

BÁBÁ'S LOVE FOR SOUTH AMERICA

**Spiritual Experiences
with a Spiritual Master**



Volume I

BÁBÁ'S LOVE FOR SOUTH AMERICA

Mystical Experiences
with a Spiritual Master

Volume One



Ananda Marga Publications
São Paulo

Bábá's Love for South America:
Mystical Experiences with a Spiritual Master
Volume I

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ISBN 85-86044-01-6

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Parque Mandaqui
São Paulo, SP 02421-070
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Printed by:
Ananda Printers
Tiljala
Calcutta-39

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INTRODUCTION

This book is an expression of devotion. It includes the personal accounts of seventy Ananda Margis and *ácaryas* (spiritual teachers) from South America with their Guru, Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, also known by his legal name, P. R. Sarkar. In this book He is referred to as Bábá, which means "most beloved."

All the stories demonstrate Bábá's incredible impact on our lives. He powerfully demonstrated true divinity in all His expressions.

Each of the authors has the deepest reverence for Him. For this reason, we have chosen to capitalize the first letter of all pronouns used to refer to Him. Though we realize that this is most unusual and may surprise some readers, we feel that to not do so would be untrue to our deepest feelings.

One aspect of the Supreme Consciousness is that He maintains both a general relationship with the entire universe, as well as a very personal relationship with everyone. Each devotee feels that Bábá loves him or her completely. Though we understand logically that He loves everyone everywhere, still we feel that He has a very special place in His heart for those of us who live in South America.

Many of these stories are very simple, yet each one has its own charm. They are like flowers of different colors. We collectively offer these stories to Bábá in the form of a garland from His devotees in South America.

On different occasions Bábá demonstrated that He knew everything about us: our past, our present, our future, our secrets. Yet He always remained mysterious. We hope that this book will help every spiritual aspirant to know and understand a little more about Bábá and His infinite love.

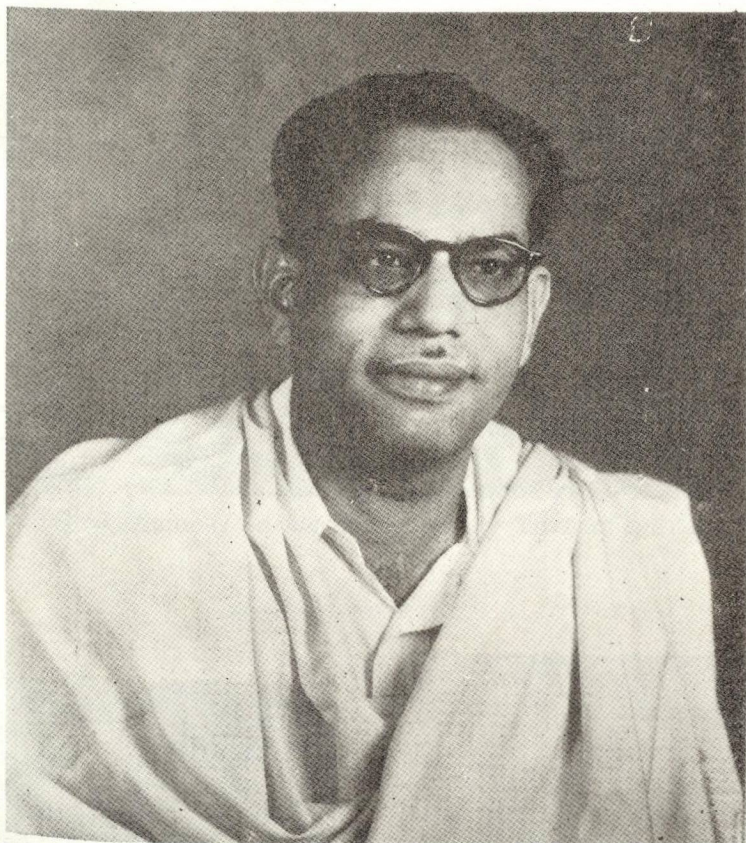
All the stories in this book except one are first-hand experiences by the individual narrators. Some wrote their stories, most tape-recorded the accounts that were later transcribed by the editorial team. Stories were received in Portuguese, Spanish or English. Each story was edited and then translated into the other two languages. In this way the complete book can be published in all three languages for the widest possible distribution. Unfortunately all experiences could not be included due to limitations in space, and we apologize to the authors if their story is not here.

The stories in this book rely on human memory, which is imperfect. So the words attributed to Bábá in this book should not be accepted as perfect accounts of what was said, but rather as the best recollections of the narrators.

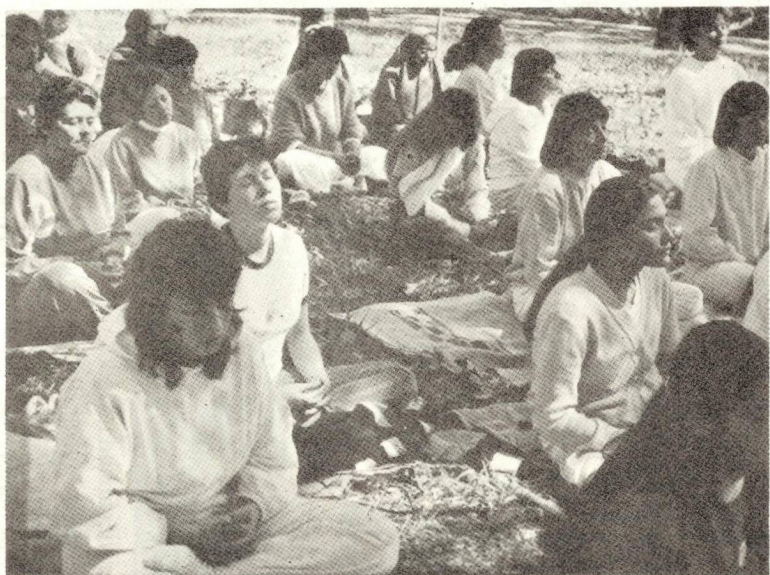
The accounts in this book are by spiritual aspirants. Thus we list them by their spiritual Sanskrit names. The yoga meditation and the spiritual and social philosophy of Ananda Marga develops a sense that humanity is one universal family. Bábá encouraged us to view everyone as our brother and sister.

Those names that begin with Dádá, which means “elder brother,” or Didi, which means “elder sister” indicate renunciant monks and nuns called *ácaryas*. To foster a sense of universalism, Bábá created an organizational approach that *ácaryas* from South America should be posted to other continents. In the same way, *ácaryas* from other lands work here. Because they are renunciants dedicated to serving humanity without distinction of race, color or creed, we have not listed the place of origin after their names. Still the accounts of the nine *ácaryas* who are native to South America begin with a mention of where they are from.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all those who offered their personal stories. We would like to thank those who sacrificed much of their time to make this collection happen: Vishvanáth and Narendra of Curitiba, Yamuná of Sao Paulo, Avinásh, Májájit and Karun of Rio de Janeiro, Dharma Deva of Guarapuava, Hari of Tucuman and Didi Susmitá.



**Dedicated to You, Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti,
our beloved Bábá,
from those of us in South America
whose lives You transformed
and with whom You always remain.
We are yours.**



Collective meditation (*Dharmacakra*), literally "circle of spirituality."



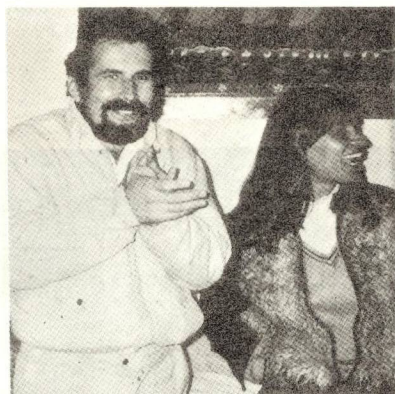
Dádá Mukatánanda



Dádá Sumitánanda



1986 Bhukti Pradhan Conference: (clockwise from left) Dádá Paradevánanda, Dádá Anishánanda, Iishvara (Asuncion), Vishvanáth (Curitiba), Dádá Nirgunánanda, Dádá Yogak's'emánanda, Jiivesh (Rio de Janeiro), Lalitesh (Rio), Ananta Deva (Juiz de Fora), Dádá Nityasatyánanda, Dádá Ambareshvaránanda, Dádá Sushmitánanda, Dádá Jishnudevánanda, Dádá Nirainjánanda, Mánavendra (Sao Paulo), Nirainjana (Sao Paulo), Máýajit (Rio), Didi Ananda Sumitá, now Didi Básantii, Didi Ananda Sumiantritá, Prem Kumar (Curitiba), Rajendra (Rio).



Keshava and Rajeshrii
(Asuncion, Paraguay)



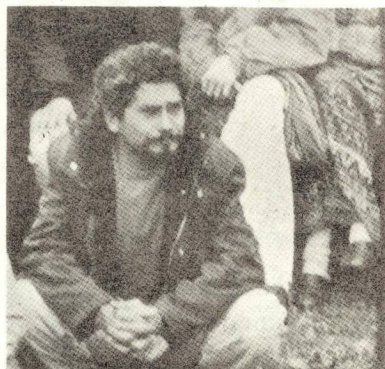
Sudáma (Porto Alegre, Brazil)



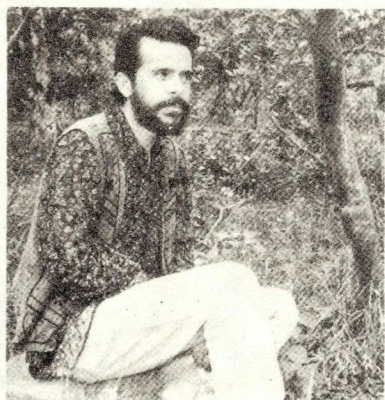
Kiirtana, devotional singing and dancing to the universal *mantra*, *Bábá Nám Kevalam*, which means "Only the name of the Supreme Father." It elevates the mind to a state of spiritual concentration before doing silent meditation.



Didi Ananda Us'á



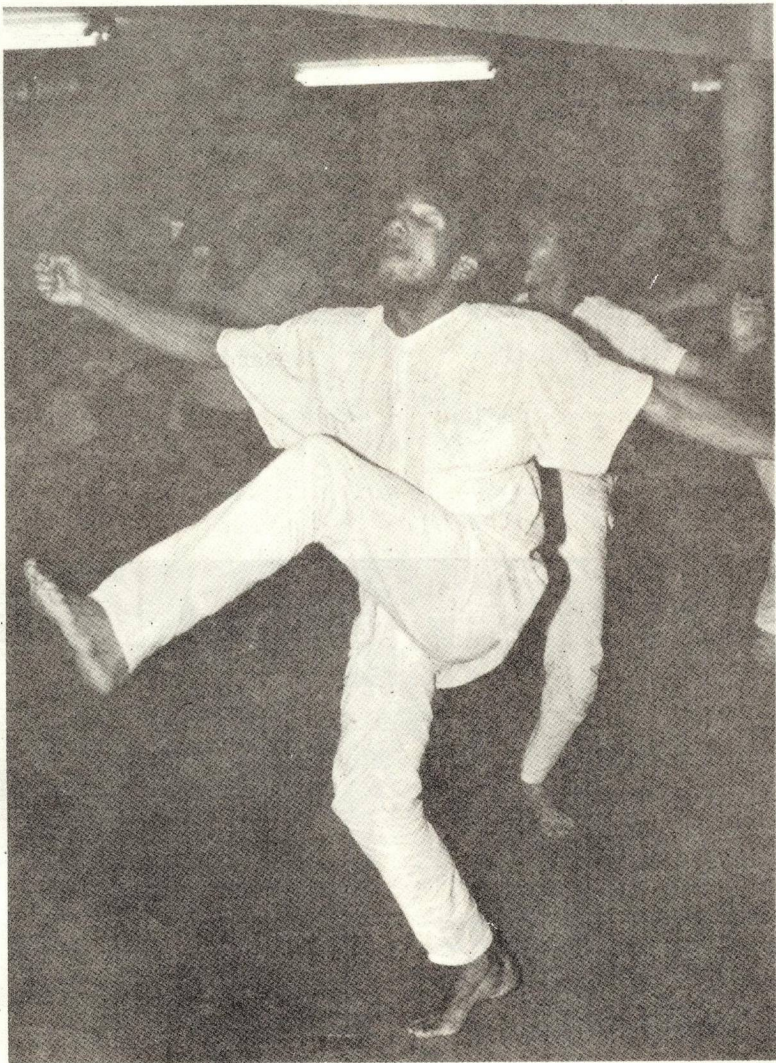
Acintya (Asuncion, Paraguay)



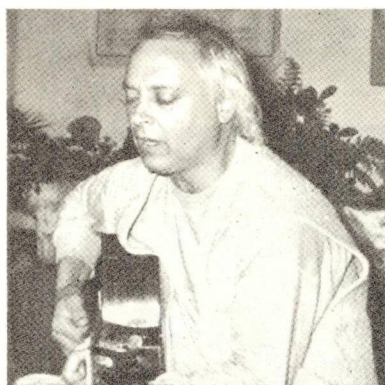
Ramesh (Acre, Brazil)



Dádá Harátmánanda



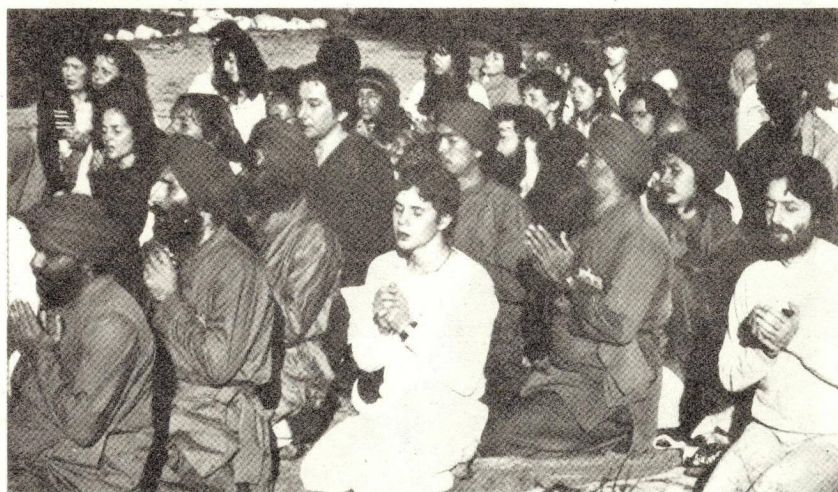
Tán'dáva, a vigorous dance practiced by men, was originally introduced by Shiva. It develops the glands and instills courage.



Janak (Buenos Aires, Argentina)



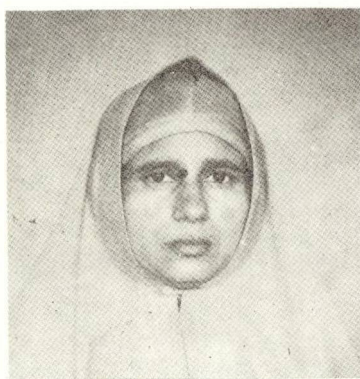
Vishvamitra (United States)



Guru Púja, a *mantra* usually sung after meditation, through which the devotee offers a symbolic flower that represents his or her ego and attachments to the Guru.



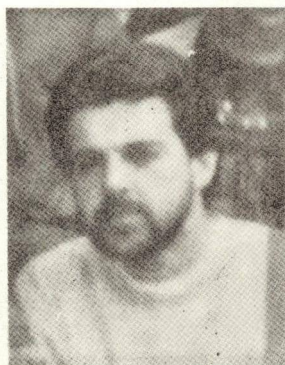
•Dádá Svaprakáshánanda



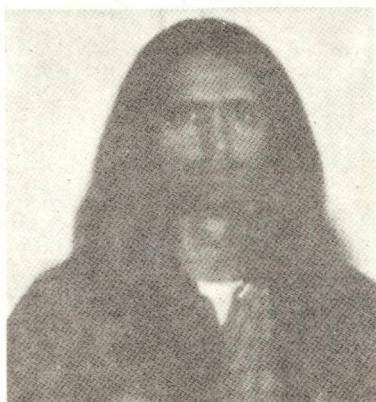
Didi Ánanda Karuna



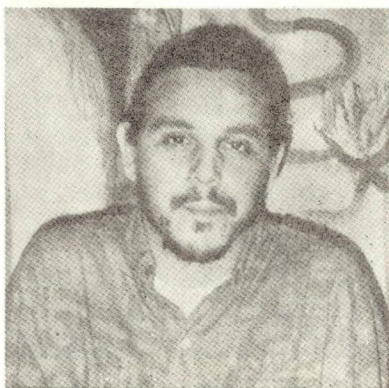
Dádá Rainjitánanda



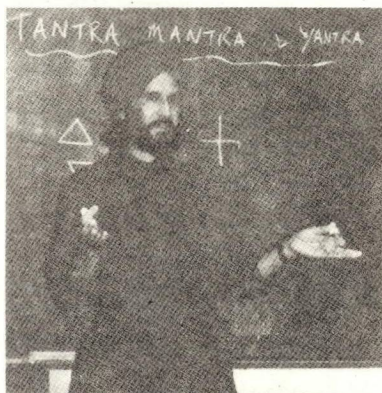
Mukunḁa (Porto Alegre, Brazil)



Ákhanda (Curitiba, Brazil). His hands are in the gesture of the yoga greeting *namaskár*.



Mrnal Kanti (Buenos Aires, Argentina)



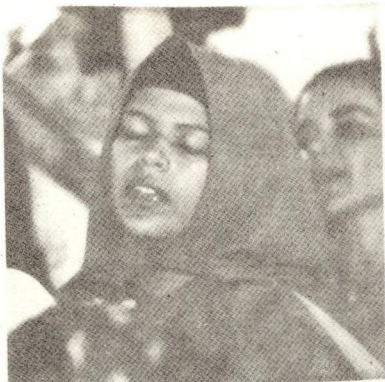
Dadá Nityasatyánanda



Mukteshvar with daughter Priiti (Cordoba, Argentina)



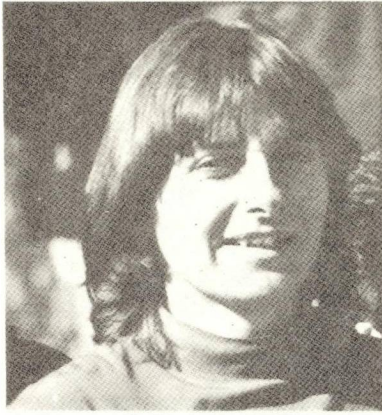
Ġiitá (Buenos Aires, Argentina)



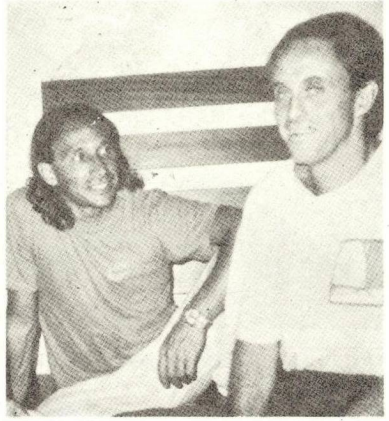
Didi Básantii



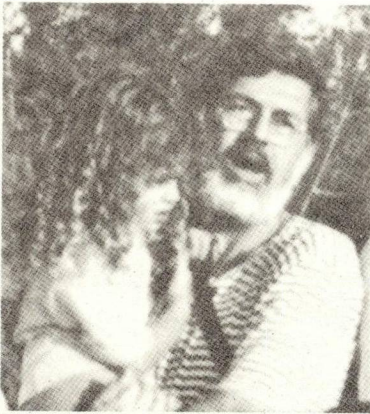
Part of the Ananda Marga Central Office complex in Tiljala, Calcutta. On the right is the place where Bábá's body was cremated. At the back some of the bird sanctuary can be seen.



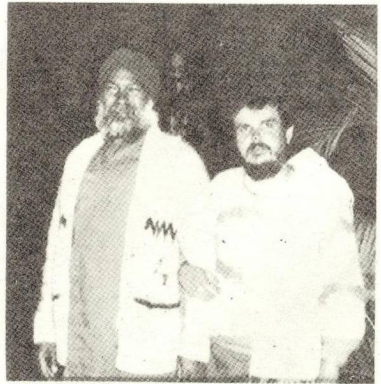
Didi Miir



Karun and Naviin (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)



Doctor Dhynesh (Belo Horizonte, Brazil)



Dd Satytmaknanda and Pradiip Deva (Rio de Janeiro)



Dádá Mánavendra, Janak and
Viiná (Petropolis, Brazil)



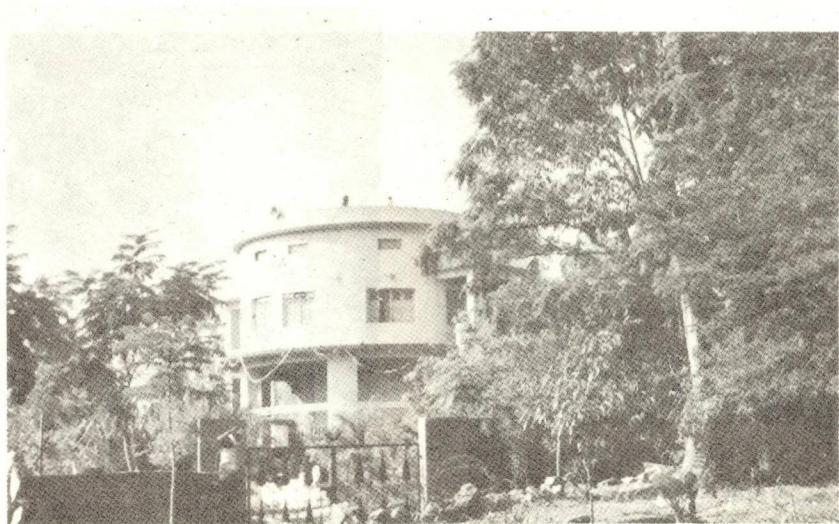
Miirá (Petropolis, Brazil)



Tapeshvar (Porto Alegre, Brazil)



Dádá Pávanánanda



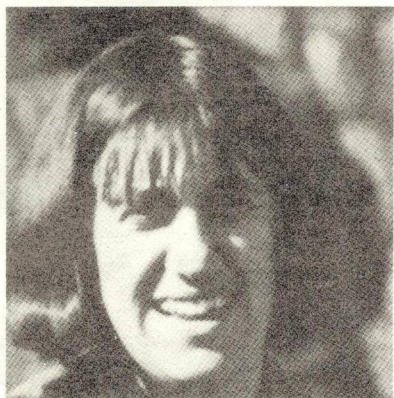
Bábá's house on the Ananda Nagar Master Unit in West Bengal, India.



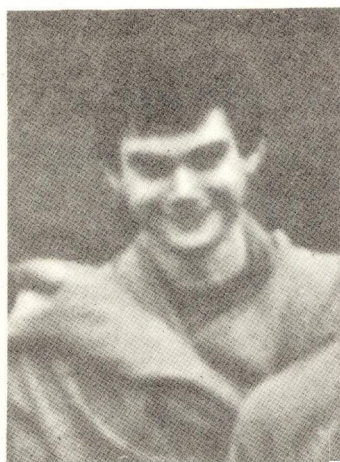
Didi Valaká



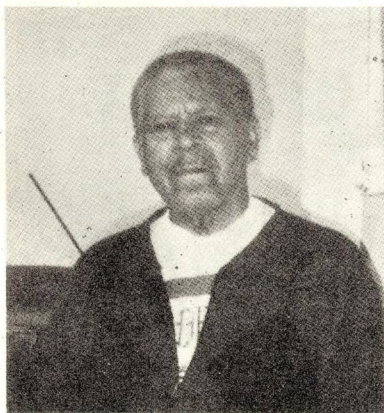
Indrá Devi (Peru)



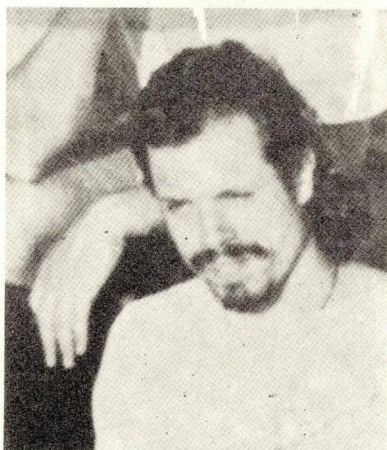
Málatii (Uruguay)



Sahadeva (Asuncion, Paraguay)



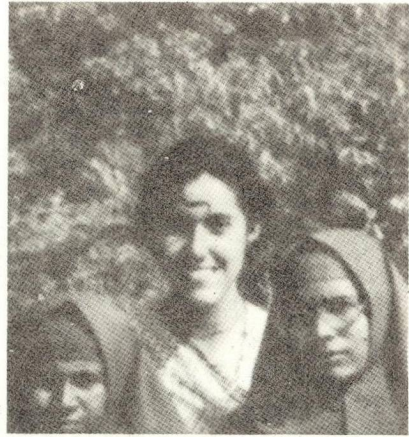
Jaganáth (Petropolis, Brazil)



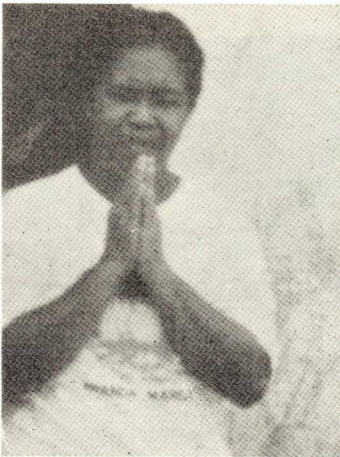
Mohan (Chile)



Somá Devi (Juiz de Fora, Brazil)



Sam'ghamitrá (Colombia) with
Didi Ánanda Sumitá and Didi
Ánanda Sumantritá



Jayá Devi (Georgetown, Guyana)



Maniká (Georgetown, Guyana)



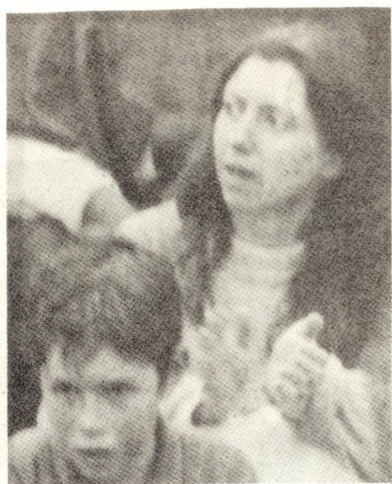
Vivek (on the right), dancing *kiirtana* in Georgetown, Guyana.



Rágini (Curitiba, Brazil)



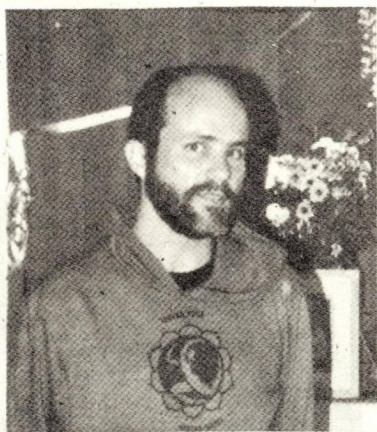
Sharadá (Buenos Aires)



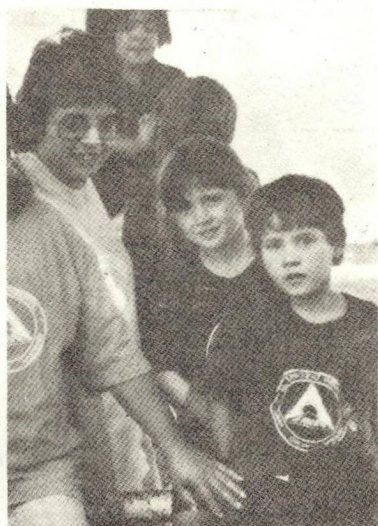
Supriyá (Chile) with her son



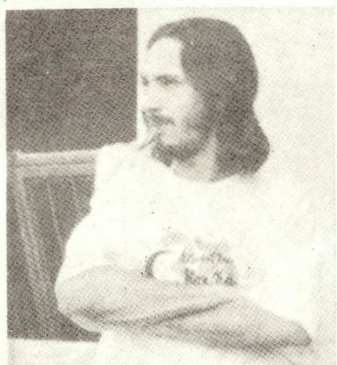
Kalpaná Devi (Bogota, Colombia)



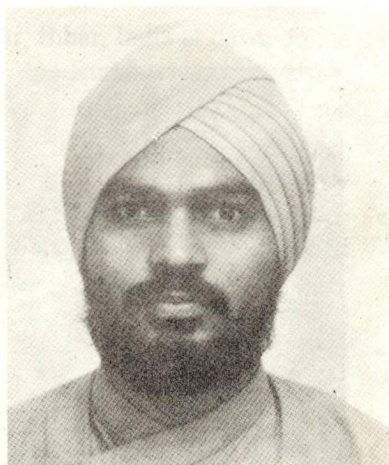
Ámrta (Bogota, Colombia)



Nirlimá with a few of the Ananda Marga school students in Asuncion, Paraguay.



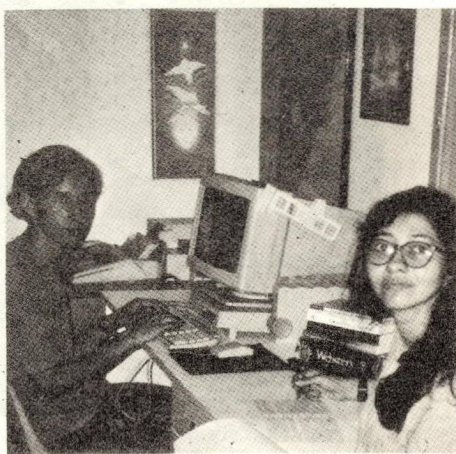
Candra Kánta (Juiz de Fora)



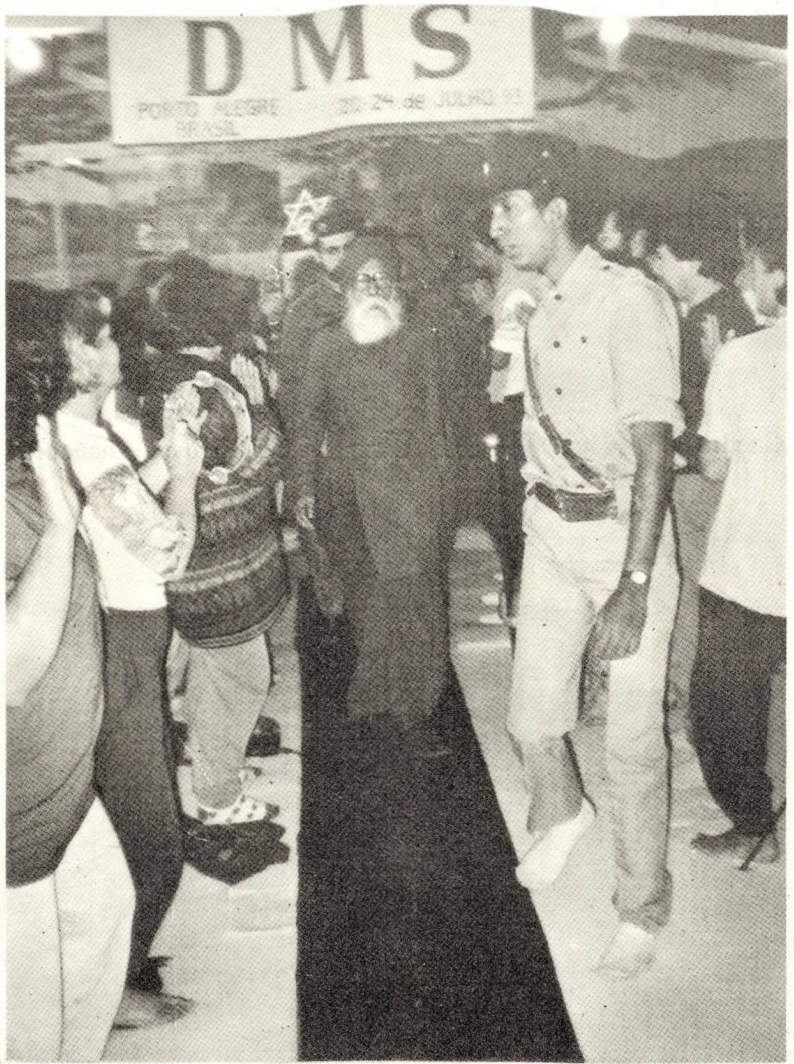
Dádá Vidyádiishánanda



Párvatii (Porto Alegre, Brazil)



Dharmadeva and Yamuná, part of the editorial team in Sao Paulo.



Dádá Shradhdhánanda, the *Purodhá Pramukha*, the spiritual head of Ananda Marga, during his historic 1993 tour of South America. The security guard on the right is Shaunkar of Georgetown, Guyana. .

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF BÁBÁ

He was born in the town of Jamalpur, Bihar, India at dawn on the full moon of May, 1921, on the same day that Buddha was born about 2500 years earlier. His legal name was Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, the name that He used on his books of social sciences.

His family members all remember seeing Him, even from a very young age, frequently sitting on His bed in the middle of the night performing meditation. In school, His astonishing memory and grasp of countless scientific phenomena and geographic facts amazed everyone.

During every vacation period, Baba was sent to the family's peaceful ancestral home in Bamunpara, West Bengal. Because He spent much of His time lying in bed, His sister one day complained that He was a lazy boy, neither studying nor playing like other children. She said that she believed he did not even know how to write His name.

Baba then wrote His name in five different scripts: Bengali, Arabic, Roman, Devanagiri and Tamil. Many years later He mentioned that at the age of seven, while spending long hours lying in His bed in Bamunpara, He chalked out His blueprint for the future Ananda Marga.

Throughout His life, He never had any spiritual teacher or guru. At the age of 18, while attending a science college in Calcutta, He initiated His first follower, an infamous criminal who had planned to rob Him.

Before completing His intermediate studies, in 1941 Bábá quit school and returned to Jamalpur to work in the Accounts Department of the Jamalpur Railway Workshop to help support His family. He worked sincerely everyday, and became known as a palmist, fortune-teller, and a source of good advice. Secretly he initiated different people. They addressed Him as Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, which means the most respected personification of bliss.

Finally at the end of 1954 Baba called a meeting of all His initiates in a small room in the railway quarters. In the first week of 1955 He formally founded Ananda Marga with the twin ideals of "liberation of self and service to humanity." He began training family people as *ácáryas*, then in 1962 created an order of monks and nuns.

In 1959 Bábá married and later had a son, demonstrating that a family was no impediment to a life of supreme dedication. Finally in 1966 He resigned His job and moved onto the Master Unit of Ánanda Nagar in Purulia District began to work full time as the President of ix

Ananda Marga. On more than 1000 hectares there He guided the creation of a vast agricultural and educational service community center.

The organization grew rapidly throughout India, teaching morality and known as anti-corruption, anti-dowry and anti-dogma. The Communist Party of India was and still is the ruling government in the state of West Bengal. They felt threatened by Ananda Marga's expansion among both intellectuals and the poor and by Baba's socio-economic programs called PROUT, the Progressive Utilization Theory. In reaction, they began a campaign of violent persecution of the organization.

This reached a climax on December 29, 1971 when Baba was arrested unjustly and imprisoned as a political prisoner for seven years in Patna. He fasted for more than five of those years in protest against His poisoning by a government agent until He was acquitted of all charges and released on August 2, 1978.

In 1981 Baba began an historic individual review of the spiritual progress of *ácaryas* and Margis called Dharma Samiks'a. Between 1982 and 1990 Baba composed 5018 songs that are collectively known as Prabhát Sam'giita and are enchanting in their rhythm, melody, harmony and meaning.

He introduced the universal outlook of Neo-humanism that includes all plants and animals and inanimate objects as part of our greater family of creation. His theory of microvita has created a new era of scientific research. In the last days of His life He introduced a global integrated university system called Gurukul.

Then on October 21, 1990, suddenly, He was gone. As the lyrics describe in one of His songs: "You came to this universe without letting anyone know, and You also left us without telling anyone."

He had a human body, yet His mind was an extraordinary source of knowledge and wisdom. He left a legacy of more than 200 books on diverse subjects and scientific textbooks that are used by different graduate departments of universities around the world.

Baba devoted His entire energy and time on the spiritual development of His followers and on the growth of Ananda Marga. When His disciples asked for his autobiography, He said, "I was a mystery, I am a mystery, I will remain a mystery." This book is an humble attempt to unravel a little of this mystery.

A NOTE ON SANSKRIT WORDS

Regarding Sanskrit terms, we have only used those which are most common and useful. The first time any Sanskrit word appears it is briefly explained, and a complete glossary of all terms is included at the end of the book. The glossary also includes those abbreviations and terms that are unique to the Ananda Marga organization.

This book uses the scientific system of writing Sanskrit words in Roman script that Bábá created. In the book, the language will be referred to as *Sam skrtá*. Because several letters are pronounced differently than in English, these are listed below:

a	“a” as in “call”
á	“a” as in “father”
i	short “ee” sound as in “week”
ii	long “ee” sound as in “meet”
u	short “u” sound
ú	long “u” sound
r	sometimes a Sanscrit vowel, pronounced “ri”
m’	“ng” sound as in “rung”
una, ina	nasal sounds
t’, d’, n’	palatal pronunciation of the consonents
s’	“sh”

Ananda Marga Georgetown



CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY YEARS: 1972 - 1979

The first ácárya or spiritual teacher of Ananda Marga to come to South America was a young monk from India. He arrived in 1972, wearing his bright orange uniform, to give lectures and teach yoga meditation free of charge through the process of "initiation". He was later joined by a handful of other ácáryas from different countries.

Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, the spiritual Master they represented, was at that time unjustly imprisoned in India. Yet, as these stories show, even during those turbulent times, Bábá was transforming the lives of South Americans. Two of the stories in this first chapter are by Brazilians who became so inspired by Bábá's spiritual practices and philosophy that they decided to dedicate their lives to work as a monk and nun, a "dádá" and a "didi".

Dádá Mukrátmánanda

In the early seventies I came in contact with Ananda Marga in Porto Alegre, Brazil where I was born. I learned the universal *Sam 'skrta mantra, Bábá Nám Kevalam*, which means "Only the Name of the Divine Father." I started regularly meditating alone in my basement. I felt a flow of inspiration in my mind due to the great positivity of the *mantra*. Two months later I was initiated, after which I started my efforts in earnest. Each time I sat as long as I could, hoping to experience *samádhi*, a state of complete absorption with the Cosmic Mind.

A few weeks later I went to live in the newly rented house of Ananda Marga known as a *jágrti*, "a place of spiritual development." The first time I entered the meditation hall, I was deeply impressed. The room was white with violet light. Pictures of Buddha, Christ and great yogis hung on the walls. The entire atmosphere felt quite mystic and there was a

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sweet scent of Almiskar from the Himalayas.

At the center of a little altar was a photo of one whom I felt was familiar to me, someone dear, someone close. Later I came to know it was Bábá, my Guru, the One who would influence and change my life forever.

I underwent one month of intensive LFT ("Local Full-time Volunteer") training at our *jágrti*. This short period was full of incidents that changed me a lot.

Afterward I was sent to Rio de Janeiro to organize a lecture for my *ácarya*. I arranged a large hall for 300 people at the Hadock Lobo Club. I went to newspapers, distributed leaflets, posters, etc. But only five people came to the lecture -- two were policemen, and the other three were my friends! That was my first experience doing *pracár*, "propagating spirituality to the public."

Then I was assigned to Buenos Aires to do *pracár* and run our center there. Argentina was then in turmoil: President Isabelita Peron was about to fall, the city was in chaos, and the military was about to start their reign of terror. It was a dramatic and dangerous time.

Another LFT and I divided the city into zones, with four zones in the center. Then we started a very extensive *pracár* program, doing door-to-door contact eight hours every day. Each Sunday afternoon, before group meditation, we also used to go to a very big park in the center to lecture to the crowds that gathered there. We contacted 200-300 homes daily, but very few people were willing to listen or welcome us due to the climate of fear. Those days were very frustrating.

One house I visited, however, was the home of a very kind doctor, a foot specialist. This gentleman invited me into his home and introduced me to all his family members. Later they all came to the *jágrti* to attend our philosophy class. Then on Sunday they came again and brought flowers for collective meditation. That day I received my first direct contact with the Supreme Being in the following way:

We sat in a circle, sang and clapped to a very sweet devotional *kiirtana* tune. As I watched them I was deeply moved by the devotional love I saw in their eyes and their hearts for God. Then I felt tears falling down my cheeks. I started laughing without any control or reservation. Soon an *ácarya* appeared at the door singing, too. As I looked at him I saw an intense light in his eyes. I thought, "This is not Dádá, this is the beloved Father." Then I saw the same bright golden light shining everywhere -- from the walls, the ceiling, the floor. Everything was shining.

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I could no longer control my clapping hands. They seemed to move very fast. My mind was spinning in light. I could no longer feel my body or distinguish anything. I then lost all grip on the external world and felt tremendous joy.

After Buenos Aires, I came back to Porto Alegre. I loved that house we used to have at San Manual Street. It ended in steps that overlooked the city. The river looked silver in the summer afternoons. The sun rose in front of the front door and set at our back window. A huge tree stood in the front yard that was full of flowers in the spring and summer. The whole street was lined with trees, and at the back the greenery of the neighbor's garden invaded our property. The hill where our house stood was silent at the edge of the epicenter of activity of the city.

One day at noon in the summer of 1976 I was meditating on our little verandah. At that time in the history of our movement Bábá was fasting in jail in India. We had received news that Bábá's health was faring badly, that His life was in great danger and that He was surviving only by a miracle. This news made me extremely worried, and it created a pain in me that I could not share with anyone. I was worried that Bábá would leave the world for someplace where I could not go.

Then, in my meditation, I saw the form of my Guru shining in front of me. The vision became more clear and more intense. His cheeks were rosy and He wore white clothes. His arms were outstretched and He was saying, "Why don't you come, my son? I'm waiting for you. Why don't you come?" His smile was radiant and graceful, His form was nebulous light, and His eyes were filled with boundless love. I called out "Bábá!" loudly two or three times. My mind no longer functioned and I could not think or reason.

After some time I felt myself recovering from the shock. My ego returned. I wondered who had come to me that summer day in the form of sheer light. I touched my heart and discovered it was beating very fast. Then I realized I had received a direct experience of *Táraka Brahma* (the Supreme Consciousness in Its liberating aspect).

I was a very young LFT when I boarded a transport company truck on the road to Curitiba, the capital of the state of Paraná in South Brazil. When I first arrived there I had no place to stay nor any contact at all. I used all of the little money I was carrying to stay in a cheap hotel for two nights during the weekend. It was winter and rained constantly.

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I went to the city Monday looking for anyone who could help me, a place to stay, etc. I visited a yoga center and there I met a very respectable lady. She took me to a TV program, and later she offered to pay for a hotel room for me. Then she took me to a health food shop that belonged to her friend and told her to give me whatever I wanted and she would manage it.

I gave many lectures on Ananda Marga philosophy and gradually gathered a group of 30 people. We meditated regularly in a library room at the center of the city.

During that stay at the hotel, I was alone on Bábá's birthday. I remembered my brothers and sisters in Porto Alegre who were celebrating together in the *jágrti* and I felt profound sadness. It was dark and raining outside while I tried to meditate in that small hotel room. I felt myself sinking into depression and could not continue.

Suddenly I felt someone tickling me all over my body. I started laughing uncontrollably. I felt incredibly happy. This experience continued for four days!

Later I received permission to live in a small attic of the Gnostic Society. During that period I only slept three to four hours a night.

One afternoon I had nothing to do because I had distributed all my *pracár* leaflets and booklets. So I asked a friend to invite others for collective meditation.

About 25 people came that evening to the home of a yoga teacher. I sang the *mantras*, and during *sáadhaná* (meditation, literally "sustained effort") I felt as if Bábá was embracing me. An uncontrollable wave of emotion filled me and I could not prevent myself from shouting Bábá's name.

Later when we finished the people asked me why I had shouted. I explained that I felt the presence of my Guru. One lady in the group was a clairvoyant. She said, "I saw a short man in the corner of the room. He had an Indian complexion and was dressed in white gown and pants. He approached you very closely and seemed to embrace you. Then he merged into you."

On three other occasions when meditating collectively I had the same experience. Internally I asked Bábá, "Why do you come when there are others around?" But He never replied!

I returned to Porto Alegre in 1976 and stayed there until 1977. This period was a very blissful time for me. Whenever I sang *kiirtana*, I

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could feel the presence of Bábá.

One day we went by bus to do social service at an old people's home. We started singing *kiirtana* on the bus. Suddenly I started laughing uncontrollably.

I was worried that others on the public transport must think I was crazy. But when I glanced around I realized no one was looking at me. Actually, Brazilians are used to euphoria and craziness of many kinds. For a long time after that, whenever I sang *kiirtana* I felt taken by a wave of abnormal laughter and felt full of joy.

Time passed quickly and I was not getting the chance to see the One who was my most important relation, the closest of all. I used to mutter in silence and suffer alone, thinking, "Bábá, You won't stay much longer on this earth and I'm not getting the chance to see You." Regularly in my *sádhana* I used to weep mentally and physically. This feeling was melancholic and I could not get rid of it.

One day we got the opportunity to watch a film of Bábá. In that film He was young and smiling and walked very fast as He surveyed and planned the projects at Ananda Nagar Master Unit in India. Many *ácaryas* followed Bábá as he wandered. Then sometimes Bábá sat down in the shade of a tree and they talked and thought about the future. After the film we held *dharmacakra* (group meditation).

During meditation, I suddenly felt myself in India. I was under an enormous tent (*pandal*). I sat in the first row surrounded by people in front of the dais where Bábá sat. He was dressed in a white silk *kurta* and *dhoti*. I watched a man in white offer flowers to Him. Beside me was a young, obese man with dark complexion who was crying, and as he cried, his whole body shook.

I watched a *dádá* play the harmonium and sing devotional songs while a *didi* played *tabla*. Then we all danced together to a very sweet *kiirtana* tune. Bábá started to speak, but I couldn't follow what He said. As I watched Bábá in my vision, I shouted His name very loud.

When *dharmacakra* was finished, Didi and some Margis asked me what happened. I told them I had been watching Bábá.

Four years later, in May 1981, I finally went to India for the first time. At the Dharma Máhá Cakra (DMC, the great spiritual program held periodically by Bábá) in Tiljala, Calcutta, I found myself sitting in the first row in front of Bábá. Then I was amazed to see the same man I had seen in my earlier dream offer flowers to Him! Beside me I saw the

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same obese man I had seen crying and shaking (later I learned that he was from a well-known family of Bombay). The same *dádá* and *didi* played their instruments and sang. I realized that my beloved Bábá had shown me the future and arranged a secret trip for me to India four years before I ever reached there.

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Prem Kumar (Curitiba, Brazil)

When I first joined Ananda Marga in 1973, I had much thirst for the Infinite. I had previously met two Indian yogis, but my experience with them was not intense.

One day someone invited me to a lecture of Ananda Marga by Dádá Yatiishvaránanda. During the lecture, I had a strong desire to feel God inside me, to find my Guru. As I watched Dádá, I felt everything that I had desired, I felt an energy very powerful. I felt in him a very strong energy, which today I realize was Bábá.

When Dádá was speaking, everything that he said was for me. He answered all my questions and doubts. His look, even though he was far away, appeared to be only for me. I began to feel a tremendous ecstasy while the lecture was going on. I was with various companions, but at that moment I felt that only he and I were there. A tremendous vibration emanated from him, an energy of much love, that made me feel closer to him. I wished that the lecture would finish so everyone would leave and I could be closer to him and if possible touch him, because I was no longer able to resist that strong spiritual attraction.

At the end, when everyone was leaving, Dádá did *namaskár* (a yogic *mudrá* of greeting and parting. Pressing the palms against each other, the thumbs first touch the forehead, and then the heart-region. The meaning is "I greet the divinity within you with my mind and heart"). I returned the greeting, and when I looked at him again, I started to vibrate together with him, and felt that the love penetrated inside both him and me. Then I looked at him and - puft! - I merged with him. In that moment I felt what is the Infinite. Dádá and I disappeared, we became one. I felt enormous ecstasy and total bliss. I felt that he entered me and I entered him, a total union.

It was one of my first spiritual experiences. In the past I had also meditated, but had never had such intense sensations. Since that day I was convinced that my place was in Ananda Marga.

After those days, I spoke with Dádá, to see if it was possible to become a volunteer of Ananda Marga and live in the *jágrti*, since the experience that I had was so strong. It immediately convinced me that I should be there and not in my house or with my old friends. My place was there in the *jágrti*.

Comments Bábá Made About South America From Prison

From 1975-1979 Dádá Sumitánanda was the Sectorial Secretary, the highest organizational authority of Georgetown (GT) Sector, the organizational division of South America. He visited Bábá in jail in 1977 and asked Him where to put the Sectorial Office. Bábá said, "Georgetown Sector is very big. You can decide where to put the headquarters."

"Bábá, what about in Brazil?"

"Brazil is quite large, larger than India! Brazilian people are very good people and simple."

At that time Dádá decided to establish the Sectorial Office in São Paulo.

Dádá Nirmohánanda was posted to work in Peru in 1977. Though he was transferred before he ever went, Bábá gave him the following advice about South America:

"Spanish is easy to learn, Portuguese is not as easy.

"The red Indians were the original inhabitants. They were exploited by the landlords. Your duty is to return their rights to them. They are very good people. If you give them love, they will easily side with PROUT (the acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory, the comprehensive socio-economic theory propounded by Bábá).

"You can adjust there because their food habits are like India. They eat rice, maize (corn) and they like hot spices.

"I like Brazil very much. Had I not taken birth in India I would have taken birth in Brazil.

"The people there drive like racing drivers. Many accidents take place there.

"Most South Americans have faith in their legends and old traditions. When Ananda Marga is propagated, this faith will disappear. Ananda Marga will grow very fast, and they will not change their opinion. They do not change their opinion often."

In Feb. 1978, Didi Ánanda Jayáshrii visited Bábá twice in jail in Patna. Bábá told her, "The Brazilian people have very good hearts. But you are few there." Didi answered, "Yes, Bábá." (At that time there were only four *ácáryas* in GT Sector.)

"But there are few lions in the forest and few diamonds in the mountain. You will have to work very hard to uplift the people."

Nirainjana (São Paulo, Brazil)

Whenever I start to remember the stories of Bábá, my mind becomes elevated. To me this demonstrates the great force and power of Bábá. Saying His name elevates our minds, leaving us in another state.

My contact with Bábá began long before it actually happened. If one analyzes one's life, he or she will realize that Bábá was present in their life since birth.

Meeting myácarya, Dádá Sumitánanda, was a very powerful experience. When I was 21, I practiced yoga in an academy to which he went to give a lecture. He arrived, sat down, did namaskár and started to meditate. Everyone looked at one another, wondering what he would say. Suddenly he spoke two sentences, only two sentences, did namaskár again, got up and left. It was so powerful that I stood up and followed him, wanting to know more about him.

I was initiated on November 20, 1976. Then began my objective relation with Bábá. I was very lucky, because at that time Ananda Marga was small and I was a student, so I had the opportunity to spend that whole year with my ácarya. He taught me a lot.

After that I started to cultivate my inner relation with Bábá. This increased and caused me to begin studying in preparation to be an ácarya. But because I was the only son in my family, the pressure that I had from my family made this difficult. So instead I decided to marry according to the Ananda Marga system of revolutionary marriage.

My marriage was very Tantrik (Tantra is the ancient spiritual tradition of India that emphasizes overcoming all fears and weakness through meditation and confrontation of difficult external situations). No one in my family wanted to attend, because I got married in the July 1978 Sectorial Retreat in São Paulo. After only a few days we traveled to India.

When we arrived in Patna, they announced that Bábá would be released from prison. That week before He came out was a tumultuous time. I remember clearly that the day he was released I almost could not see Him and I got frustrated. Everyone was running, pushing and shoving. It was a mess. I do not know how, but Bábá's car suddenly turned around and passed beside me. I came out from the crowd and Bábá turned towards me and gave His first namaskár to me. I could not control my emotion. I lost my balance and started to cry. It was very powerful.

The days passed. Bábá used to give darshan, a discourse to the Margis, every day. At the time I could not comprehend the concept of

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how that physical person could be Parama Purusa, the Supreme Consciousness. This made me very confused.

So I decided to go to the Ananda Shiila Master Unit. I went there with one *dádá* who had also been jailed with Bábá and who had been released a few days earlier. We spent ten days meditating and sharing Bábá stories. It was like a retreat for me.

When I came back to see Bábá, I felt more prepared to understand Him. Soon I began to have some spiritual experiences. The first took place in a small *darshan* hall where we could not see when Bábá was coming, since He would walk behind a wall before entering. While we were doing *kiirtana*, I felt a very strong force in my *anáhata cakra* (the psychic center located in the center of the chest). A few moments later Bábá entered through the door at the front, and I realized that my internal sensation had occurred at the precise moment when Bábá had walked past me on the other side of the wall. It is impossible to explain the feeling.

Bábá was very accessible then and we could easily get close and talk with Him. He was very weak after His five year fast. Once He called all the Margis from São Paulo, Brazil. Jayantii, my wife and I entered Bábá's room. Though He was physically weak, we felt an incredibly strong vibration. His eyes were like beams of light that looked at us. We lost control by being near to Bábá and started to cry. He asked us some questions and then said some things that until today are engraved in my memory. He said: "Today your actions are very small, but one day your actions will be very great."

I had something on my mind. I mentally chose a message I wanted to ask Him. Then I said, "Bábá, please never leave me."

He looked at me and said, "I will always be with you."

That made me realize that spiritually Bábá is always with us. Now our effort to remember and follow Him is what is important. When we want this and struggle for it, it is possible to enjoy His presence every moment.

I brought some things back from India and sold them in Brazil. In November I decided to return to India with the intention to do more business, but when I arrived, I realized that I had not gone for that. I had gone there to be with Bábá. So I went alone to Calcutta and waited to have my personal contact (PC, a special personalized psycho-spiritual experience given by Bábá to Margis; personal contact was given to men individually

and to women in small groups).

I remember it was a hot day and I was sweating and had constipation. My stomach hurt a lot. It was becoming dark, so I went to take bath and got some relief. Suddenly Bábá's Personal Assistant, Dádá Rámánanda, called me. He told that it was my turn. He opened the door to Bábá's room, I entered and did *sást'aunga pran'am* (posture of respectful salutation to the Guru, literally "straight as an arrow," lying face down, with arms and legs extended straight).

I sat and Bábá did not even look at me. He started shouting at Dádá because he left the door open. So he closed the door and Bábá continued with the same hard, angry vibration. He ordered, "Sit near me." He started by asking me my name, the name of my *ácarya*, where I was initiated and where I was from. I was very nervous as I answered His questions.

Then He told me to take off my shirt and put my hands over my *anáhata cakra*. I began to repeat some promises, repeating each phrase after Him. He showed me all the past mistakes that I had committed. It was like a film that was going in my mind. He demonstrated that He knew all about my life, which put me in another state. His voice continued to be very hard and I continued repeating. He showed me what I had done in my past and what I should do in my life.

Bábá said some very important sentences about my life that until now continue echoing like a mantra. That was sixteen years ago, but it seems like only yesterday.

Finally He said, "Raise your hands." He was sitting on His bed and I was sitting below Him on the floor. He picked up His stick and said that He would punish me, asking me how many times He should hit me. I said as many as He wanted. He insisted that I say a number, but I repeated the same reply. However He said angrily, "You have to say how many!" I was afraid and closed my eyes, because He was holding the stick up in the air and had a very angry face, asking me how many I wanted. Finally I answered that I could stand maybe ten.

He was about to hit me very hard, but He only lightly touched me with the stick. I opened my eyes and Bábá had completely changed His appearance. He was another Bábá. He smiled and said, "Come here, my boy, sit on my lap." I sat in His lap and He embraced me. I was in another state and lost consciousness.

I only remember that Bábá finally took me off His lap and said that I had to go out. I did not want to go. He said, "Go out, go out." So I put

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on my shirt and took a little time. The attraction was so strong that I did not want to leave Him. Finally I had to go.

The next day I traveled to Delhi and from there I returned to Brazil. On the train I traveled with one sister from São Paulo who was becoming a didi. When I started to have a very high fever, she said to me that Bábá was burning my sam'skáras (mental reactive momenta).

Rajeshrii (Asuncion, Paraguay)

I developed a strange and mysterious spiritual relationship when I was only eight years old. Once, when I entered my house, I saw a face on the wall. I became very scared and ran out of the room. Then I prayed a lot and slowly re-entered the room thinking, 'If you are a bad person, go away, and if you are good, stay and be my friend.' He did not go away, so we became good friends. From then on I felt that he always helped me in everything of my life.

When I was ten years old, I was flying a kite when suddenly a friend of mine cut the string. I ran home crying and afraid. When I entered my room, I saw that the image was also crying. When I asked him why he was crying, he told me to calm down because my kite was stuck in a tree. Then I ran back and found it again. I was so happy. Every time that I needed anything or was worried, he always helped me.

When I was a student at the university in 1977, some friends told me about a yoga seminar because everyone knew that I was fascinated by all spiritual things. I went and was very impressed by everything that Dádá said. I told him that I wanted something new and something different. He told me that I was never alone, that there was someone always with me. I was very surprised how he knew that I had a friend who always accompanied me.

Finally we parted, but I felt anguish. Suddenly he came running back and said that I could go to his house to be initiated in meditation. [Editor's note: By the end of that year, 1977, Bábá directed that *didis*, female *ácaryás*, could only initiate interested women, and *dádás*, male *ácaryás*, could only initiate men.]

The next day I went. He told me to wait for him in the hall. When I entered, I saw a photo of Bábá. It was my secret friend! I was so surprised that I screamed.

Dádá asked, "What happened?" Then I told him the stories of my childhood and he understood that the image I saw as a little girl was Bábá. Dádá promised that Bábá would never leave me.

Soon after initiation, I started to meditate regularly. For the next three days I forgot about the image on the wall. When I remembered it again, I found that it had disappeared.

I was desperate. I ran to Dádá and told him what happened. I asked if it was possible to have a photo of Bábá. He gave me one. Then I began my personal relationship with Bábá.

Sudámá (Porto Alegre, Brazil)

In July 1978, various Margis and I left for India because we heard that Bábá would be released after seven years in prison. We went to Patna, but He had not yet been released. So we went to Nepal and returned to Patna to hear the news that Bábá would be released that day, August 2. I was very anxious to know Him, because for three years I had been in Ananda Marga, and I had not yet had the opportunity to see Him or to have His personal contact.

With this perspective we went to a great darshan that Bábá gave the day following His release from prison. That was the moment that I really felt what is meditation. I was concentrating and at the same time listening to what Bábá was saying. My mind was completely absorbed in a feeling of peace, tranquillity and harmony. It was not an extraordinary experience, but it was really strong.

The following day various Margis from different countries were waiting outside Bábá's house. We were then joined by a group of Margis from different parts of India, so that we were about thirty trying to get close to Bábá. At that moment we saw Him coming out in a wheelchair since He had just broken His long fast. Everyone was desperate to get close to Bábá and pushed their way to the front. I was not so quick. I was a little sad and I thought, 'It seems that Bábá does not want me close to Him.'

Various Margis sang devotional songs for Him. Only His smile made me feel better. But deep inside I thought that Bábá did not want me to get closer, and this made me feel isolated sitting at the back of everyone beside the door. He was four or five meters away surrounded by the group.

When the meeting was over, He went back to the door. Those who had followed Him before were left behind, and He came in my direction. At that moment I felt a different vibration. When Bábá passed less than a meter from me, He asked the assistant pushing the wheelchair to stop. Then Bábá turned and gave me namaskár with a smile that was brilliant. I was so close that I even touched His arm.

It was the first time I had come physically close to Bábá, and it was an incredible moment. It satisfied all my doubts about whether He felt love for me and for all the people on the planet. My desire to be close to Him that time was very intense and this proved that really Bábá knew the thoughts of His devotees. In the first moment Bábá played hide and seek, leaving me far away and isolated, then He gave me that historic

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moment of my life that I can never forget. Today I feel even more that when one has the desire and the will to be personally close to Bábá, He creates the circumstances so that the devotee can come close to Him.

Didi Ánanda Us'á

Bábá inspired me to go to India to be with Him physically in a very sweet and direct manner. This experience took place at the end of September 1978 in Rio de Janeiro. I was working for Ananda Marga there and had been doing *sádhana* for two years.

I started to hear the words, "Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, *Táraka Brahma, Parama Purus 'a*," over and over again. For six days I heard this blissful sound wherever I went and it filled my thoughts. Bábá was calling me to Him.

Somehow I easily arranged everything needed to travel and in October I journeyed alone to Patna where I met Him. Before I left, though, the Margis of Rio asked me to inquire from Bábá when I met Him whether or not one should eat white sugar.

The moment I arrived, the first *avadhútiká* (senior nun), Didi Ánanda Bháratii, gave me the duty of transcribing and typing Bábá's darshans that He was giving twice daily in the Patna *jágrti*. So during the six weeks that I was there I attended every *darshan* and spent the rest of my time listening to the cassettes of Bábá's words and typing them.

Every day I anxiously awaited my chance to receive personal group contact with Bábá. After a week of disappointment I could not control my frustration. I had followed Bábá's car to His house, but at the gate I was told that I could not see Bábá then because He was busy. I started crying uncontrollably.

Two brothers gave me a glass of sugar cane juice to drink while they went inside and mentioned to Dádá Rámánanda, Bábá's Personal Assistant (PA), that I was there asking for Bábá's contact. Suddenly Bábá called Dádá and asked him if there was any overseas Margis in that morning's darshan. Dádá replied that I was the only one, that I had come from Brazil, and that I was waiting for His contact. Bábá then promised that I could have His contact the following morning in the *jágrti* according to the prescribed system.

Then Dádá told Bábá that I also had a question from the Margis of Rio de Janeiro about white sugar. Bábá said, "Tell them that if there is a substitute for white sugar, then a substitute should be used. White sugar makes one look older. If suppose a person of 24 years eats a lot of white sugar, she will look like 44 years old. So a substitute for white sugar should be used if available." Bábá then handed him a bag of prasád (food blessed with intense spiritual vibrations) to give me for the Margis of

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Brazil.

His words touched me directly and made me laugh. I was 24 years old. That first week in India I found it a little difficult to adjust with the different food. So three times a day I had eaten a box of milk sweets and almost nothing else!

The next morning there was no other sister ready for Group Contact. Still Bábá called me in and gave me guidelines that I should follow in this life. But I still had a secret question that I couldn't say out loud. Bábá seemed to know it because in the following two darshans He explained the answer to my question and completely cleared all my doubts. Then I decided to become His *ácaryá*.

I followed Bábá on His tour to Calcutta and Delhi, then flew to the *ácaryá* training center in Sweden. After six months, Bábá came to Europe and visited us. As soon as He arrived, He asked Dádá Vijayánanda who was traveling with Him to give our examination. Then Bábá announced the postings of those of us who passed. I was posted to be Diocese Secretary (Ladies) in Lisbon, Portugal.

During that visit Bábá told us, "In the developed countries, people have many comforts on the physical level. There service should be given on the psychic and spiritual level, because people become mentally ill and even commit suicide due to lack of balance in the mental and spiritual spheres."

Acintya (Asuncion, Paraguay)

I attended my first retreat two months after meeting Ananda Marga, and there I was initiated in 1978. I was invited to go to LFT training and something inside told me that I had to go.

At the end of the retreat the news arrived that Bábá was about to be freed from prison. We were very inspired, so we decided to do 24 hours of kiirtana and to fast. It was a very special day. It was the first time that I had fasted completely without eating or drinking anything. We did kiirtana near a lake in São Paulo. I was practicing movements of martial arts on the wharf instead of meditating.

Then I returned to the meditation hall where everyone was doing kiirtana. I sat down and began to feel very strange. I felt that something more was going to happen that day. I began to cry.

I felt very light and that I was leaving my body. At that moment I clearly saw a distance between my cosmic and physical bodies. I became afraid because I had never experienced this before.

This never happened again, even though I tried to imitate that feeling. Due to this experience, I feel that my life has been protected by a very special energy. I believe that Bábá is the one that is protecting me in every moment of my life.

Ramesh (Acre, Brazil)

I met Ananda Marga in 1975, and after four years of spiritual practices, I had not yet established a devotional relationship with Bábá. I used to meditate regularly, however I always meditated with a pratik (the symbol of Ananda Marga) in front of me. Bábá's photograph did not inspire devotion in me.

During the retreat of February 1978 in Porto Alegre, Dádá Sumitánanda asked me to go to his room. When I arrived, there was nobody there. However to my surprise on the table there was a black and white photo of Bábá. Only those who practice the sixth lesson of Ananda Marga meditation have this photo, in which Bábá is sitting in barábhaya mudrá (a meaningful gesture of the hands that signifies "blessing without fear"). I had already seen this photo but had not noticed anything special in it, except the position, which was different from other photos.

When I saw this photo at that moment, something different caught my attention. My eyes became fixed on it, as if they were attracted by something special. The sensation that I had was that in the photo Bábá was present in miniature. This lasted for several seconds, and I felt that in that room His presence was emanating. I left the room and tried to analyze what had happened. So I decided to walk a little, yet that image of Bábá remained fixed in my mind.

At night there was a devotional program. We sat in a circle lit with candles and a few *ácáryas* told stories of Bábá, alternating with *kiirtana*. During this program, I was very inspired and meditated deeply. At one point, I felt Bábá's presence over the group. Bábá came down until He merged in my body. That moment I felt an extraordinary sensation of nobility and greatness. It was as if I was a very high mountain like one of the Himalayas. I felt a most gratifying and intimate union with Bábá.

In 1979 I was living in Rio de Janeiro and studying biology in the university. Bábá was traveling around the world, visiting various sectors. I received the news that He would come to visit Buenos Aires in South America. However the date of His arrival was uncertain. Though I was not sure whether Bábá would come or not, I decided to quit the university and go to Buenos Aires to wait for His arrival.

At that time I was reading a well known book, the Bhagavad Gíita. During my journey one thing in that book that impressed me a lot was the moment when Krs'n'a revealed himself to Arjuna. A powerful question arose in my mind: "How could I be traveling to find *Parama Purus 'a* in

human form? How could I deserve such grace?" In Ananda Marga Bábá is considered to be of the same caliber as Shiva and Krs'n'a. I started to think that maybe I had done something very important in my previous life to deserve such grace, and this made me feel a certain superiority. But then I started to think that I was in Ananda Marga for four years and had not done enough social service. This made me feel inferior. With my mind alternating back and forth like this, I traveled to see Bábá.

When I arrived in the *jágrti* in Buenos Aires, after much reflection, I understood that when we feel complexes of superiority in respect to others, arrogance arises in us that prevents us from working collectively with other people. In the same way, when we feel inferiority, an impotence and lack of will prevents us from achieving any spiritual progress. I realized the importance of the Tantric concept that everything is a manifestation of God and that nobody in this universe is superior or inferior. I also realized that *kiirtana* is a powerful weapon which establishes a collective consciousness by creating in people a feeling of unity. [Editor's note: A few days after this, Baba explained this idea at length during His second *darshan* in Caracas, included in Chapter Two.]

Soon after this, I was walking by the *jágrti*. When I opened the door, I found two *dádás* doing *kiirtana*. This *kiirtana* created a very strong emotion for me because it seemed that they were dancing in space. That sound became fixed in my mind like a recording, and I didn't want the feeling to end.

Then all the Margis in the *jágrti* became very clashed, because it was announced that Bábá was not able to come to Argentina. In my *sáadhaná* I thought that certainly I was not prepared for His contact.

When I finished my meditation, I did *Guru Pújá* (a *mantra* sung together with *mudrás* by which a devotee offers his or her ego attachments to the Guru). Suddenly I had the sensation that Bábá was looking at me from His photo and smiling. Such a feeling made me very emotional, because the more I looked at the photo of Bábá, the more He smiled at me. A very strong energy vibrated in my *anáhata cakra* and *vishuddha cakra* (psychic center located in the neck), making me cry a lot. After this the presence of Bábá remained inside me.

On the bus back to Brazil, the sensation of His presence was very strong in my mind. As soon as I arrived, I decided to train again to be an LFT in Porto Alegre. In my meditation I frequently felt the presence of Bábá with me. He was not physically present in Buenos Aires, however I could feel that He was there spiritually.

CHAPTER TWO

BÁBÁ IN SOUTH AMERICA: SEPTEMBER 25-27, 1979

Less than a year after His release from prison and the conclusion of His historic fast, Bábá began a series of three world tours. On the third journey, one of the last stops, the farthest-most point from India, was in South America. This account is compiled from the personal recollections of eleven of those who were there with Bábá and two audio cassettes. It is followed by the text of Bábá's discourses, and some more personal impressions.

The Visit to Caracas

When the Margis of Venezuela learned in 1979 that Bábá would visit Kingston, Jamaica to meet the Margis of North America, they sent telegrams to Calcutta inviting Him to visit Caracas, too. Though the unit there was only a year old, several hundred people had been initiated and many were meditating regularly. Units had also been started in Valencia and San Cristobal, and the Margis organized food distribution, medical camps and a temporary kindergarten.

Bábá arrived in Kingston on September 20, 1979. There He gave DMC and two *darshans*. From there He was scheduled to fly to Buenos Aires, Argentina. Dádá Rámánanda told Bábá that the Margis of Buenos Aires were trying to obtain a visa for Him. He just smiled and said, "Let them try. If everything goes OK, then I will go. But the possibility is less."

"Why, Bábá? They are approaching the government for permission."

Bábá explained, "The Indian Embassy with the help of Interpol is creating confusion." The United States government had already refused to grant Bábá a visa on the grounds that He was a "revolutionary." Unfortunately, the Argentinean government was influenced by this and so

they also refused to grant Bábá a visa.

On September 24 He called the *ácarya* assigned to Venezuela and said, "You should take me out of Kingston to Caracas today."

He replied, "But, Bábá, You are scheduled to fly tomorrow, not today."

"If you want me to go to Caracas, I am giving you today as the deadline."

Dádá then found that there was no direct flight that day. The only possibility was to take a flight to Miami and transit there, boarding another flight to Caracas. When Bábá heard this He said, "I don't want to touch the U.S. territory."

"No, Bábá, you will only be in the transit lounge of the airport."

"Not even a dust particle of U.S. territory should touch my foot," He insisted. "You solve the problem. You have solved problems of my workers in the past. Now you solve this problem."

So that afternoon Dádá telephoned to Caracas and directed them to contact one Margi who had a private plane. Soon they called back to say that it was in a hangar in Miami under repair. So Dádá told them to hire a plane immediately. "If you want the Lord to come, you have to send a plane today."

"But, Dádá, a plane for Carlota Airport will be very expensive! Do you know how much it will cost?"

"I don't know. But I know how much it costs to move the Lord from one place to another. This is beyond economics. I need an answer in 30 minutes!"

Before the half hour had passed, the Margis phoned and said, "A plane has been hired and it has already left. It departed at 7:00 p.m. and it will reach Kingston by 11."

When the workers informed Bábá, He was very pleased. "Oh, I see you know how to solve problems. Are my children waiting for me in Caracas?"

"Yes, Bábá, they are very happy You are coming today."

All the Margis who had attended the Kingston DMC went to the airport to see Bábá off. An airport strike by most of the employees meant that the Margis had the entire terminal to use for their farewell celebration. After performing the yogic physico-psychic-spiritual dances of *kaos'ikii*, *t'an'd'ava* and *kiirtana*, followed by *Guru Pújá*, Bábá gave His blessings. Then the party started for the exit to meet the plane sent from Caracas. Margis lined the halls giving their *namaskár*. As they

emerged from the terminal, the plane was taxiing towards them.

Eight people had come with Bábá from India: Dádá Rámánanda (Bábá's Personal Assistant), Dádá Jagadiishvaránanda, Dádá Tapeshvaránanda, Dádá Nityasatyánanda, Dádá Girijánanda, one VSS *dádá*, Didi Ánanda Karuna and Dr. Pathak. In addition, Brother Vishvamitra from the U.S. and the *dádá* who was working in Venezuela went.

The pilot and copilot explained that the small jet could carry a maximum of eight passengers with no luggage.

Dádá said to the pilot, "Do you know who that man in white is? He is like Jesus Christ. And do you know who those in orange are? They are His disciples. You are blessed to put them in your plane. You will be blessed your whole life."

The pilot was inspired, so he allowed everyone to enter the plane. But when they started loading all their luggage aboard, too, he doubted whether the plane would be able to take off. Then Dádá said, "The one who is the pilot is the man in white. You are only the co-pilot."

Then Bábá asked, "What is happening?" Dádá explained that the pilot doubted whether the plane could take off. "And what did you say?" Bábá asked.

"Bábá, I told him that You are the pilot and he is only the co-pilot."

"OK, let him fly and he will feel who the pilot will be."

The flight was very smooth and relaxed. Afterwards the pilot and co-pilot said that they had never before flown their plane so easily.

They landed at Caracas International Airport after midnight on the morning of September 25. Over a hundred Margis were waiting. They were singing *kiirtana* with a Latin rhythm, and the devotional feeling was very high. Vishvamitra felt it sounded like many more voices, as though a celestial choir of luminous beings was singing, too.

Four of the Indian passengers had decided to come at the last minute and had no visas for Venezuela. So Dádá approached the Immigration officers. They had never seen such a devotional crowd, and so late at night. "Who is this group?" they asked. When Dádá explained, they granted them visas, happily.

Then everyone drove to the big rented *jágrti* in Los Chorros where Bábá and the group stayed.

Late that day Dádá Harátmánanda, the Sectorial Secretary for Georgetown Sector, arrived with Janak from Buenos Aires. Janak told Bábá with tears in his eyes, "The Indian government said that this man is

very big and a very attractive personality. If He comes to Argentina, many young people will be attracted to Ananda Marga. So the government refused.”

Then Bábá said sarcastically, “Janak, I am not very big. I’m only five feet two inches tall! Don’t worry. This is the situation, everyone has to face it. In spite of that, you have come and I have met you.”

Some of the Venezuelan Margis were intellectual and some were devotional. When Dádá asked Bábá’s Personal Assistant if the brothers could receive Personal Contact, he was told that only those who had second lesson were eligible. Actually, because all the Margis were new, none of them yet had second lesson. So Dádá gave second lesson as fast as he could and almost 25 Margi brothers received PC.

Didi Ánanda Karuna arranged the sisters for Group Contact with Bábá. In this meeting, Bábá pointed to Abharanii who had come from Bras’lia. He explained the meaning of her *Sam’skrta* name, saying, “Abharanii — why this? ‘Queen of light,’ plentiful light.” Then He blissfully touched her head.

Prior to Bábá’s visit one Venezuelan man had a dream in which Bábá appeared to him and taught him a *mantra* and a process of meditation. Bábá then told him in the dream that he should get his process revised by an Ananda Marga *ácarya*. Later when that man met Dádá and took initiation, the personal *Is’i’a Mantra* that he received was the same as the one Bábá had personally taught him. In Personal Contact Bábá told him, “You are a good boy, but you were led astray. Still you had a little bit of love for me. That’s why I selected you for initiation.”

Bábá told Dádá Nityasatyánanda and some other workers privately, “GT is a big sector, a vast sector with vast potential. It is not poor. It is the richest sector. Some very rich people are there, a lot of money is there. It has a lot of sources of wealth.

“Fifty percent of the world’s oxygen is being supplied by the dense rain forest of the Amazon. It is the lungs of our planet. It is being destroyed by multinational corporations just for the profit motive. If that is destroyed, our whole planet will be destroyed.

“You Proutists should save it. You should start this movement. When you start this movement, you will save the planet, and when you save the planet, you will save humanity.

“The forefathers of these people made some mistakes in the past when they colonized this continent, but we should forgive and forget. These people are nice people. It is they who have established Roman

Catholicism. But the Roman Catholic Church is shaking today. People are becoming poorer and poorer, so many are leaving.

“Communism is taking advantage of this. The people have a great missionary zeal. Ananda Marga should replace this, we should save them. Prout will be accepted like hotcakes here. South America will become a hotbed for Prout.” Then Bábá directed Dádá Jagadiishvaránanda to give a lecture to the Margis on Prout just a few hours after their arrival.

On the evening of the first day, Bábá gave a general *darshan* about “Strata of Human Life.” On the morning of the second day, His *darshan* was “Success in Life.”

When some brothers danced *t'án'd'ava*, Bábá said, “Move forward through clashes and cohesions. If one wants that the life should be peaceful without any struggle, without any battle, this desire won't be fulfilled. Human movement is through fight, through clashes. If you want peace, you will have to establish peace by fighting against those elements of the society who disturb you. This is the rule.

“This *t'án'd'ava* dance represents human life. The skull in the left hand represents death, represents the inimical force. And the knife represents what? -- human stamina. We'll have to fight against death, we'll have to fight against inimical forces. This is the idea. Do you follow?”

That night Bábá gave Dharma Máhá Cakra. The topic of his discourse was “The Path of Salvation.” It was later published in *Subhás'ita Sam'graha Part 19*.

Dádá Tapeshvaránanda was responsible to lead the DMC. He spent three hours trying to train the new Margis, but Dádá could not speak Spanish, and the Margis were overwhelmed by all the spiritual drama taking place around them.

After Bábá's discourse, no Margi remembered to ask Bábá for permission to sing *Guru Pújá*. So Dádá Tapeshvaránanda himself asked Bábá for permission, but He replied, “No the request should come from the Margis.” Then Bábá left the room without doing *barábhaya mudrá*.

Dádá Tapeshvaránanda was very sad and upset. That night he fasted and cried. The next morning he was still upset when Bábá called him and asked, “Tapeshvaránanda, can you arrange a general *darshan* today?”

Dádá immediately agreed and felt this was Bábá's chance to redeem the situation. Bábá's topic was “The Glorious March”, and it was later published in *Ananda Vacanamrtam Part 14*. After the *darshan* one Venezuelan Margi stood up and asked in English, “Bábá, may we do *Guru Pújá*?”

“*Guru Pújá* not now, it is general *darshan*.” Margis were pleading and crying. Finally Bábá nodded His consent and everyone sang together.

Then Bábá recited this blessing:

“Let everybody be happy. Let everybody be free from all ailments. Let everybody see the bright side of everything. Let nobody be forced to undergo any exploitation or suffering.” Finally Bábá gave His historic *barábhaya mudrá*, and the hall was filled with crying and devotion.

Bábá went on field walk to three places: Parque Los Chorros, the Botanical Gardens and the Zoo at Parque del Este.

When Bábá and the small group of *ácaryas* and Margis entered the Botanical Gardens, they descended a few stairs. Bábá held the arm of PA for support and said, “You know they tried to poison Bábá in jail, but they did not succeed, did they? However the poison did impair my eyesight for which I need some assistance.”

The next instant Bábá seemed to demonstrate extraordinary vision when He pointed to a plant about 30 meters away. Bábá told its Spanish name and the Latin names of its species, genus and family. Bábá explained that the Portuguese had brought this plant to Venezuela in the early nineteenth century. He then described its medicinal uses.

A huge cotton tree attracted His attention. This tree was special in that its flowers were golden instead of the usual red. Bábá told Didi Ánanda Karuna to get some of its seeds. She carried the seeds of this plant and others back to India. Eleven seeds of the cotton tree germinated, and Bábá planted one of them with His own hands in His house in Lake Gardens, Calcutta. Today, fifteen years later, it has grown into a huge tree on the right side of the house and is the tallest tree in the neighborhood.

Suddenly Bábá pointed to a fruit tree nearby and said, “That tree has very nice flowers, don’t you think?”

Someone said, “It’s a fruit tree, Bábá.”

“But those things hanging on the tree are flowers. What are my workers saying? That Bábá cannot see very well. So is it fruit or flowers?”

“Fruit, Bábá.”

“OK, one of you go and bring one of the flowers to me.”

So Dr. Pathak went over and brought back one of the brown fruits and gave it to Bábá. Very gently He broke the skin open, and there inside was a beautiful flower! Then he explained that this was an example of an internal flower instead of an external one. The fig is similar, having a

type of flower inside the fruit.

Some Margis who were professors of botany at the University of Caracas accompanied Bábá. They used to give informal classes to the other Margis there before this visit. Bábá spoke about the bodhi tree there. He asked them its Latin name, and they were ashamed because they did not know. Then He told them, and He also explained its history and medicinal properties. He did the same for several other plants. They thought Bábá only knew about the spiritual world. Afterwards they said, "He is an open book of botany!"

Bábá complimented the garden official who accompanied them for the beautiful condition of the garden and the diversity of its plant life. Bábá reminded the group of the mutual benefits of human and plant culture.

Finally they came to a waterfall and Bábá requested to sit for a while. Vishvamitra had been carrying Bábá's chair, so he placed it under the trees on a lovely stone terrace above the pool created by the waterfall.

Vishvamitra began wondering how such a large volume of water was pouring off a small hill with no apparent watershed. He had seen the same phenomenon years before in Ireland. Suddenly Bábá looked at him and asked, "My son, do you know the sources of water for waterfalls?"

"Bábá, I know some sources: watershed from rain and snow, and underground springs."

"Yes, those are two sources. What is the third source?"

"I don't know, Bábá."

"In an area where there are small undulating hills, [He motioned in an undulating fashion with His hands], and the water is high, the water forces its way through the surface of the ground at the highest point. This is called the artesian principle. Do you understand now, my son?"

"Yes, Bábá." He smiled, and Vishvamitra felt enveloped in bliss. It was only later that he realized the deeper significance of this encounter. He had always wondered if Bábá witnessed every thought and event in his life. In this small exchange, Bábá had demonstrated very sweetly and privately that He does.

During field walk at the Zoo in Parque del Este, Bábá stopped in front of the enclosure of the elephants and explained:

"Elephants in this world are now of two varieties, africo and indica, that is African varieties of elephants and Indian varieties of elephants. African varieties are taller and cannot be tamed. It is too wild to be tamed. Indian varieties are a bit smaller, and it can be tamed. And in the eastern

portion of India there is a smaller variety of elephant of grayish color, and that grayish color becomes whitish in Burma and Thailand. In Thailand you get a few whitened elephants.

The group entered the reptile house, and Bábá asked the Margis the names of certain ones. He asked Vishvamitra the name of a snake he knew, and when he answered correctly, Bábá said, "My son knows so much about reptiles!" Bábá also praised the knowledge of the Venezuelan Margis when they knew the names of other reptiles.

He explained, "That is the lizard, ordinary house lizard. They are related to the dinosaurs, those big animals. They also lay eggs and belong to a distant group of dinosaurs, known as caucasicus. I told there are varieties of animals — crocodile, alligator, all come within the scope of lizards, that is called caucasicus group.

"When I was a little boy, a boy of 19 or 20, I took much interest in botany and biology, particularly the plants and animals. Dinosaurs are extinct, they are fossilites, skeletons. They are no more in this world.

"They say after thousands of years there will be no man in this world. Men from other planets may come and see the fossilites, their life history. That there was a true child of this planet named man. They were educated, they were intelligent, they lived and built palaces, buildings, cities, but who have now become extinct due to internal disunity and infighting. Do you want that the history should be written like this?"

"No, Bábá."

"Then place the prospects of humanity to everyone — soon."

They stopped at a pond with many small alligators. Bábá said, "Amongst crocodiles are alligators. Most of these fall within the scope of alligator. Bigger belly and shorter size. The smaller variety do not attack man, they won't attack a big gentleman."

The Margis told Dádá that in Venezuela these animals are called *baba*. Bábá asked, "What are they telling you?"

"Bábá, the indigenous people call them *baba*."

"But Bábá is not so dangerous. Do you know the difference between those *babas* and this Bábá? They are totally different. This Bábá in front of them is not harmful. He is loving and He cares for every one of them, while those *babas* down there are totally opposite, the opposite of this Bábá." Everyone started laughing.

Then He pointed to an egret bird standing beside an alligator with its mouth wide open. He explained, "This alligator and the bird have an agreement between them. The bird picks the meat from between the

alligator's teeth and no harm comes to the bird."

They stopped at the enclosures housing the lions and tigers. He asked, "To what family do these animals belong?"

Vishvamitra replied, "Bábá, they both belong to the feline or cat family."

"Can it be that this primarily solitary animal and this animal which runs in prides [small groups] belong to the same family?"

Bábá then pointed out the distinguishing characteristics of the feline family: round skull, hunts and lives alone, climbs trees, etc. This He contrasted with the characteristics of the lion: angular head and jaw, hunts and lives in groups, not a good tree climber, etc. Bábá then pointed to the lion and said, "This is a member of the canine family." He then commented on the continuum between cats and dogs in evolution.

When they passed the seals and sea lions, Bábá explained that such animals search underwater for food. The sound that they make when they finally come up for air is "Ahhh". Bábá said that this important sound then became the first letter in the alphabet.

"Whales were once land animals, now they are sea [animals]. Whales are mammals. They get mother's milk. All these animals with rudimentary flippers once had larger limbs and lived on land. They evolved back into the sea to escape predators."

Vishvamitra then remembered the endangered species of whales and asked, "Bábá, will whales survive on this planet?"

Bábá looked into his eyes and said, "Someday, my son, people with blue eyes and blond hair will be extinct!"

One Margi asked if there was a chance that earthquakes could cause Venezuela to disappear. Bábá replied, "There is no problem of earthquakes caused by volcanoes, because there are no volcanoes here. The only problem is if there is a world planetary calamity, Venezuela will be affected by high tides because of its low coast."

On that last day, Bábá called all the *ácaryas* into His room. He said, "I would like to tell you something that many of you have in mind. Why did I come here to Venezuela? I will reveal to you things I have in mind that you may not know.

"I came because of this boy," [He pointed to the *dádá* working in Venezuela]. "I promised to be with him physically whenever he invites me. This promise I made to him many years ago in Manila, and now I am fulfilling it. He knows I fulfill my words."

The Venezuelan Margis were very happy with Bábá's visit. At the

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airport, when leaving on the 27th evening on the Lufthansa flight for Germany and then India, Bábá said, "The visit to Caracas is something significant. Venezuela is a blessed country. Venezuela needs good spiritual, political leaders. If Venezuela could produce spiritual political leaders, it wouldn't only be the leader of Latin America, it would be the leader of the planet. Venezuela is a blessed country."

"My sons and daughters, it is your duty to accelerate the process of creating spiritual political leaders. I leave it upon you, and you have my blessing."

The Margis said, "We love you, Bábá."

Bábá said, "Your Bábá also loves you too much."

Notes of Bábá's First Darshan: "Strata of Human Life"

On the evening of the first day, Bábá gave a darshan in English. No cassette or copy is available, however a Spanish translation was found. This is therefore a close approximation of what Bábá said, but should not be taken as completely accurate.

You know, in our universe, nothing is static, nothing is stationary, everything moves. Movement is the order of nature. Movement is the order of knowledge. Where there is no movement, there is no beginning of life. Immobility means complete death. This physical world, in all its five fundamental factors, is always moving and nothing in the universe can be separated from this collective flow.

In the human structures, in the small protoplasmic cells, there is internal movement. In the collective forms of the protoplasm, in the metazoic structure, the intermetazoic spaces are always increasing or decreasing and in this way, there is movement.

In our mind, such structures move internally and create external pressure in other microcosms and also create a commotion in the Supreme Macrocosmic structure. Nothing is static, nothing is stationary. In this way, in the spiritual sphere, the path never ends. It begins at one extreme in the least subtle form of the Macrocosm and moves along the eternal path of blessedness.

This is the system, in the small sphere of the atom as well as in other material structures. Mars moves with its satellites — Drumos and Fobos. The sun and all its planets move in eternal space. Nothing is without movement.

In the human structure, in all the living structures, in the case of all animate objects, there is constant movement. Your mind is attached to physical portions of the body, nerve fibers, nerve cells to which everything is connected. This is your physical movement. Your physico-psychic body associated with your physical body moves.

Then your second movement is your psychic movement. Your first movement is your physical movement, the movement of the nerve fibers, of the nerve cells. The second movement is your psychic movement.

The third movement is your psycho-spiritual movement, that begins in the psychic sphere and moves toward the spiritual self. And the subtleness of the fourth movement is your psychic movement and your psychic progress. This psychic movement is not only a movement of hu-

man beings but is the movement of all living beings, of all animals and of all plants which move psychically. In this psychic movement, the human minds can move from one point to another, a projection converted into another projection, a psychic matrix transmuted into another matrix or psychic matrices. However, in the case of plants, this psychic movement is nothing but innate instinct. In the case of subdeveloped animals, the movement is nothing but innate instinct. They move by instinct, there is no autonomous thinking. In the case of undeveloped animals, there is a small touch of autonomous thought and in the case of humans, they can think anything and everything.

This is the specialty of human beings — autonomous thinking. And when this is strangled, impeded or refrained by something internal or external, this impeding entity is a dangerous entity for human progress. When human psychic growth is stopped in this way, this restriction that has impeded human ideas or thinking or human projections can be called dogma. The progress of human society must be always free from all types of dogmas; otherwise human progress will go backwards forever. Human progress will be blocked forever.

The third human progress is psycho-spiritual progress. What is psycho-spiritual progress? We obtain pleasure from our spiritual progress or through our psychic approximations or through different types of psychic projections, either internal or external. Depending on the subtleness of the object of projection, the more blissful or happy it will be. In this way, each and every human being must move towards this psycho-spiritual progress. This is the special realm of the human beings. No animal can have this psycho-spiritual progress.

The best is spiritual progress. When the psychic body of the intellectual person directs itself towards this spiritual progress, this summit, this goal of human propensities; when it marches towards the knowledge and finally becomes one with the highest wisdom within this kingdom of eternal knowledge — this is spiritual progress. A spiritual aspirant must always remember that within himself or herself there is a happy blending of progress in all the four spheres: physical, psychic, psycho-spiritual and spiritual.

Recently I said, perhaps in Israel or in Turkey, that among these four types of progress, the physical and the psychic are objective in nature and the psycho-spiritual and spiritual are subjective in nature. That is, in the human beings, there are two important options of progress: the objective and the subjective.

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In this world, you require food, medicine, shelter, education and so many other things. A healthy economic structure requires a life free from exploitation. You need things for the healthy maintenance of your physical body and to maintain the proper order of the objective level. You cannot ignore it, you cannot negate your necessities. You should carry out your duty in this objective sphere and at the same time, you must not forget that you are a glorified human being. You have to elevate yourself to the excellence of human glory, to the greatness of humanity. In this way, your progress in the psycho-spiritual sphere must go forward without barriers.

In this kingdom of psycho-spiritual movement, human beings cannot tolerate any barriers. Also you should remember that your original source is the Supreme Father. He is the Causal Matrix, the Supreme Origin, the culminating point of all your movements.

In this way, your energies, all your tendencies must be goaded towards this Supreme Entity, *Parama Purus 'a*, the Supreme Father, who created everything. Therefore I must say that yours should be a happy blending of objective and subjective worlds. Ours is a subjective approach with objective adjustment, towards the subjective goal of the Supreme. This is the blissful blending of the objective and subjective worlds. If this blissful blending is achieved, it will create a human society: there is no alternative. A subjective approach is the important question but while you move towards the subjective end, you must maintain an adjustment with the objective world. There is no other alternative and this goal, when the human society is established in the Supreme Idea in the very near future, will produce a more constructive human society. The humanity of the universe will unite and we await anxiously that happy moment.

Caracas, September 25, 1979.

Notes of Bábá's Second Darshan: "Success in Life"

On the morning of the second day, Bábá gave another darshan in English. Again only the rough Spanish translation was found.

Last night I said something different about the strata of human life, the different aspects of life. Now there is an eternal question about success in life. People think many things but do not achieve success and some people attain it but only for a short time. What is the eternal secret? Some achieve success and others not.

Lord Shiva was the propagator of the cult of yoga. I don't mean the philosophy of yoga because the propagation of yoga philosophy was done by Ananda Marga. Before this, during the time of Shiva, there was a cult, that is, a practice.

You see, a person can never be ruled by any type of complex, that is, the spiritual aspirant must be free from all types of complexes — superiority complex, fear complex, defeatist complex, and inferiority complex. That is, the mind must be completely balanced. In reality, the question made by Párvatii to Shiva — Párvatii was his first wife — was, "What are the secrets of success?" And Shiva responded that there were seven secrets.

There must be in the spiritual aspirant a firm determination to reach success in his or her mission. Firm determination is the first quality, the first practical point. If a person is doing something but does not have a firm determination, including the thoughts of his or her mind, success will never be achieved. There should be firmness of determination to attain success. This is the first secret of success. (Oh, you understand English. Even those who don't understand, understand a little.)

The second secret is that a person must respect his or her own path. One should have reverence for your Guru. I do not need to explain this. One should be free from all complexes.

Good control helps the spiritual aspirant have a balanced mind. One should stop eating much, sleeping much, drinking much — these weaknesses do not help an aspirant. One should have a balanced life. One must know how to control oneself.

One should take balanced food, that is, not too much nor too little. It should be substantial, should be subtle or at least mutative in nature. For family people, it shouldn't be static. The food should be balanced because from the food that we eat is created the cells of our body. Every-

thing we eat makes the cells of our bodies and mind. The mind is a collection of so many cells, so if you eat static foods or if you eat more subtle food, your mind will also be of this nature. Your mind will be regenerated if you eat adequate and balanced food.

In reference to this, Lord Shiva advised that you should have a balanced mind. What is a balanced life? The human mind has two principal duties: one is to think and the other is to remember. One, to think, and the other — remember? — have a good memory. What is appropriate thinking and what is appropriate memory? If thinking is appropriate and memory is appropriate, all thoughts are appropriate and then I say that a person is free from all complexes.

Now these two attributes, thinking and remembering, are related to each other. What you see now and you have seen before in the external and objective world are reflected one in the other. As a result of this reflection, coming first, from the nerve fibers, and second, from the nerve cells, a type of impression is created in the mental plate. When the impression is recorded, we feel the existence of this external object. You see? This is thinking and the second part of the movement is when these synchronized waves of the human mind are refracted on the mental plate; they are kept or return to the mental plate.

Now when you suffer from some complex of superiority, you think that you are a better person than others and the others are worse. As a result of this, you become incapable of accepting external waves in an appropriate manner. In this way, your thoughts are contaminated, are distorted and as a result of this, many other mental processes like memory, become deformed and weakened.

You should not have any superiority complex. You should learn that you are not superior to anyone. All are the children of the Supreme Father, all are descendants of the same Supreme Creator. Nobody is superior to anyone.

The second complex is inferiority complex. For example, some people think, "I am an ordinary person," or "I am black," and see other people as very big or very important. What happens is that there is not a correct expression in their minds. There are not correct emanations of their thought waves. And as a result of this, the thinking will be distorted and the refracted thoughts that reside in the memory will be reflected again.

The same thing happens with fear complex from which people sometimes suffer. This psychology is due to the presence of something stron-

ger or due to the presence of something imaginary that is also stronger, but, in reality, is not. What happens is that your mental discrimination is blocked. You cannot find your own form of expression as a result of these thoughts.

Constantly repeating such thoughts, a person that suffers this complex cannot think correctly. You must not do this and if the thought is received in the imaginary plane, it will be reflected. So you should not suffer from any fear complex.

Why should you suffer from fear complex or inferiority complex when the Supreme Father is your father, when you are all children of the same Father? Why should you suffer inferiority or fear complex when you are under the care of the Lord? The All-powerful Father, the Omnipotent, is with you to help you, so you should not have a psychology of weakness, or inferiority complex or fear complex. He is always with you to help. You are never alone.

Sometimes a defeatist complex arises. "Oh, I feel defeated with this project," or "Oh, I feel defeated in this struggle for existence." Such suffering or such psychology sometimes happens. "I am defeated, I am defeated in the struggle for existence." You must have heard this type of psychology.

When your father is the Supreme Father, when your father is the strongest entity in the entire universe, why should you think that you have been defeated in the struggle for existence? No, a brilliant future awaits you. Your future is glorious, your future is luminous, your future is effulgent.

So you should not suffer from a psychology of helplessness or desperation. This defeatist complex, in other words, should be called a "sinners complex". A person can always think, "I am a sinner, I am a sinner". If one thinks in this way, one day really he or she will be converted into a sinner. In reality, he or she is not a sinner but if one continues like this, he or she will be converted into a sinner because the characteristic of the human mind is to take the form of its object.

When a person says, "Oh Lord, I am a sinner, I am a sinner," he or she will be converted into a sinner by this psychology. You should never think that you are sinners. You may think that you were sinners in the past but from this moment, you should think, "I am in the lap of the All-powerful Father and I cannot be a sinner. I cannot be a sinner. I am not a sinner, I am sitting in the lap of the Supreme Father, I am not a sinner." Thus said Lord Shiva.

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Now even if a person is a great sinner, and other sinners say that he or she is a bad person, still, for this great sinner, the future is not dark. On the contrary, it will also be very brilliant in the lap of the Supreme Father. "I am in the lap of my Father, I cannot be a sinner." Suppose that you are walking along a road and your clothes get dirty, get muddy. Then should you think that they will remain dirty forever? If you appear before Him with dirty clothes, He will brush off your clothes and take you on His lap and say, "Oh my child, your clothes have become dirty, but you are my child, come here, come closer, come closer. You can sit on my lap. You are my child, you should not suffer like a sinner.

So if, in the past, you were sinners, forget about it. Remember that from this very moment, you are the pure and clean children of the Supreme Father. Therefore, you must not have any sinner complex. So for the spiritual aspirant, there should not exist any complex. Free yourselves from all complexes! Move along the path of righteousness with a balanced mind, with a mental balance and you will attain a brilliant future.

Caracas, September 26, 1979

Bábá's DMC Discourse in Caracas: "The Path of Salvation"

The subject of today's discourse is 'The Path of Salvation.' As you all know, everything moves. Humans will have to move. Nobody can remain stationary and life represents that movement. There must be movement in human life.

As in all strata of life, in our physical stratum we'll have to face, we'll have to solve so many problems, and in the physical stratum also the goal is the Cosmic welfare, the Supreme welfare. As this physical stratum, however, is a creation of three fundamental relative factors, and these factors are also moving, there cannot be any permanent goal or permanent point of stagnation in this realm.

Really speaking, there cannot be any progress in the realm of physicality nor in the psychic arena. You are moving, solving one problem, a few more problems will be created and so on. But human beings cannot remain idle. They will have to move forward.

In psychic stratum also, so many psychic knots are unknotted but so many psychic problems are again created. If there is no proper adjustment amongst physical, psychic and spiritual movements, the psychic side of humans will get unbalanced and so many new and newer psychic diseases will get created. This is the present position of the world. There has been enough physical progress, less spiritual progress and the psychic structures of humans have lost their equilibrium, rather their equipoise, and that's why the modern society is suffering from so many psychic ailments.

Really speaking there cannot be any true progress in the psychic arena. Progress can be only in the spiritual level, because the spiritual goal, the spiritual desideratum of the humans is beyond the periphery of the fundamental factors -- spatial, temporal and personal. So a person, a wise person is to move on towards the spiritual goal. While moving along the path of beatitude, he or she will do his or her physical and psychic duty properly. This is the true path.

Now, everything moves and that movement is of systaltic nature. Wherever there is any movement there is pulsation. Without pulsation there cannot be any movement. And this pulsation, that is movement through speed and pause, is an essential factor for each and every animate and inanimate object. Wherever there is existential factor there must be this pulsation. An entity acquires strength and stamina, during the pause phase, and emanates vibration during the speed period. Hence there

cannot be any absolute speed or absolute pause in the created world.

For a proper or a well-knit structure, there must be one nucleus and there must be many entities moving around that nucleus. Starting from the very little atom to this vast cosmological order, the same movement is there around a nucleus. Hence in the middle there is the nucleus and everybody moves around it and always the path is to some extent elliptical. I said "to some extent" because it is not actually elliptical. In the case of atoms, electrons are moving. In case of our ethereal order, the moon moves around the earth. In case of our solar system so many planets are moving around the sun, and in the Supreme Cosmological Order, *Parama Purus'a* is the nucleus and everybody is moving around Him.

Now the fundamental difference between this cosmological order having *Parama Purus'a* as the nucleus and other orders, is that in all other orders the movement is physical and the nucleus is also physical. In the case of this Cosmological Order, however, the nucleus is spiritual with all the potentialities of psychic and physical expression, and the moving entities are physical having psychic and spiritual pabula. That is, when one moves, he or she not only moves physically but moves along with his or her psychic structure and spiritual structure also.

When asked by his disciples, Lord Buddha said that the proper style of movement should be according to a definite system and in that definite system there should be eight fundamental factors.

Another thing I should say here, while moving around the nucleus two forces are at work — one is centripetal and one is centrifugal. The centripetal force is called *Vidyá Shakti* or center-seeking force. Those moving with *Vidyá Shakti* get inspiration to move towards the nucleus. The other is centrifugal or drifting away from the center. This movement always increases the radius, and where *Vidyá* is more strong the radius is always reduced until finally the moving entity becomes one with the nucleus. This is salvation -- becoming one with *Parama Purus'a*, becoming one with the Supreme Faculty.

Now, how to decrease the radius? That is, how to strengthen the *Vidyá Shakti*? That is a spiritual secret. Lord Buddha says, there are eight factors. Those factors will help the spiritual aspirant in lessening the length of the radius.

The first is *Samyak Darshan* or proper philosophy. One must know what one is and what is one's goal. A goal-less march is meaningless, mere wastage of time and energy. So the aspirant must know who he or she is and what is the goal, what is his or her destination. When moving

along the road, if you don't know what is your destination, your energy is wasted. So you should know what is your goal and this is called Samyak Darshan in Sam'skrta.

The second important factor is Samyak Sam'kalpa. A person must have firm determination that, "I am to reach the goal, I must reach there." This second item is known as Samyak Sam'kalpa -- proper determination.

The third one is Samyak Vák. All your expressions, sensory or motor movements must be of a definite order ; they must be properly oriented. That is, your nerve fibers, all your nerve cells must always be properly utilized.

Then the fourth one is Samyak Ajiiva, proper physical and psychic occupation. One may earn money by stealing but it is not called a proper occupation. One may earn money by gambling but it is also not a proper occupation. One's occupation should be pure. It must not go against the interest of the collective body.

The human being is a social creature. In the universe, in the world of living beings, there are two kinds of creatures: one is social, the other is non-social. Human beings are social, lions are social, and there are many other animals who live together. There are certain creatures. who are non-social. Tigers are non-social, goats are non-social. Human beings are social creatures.

You see, I never say that human beings are social animals. Old logicians used to say that humans are rational animals. I never say they are rational animals. I say that human life is an ideological flow. Why should I say humans are rational animals? Then should I say that animals are moving plants? I should not say this.

So humans are social creatures and nobody should be allowed to go against the collective interest of the society. It is the fundamental factor for neat and clean behavior. So the fourth factor is Samyak Ajiiva. That is, you must have proper occupation — your occupation must not go against the collective interest of the society, not only in the realm of physicality, but in the psychic sphere also you should have a proper psychic pabulum. That is, your thought waves should be properly directed, otherwise today's deteriorating thought may be translated into tomorrow's deteriorating action. One first thinks, then does accordingly. So thoughts should be pure and properly directed.

The fifth item is Samyak Vyayam. It means proper exercise. You do so many physical exercises, engage in so many sports and pastimes

for the development of physical health and it is a necessity, rather a dire necessity for a living society. But most people neglect the exercise of their mind and spirit. Human existence has got three parts, three important and inseparable portions: physical body, psychic body and spiritual body. So there must be proper exercise of not only the physical body but also the psychic and spiritual bodies. *Samyak Vyayam* denotes proper physico-psycho-spiritual exercise.

Then the sixth one is *Samyak Karmanta*. Whenever you start a work you should complete the work with proper zeal and proper sincerity; the finish should be of perfect order. Starting a particular work but leaving it unfinished is not good. When you have started any work, you must finish it properly. Let there be so many troubles, so many dangers, so many adversities, but when you have started it, complete it neatly.

Then the seventh is *Samyak Smrti*. It means proper memory. What is memory? *Anubhuta visaya samprá onosah smrtih*. When you felt one thing in your mind, perceived something or conceived something, and when afterwards with your mental force you recreate that thing in your mind, that process of recreation is called memory. For this memory, for the cerebral memory we require nerve fibers and nerve cells as the medium. Memory of this life may be carried over to the next life, but the nerve cells of this life won't be carried over to the next life because nerve cells will become one with the earth. Then how is memory of one life carried over to another life? It is due to extra-cerebral process. In this process one of the factors of this quinquemental world serves as the medium.

Here *Samyak Smrti* means proper *Smrti*, that is, proper memory. You should remember the proper thing which deserves remembering. And what is that? You know you are to do *japa* [repetition] of your mantra always. While doing meditation you do it. While doing worldly duties, while attending to mundane duties, you should also remember your mantra mentally. Generally you forget it. You are so much disturbed and so much engaged in the work that work takes the prominent role and your own incantation becomes less important. When by dint of constant practice you don't forget this mantra, you don't forget this incantation, it is *Samyak Smrti*. This is proper memory.

The last one is *Samyak Samádhi*, that is, proper suspension of mind. What does that mean? When one sincerely meditates on a particular object, one's mind gets attached and that attached mind gets suspended in that object. Now when *Parama Purus'a* is the object of meditation,

what happens? When the mind gets attached you become one with Parama Purus'a . That suspension of mind in Parama Purus'a is called salvation. This is the eight fold path.

Now each and every living being is moving not only with the physical body but also with the psychic and spiritual body, they are moving around the Supreme hub. Now, if they remember that their goal is the Supreme Nucleus -- Parama Purus'a -- what will happen? The length of the radius will go on decreasing and decreasing, and when it becomes zero, the moving entity will become one with the nucleus. It is the path of salvation. When one's mind is not properly subjectivated, i.e., when one gets attached to only matter, one may be reduced to the status of quinelemental objects like earth, stone, sound, etc. When mind is properly subjectivated the human entity becomes one with the goal, one with the Supreme Entity and he or she will attain salvation; and when it is not properly subjectivated what happens?

The radius goes on increasing and increasing, but it can never go beyond the periphery of the Supreme Entity. It is drifted away from the nucleus but it remains within His cosmological structure. Now, it is not the path of salvation. But how then can one be with the Supreme? The final word is, by the grace of the Supreme. You may say if I do not get His grace how can I go towards Him? The reply is simple. His grace is for all -- both for virtuous and non-virtuous. All are His children. Nobody is unimportant, nobody is insignificant.

The thing is that somebody realizes that grace and somebody does not. Why does somebody realize the grace and somebody not? The reason is that while moving along this path around the Supreme Nucleus in the cosmological arena, if one holds the umbrella of ego over one's head, what happens? Suppose it rains and you are holding an umbrella over your head, what happens? Will you be drenched by the rain? No. If you want to be drenched you will have to remove the umbrella. Similarly if you are moving around the Supreme Father and holding up the umbrella of ego, you won't be drenched by His grace, and if you remove that umbrella of ego, you will be drenched by His grace and you will feel that His grace is for you.

So the spiritual aspirant must move along these eight-fold factors and also should remember to remove the umbrella of ego from his or her head and be drenched by His grace. You spiritual aspirants, you should remember that Parama Purus'a is always with you and His grace is always with you, and you all are His loving children. You need not de-

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velop any fear complex regarding the Supreme Father. You should remember that He is the Supreme Father. He's always calling you and you should always be ready to give a proper response.

25 September, 1979 Caracas, published in Subhás'ita Sam'graha Part 19.

Bábá's Third Darshan in Caracas: "The Glorious March"

I have told you so many times that no person should encourage any sort of complex -- neither superiority complex, nor inferiority complex, nor fear complex nor sinner's complex. You should always remember that you are children of the Supreme Father, you are children of the Parama Pita. You are not at all inferior to anybody. You must not forget this Supreme Truth even for a single moment.

From this very moment forget all your past mistakes. You know, to err is human. Human beings do work and whoever does work may commit mistakes. So forget all your past mistakes, all commission and omission mistakes, and start your life afresh as an ideal child of Parama Pita, an ideal child of Parama Purus'a. Yours should be a glorious march towards the Supreme Goal, and you should remember that you are not to pause for a moment during this movement.

The entire humanity is anxiously waiting for you, for your service. You will have to shoulder a great responsibility for the suffering humanity. You know, actually humanity bleeds, and you will have to save them. You should remember that if you do not help humanity, who else is to come and shoulder the responsibility? It is you -- you are to do everything. You are the torch-bearers of human civilization. You are the pioneers of human march, and you are the vanguard of a new civilization.

27 September, 1979, Caracas, published in *Ánanda Vacánámrtam* Part 14.

Dádá Harátmánanda

In early 1979 for the first time I was posted to work outside India, in Manila Sector. After less than a month there, Bábá called me back to India and posted me as the new Sectorial Secretary of Georgetown Sector.

When I flew there, I really had no idea how far away South America was or what it was like. When I finally reached the rented apartment on the 11th floor in the building in São Paulo that served as our Sectorial Office, I discovered that the LFT's there, like most South Americans, spoke no English. If I asked for food, they showed me the toilet, and if I asked for paper, they brought me a cucumber. So I decided to keep asking for things and they kept bringing different things and in this way I gradually saw everything that was there!

I wondered how I was going to find money to pay the bills. Nirainjana, the Bhukti Pradhán, told me a previous dádá used to bring shoes from Uruguay and sell them in Brazil to raise money for the office.

Then I remembered that Bábá had talked to me a lot about cooking. During my Senior Ácárya examination, He asked me how to prepare different dishes and explained many secrets of kitchen recipes. So with Nirainjana we found a large festival nearby and we all went. Though my preparations of Indian vegetarian dishes were probably not up to Indian standards, partly because some spices and ingredients were not available, I creatively substituted other ingredients so that the dishes were tasty.

So I fried pokoras and other Indian dishes, and the LFT's sold them as fast as I could make them. We sold thousands of servings, and the journalists there were so impressed by the "yogi vegetarian cook" that they interviewed me for their publications. In this way we raised enough to pay our bills and a little extra.

Then after about a month I received news that Bábá would visit Buenos Aires in South America. So I went there to prepare for His arrival.

After only a few days we received news that the Argentinean government refused to give a visa to Bábá, so He would only visit Venezuela in South America. All the Margis were clashed. An air ticket to Caracas cost US\$500, but though I asked all the Margis, I could not get donations to pay for the ticket. One Margi, Janak, agreed to go to Caracas, but he had no extra money.

After three days of frantic searching, I received a phone call from

Dádá Jagadiishvaránanda. He had just arrived in Caracas with Bábá's party and he asked when I was coming. I had no way to go, so all I could do was cry on the phone. Then I went to my room and locked the door and cried.

Suddenly a knock came on the door. I opened it and found a brother I had not met before. He said his name was Iishvara and he wanted to donate US\$500.

I got nervous. I thought he probably did not know that Bábá's trip to Argentina was canceled. When I told him, he still said he wanted to donate this money.

I got more nervous. He probably wanted to give the amount for some specific purpose. Still I felt I had to try. So I asked, "Brother, would you mind if I used this money to fly to Venezuela to meet Bábá?"

"Dádá, this donation is for you. Use it as you like."

I thanked him with all my heart and ran to buy a ticket. The airlines told me there was no seat, but I could try to go "stand-by" at the airport. Then I rushed to the Venezuelan Embassy to get a visa.

The secretary told me that as India and Venezuela had no diplomatic relations, it would take a week to get a visa. I pleaded that I only needed permission for three days to see my Guru. Finally she agreed to ask her chief.

She returned smiling and said, "Welcome to Venezuela." My passport had a visa valid for three days.

I raced to the airport to meet Janak. He had a confirmed seat, but I did not. The airline staff told me that if a confirmed passenger did not show up, then they could give me that seat thirty minutes before the departure time.

One passenger did not come, so they gave me a boarding pass. Just then the passenger came running in late. I did not even look at him, but turned and hurried to catch the plane.

When we arrived in Caracas, we took a taxi to the house where Bábá was staying. Dádá Rámánanda met me when I came in the door and said, "Bábá is waiting for you in His room. He said I should send you in the moment you arrive." I thought this was very strange because I had not told anyone I was coming.

I was so happy when I saw Bábá, and He was very sweet. "Come close, my little boy, come close. Jagadiishvaránanda told me in the morning that you were crying on the phone. I felt very sorry because my little guardian is not here and I am in his sector. He loves me very much. If he

cannot come it is very painful.

"I thought I should do something for you. I did not do it. How did you get the money to buy your ticket to come here? Did God give it to you?"

"One Margi gave me a donation, Bábá."

"And what was the name of that Margi?"

"It was Iishvara, Bábá."

"Yes, Iishvara, which means God in Sam'skrta. Yes. It was not sufficient, but was it enough to buy your ticket?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"And the lady at the counter in the Venezuelan Embassy -- it was not me -- did she help you or not?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"I had to do so much to help. You were just about to lose your seat. Wasn't it very good that the last passenger came to the airport just one minute too late?"

"Yes, Bábá." I started to cry, as I realized how much Bábá had helped me.

"I was really in Argentina, working for you until you got the seat. Then I came back to Venezuela.

"Now tell me something. Why did I help you when I didn't help all the others? Is it because I love you more, or is it because you love me more?"

This was a very tricky question. I know I loved Bábá, but I did not think I loved Him more than other Margis. Before I could answer, though, Bábá said, "Now remember, Parama Purus'a loves all equally."

This made me even more confused. I did not know what to answer. Finally I just said, "I don't know, Bábá."

Then He said, "You and they love me equally. The reason I helped you when I didn't help the others was that you love me and you made effort. You are doing your level best, working hard. The person who is working for my Mission, I must help."

I continued crying, deeply grateful for what He had shown me.

Then Bábá said, "You will have to come to Calcutta for RDS every second month."

This was a tremendous shock. How could I afford to fly back and forth around the world every two months? So I tried to say something about the extremely difficult situation of South America.

"I know each and everything of this tiny little world, my boy. In the

rainy season, in a particular muddy hole, if a particular insect is making a sound, 'Click, click, click,' I am to understand if this insect is feeling pleasure or pain.

"Don't be worried, things will be all right. This time Dádá Yatiishvaránanda, the SS of New York, will go on your behalf, but next time you will have to come."

I still tried to object. Then He laughed so deeply and sweetly that I felt that total victory was there in His laugh. Now I realize that everything He said and did was to prepare me to accept this greater challenge and responsibility. Such a negative fellow I was, to doubt in front of that victorious laugh. Then I felt that everything was already arranged and materialized. He told me everything with His smile.

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Janak (Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Editor's note: On October 13, 1995 Janak passed away at the age of 50. One of the first Margis of Georgetown Sector, he was initiated in 1972. He was a pioneer of Ananda Marga in Argentina, built up the Buenos Aires jágri in Flores, and regularly taught yoga asanas and meditation classes there for many years.

During his last year, Janak suffered from cancer of the pancreas. I personally visited him in the hospital eleven days before he died. Though his body was very thin, he grabbed my arm with a strong grip and told me excitedly that Bábá had just come to him in his meditation that day. "Dádá, He was as close to me as you are now! So clear! So clear!"

In his vision, Bábá was standing in a huge bookstore full of Ananda Marga books. Janak asked me where that could be, and I said I thought it must be in the future, because Bábá had indicated that one day our whole Mission would be supported by the sale of our books and medicines.

Then, in the vision Bábá somehow brought Janak from this world to another and back again. He said that he no longer felt nervous about his physical death, that it was time. He was very blissful, even though his body was in pain.

Below is Janak's beautiful account of Bábá's visit to Caracas. I was able to present him a copy of the manuscript and he was happy to know that his experience would soon be available to inspire others.

In 1979 Bábá was to travel to Buenos Aires, but He did not receive a visa for Argentina. Dádá Harátmánanda, the Sectorial Secretary, brought me the sad news that Bábá was not able to come, so he was going to Venezuela instead. When I heard this news I became very unhappy because I had a great desire to see Bábá.

The next day Dádá asked me, "Do you really want to see Bábá?"

I answered with total conviction, "Yes."

"Then let's go together to Venezuela to have His *darshan*."

I asked, "When?"

"In four days we must travel."

"No, Dádá, it's impossible for me to go. I don't have any money to buy my ticket to Venezuela. It's very expensive."

Dádá said, "You don't need to think about money, only think about

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your strong desire to see Bábá. Money surely will come.”

Well, this was my desire. Five days later -- I do not know how it happened -- I was in Venezuela. It created a great clash in my family, because we did not have much money. Before leaving, my sons asked me to bring them a gift of a pair of walkie-talkies, and I promised them I would bring it.

When we arrived in Caracas, we took a taxi and we arrived at the estate called Los Chorros. It was a very expensive neighborhood in a very picturesque city. Many Margis were there, and I really felt close to personally seeing my Guru.

The first day I waited a long time to see Bábá. I had a fantastic expectation of Bábá in my mind, and imagined that he must look like a being from another planet or something. But when I saw Him come out the door, He appeared to me like a normal man. This was very disillusioning for me. After singing *kiirtana*, however, my mind became calm.

I accompanied Bábá on field walk the first day. We went to a national park. When we entered I was walking behind Him down a flight of stairs. Bábá used a cane and an *avadhūta* was carefully showing the stairs to Bábá. I wondered, “What’s going on? Why is this senior monk showing the stairs to Bábá?”

At that very moment Bábá stopped and turned to me and said, “When I was in the jail they poisoned me. Because of this I cannot see very well now.” This was the first time I was deeply touched by Bábá.

We continued through the park with much expectation because Bábá walked slowly and silently. Suddenly He stopped in front of a plant and began to explain its origin, its medicinal properties, its name in Spanish and other languages, and many other characteristics of this plant. I thought that Bábá must know this particular plant very well. But I got a big surprise when we reached the next plant, and He gave another very detailed explanation. In the same way He explained many other plants. Then I realized that this being did not have a normal mind. I had the profound realization that I was in the presence of someone very rare.

My surprise continued the next day when we went to visit the animals in the zoo. There He also spoke about each animal’s origin and characteristics, one after the other. My mind could not assimilate so much information in the presence of what still appeared to me to be a normal human mind. This baffled me internally, but Bábá was prepared to continue baffling my inner being.

When I returned that day I had sixty dollars. It was all my money.

I went to a shop and bought walkie-talkies for my sons that cost \$45. Then I returned to the house. I was sleeping on the floor above where Bábá stayed, and I hid the walkie-talkies behind some books in a bookshelf.

The following morning I did my spiritual practices and then I went to check on the walkie-talkies. To my surprise, they were gone! I felt desperate because I did not have more money. I searched and searched in the room, but they were no longer there. I asked everybody in the house, but no one knew anything. Then I felt very, very sad. I waited for Bábá to go out for field walk, but my heart was broken.

Bábá as usual created a spectacle. The Margis were sweetening His presence with devotional songs. I was allowed to accompany Him by His grace for the third time. We went walking in a lot of places. He was talking, but I could not forget my loss of the walkie-talkies.

When we came back, I was walking just behind Bábá as He entered the house. Suddenly when He raised His right foot I saw something underneath it. Automatically I picked it up and looked around, but nobody had seen what happened. When I looked I was amazed that it was a fifty dollar bill. It appeared beneath the foot of Bábá, but at that time it really did not seem to be something extraordinary. Immediately my sadness disappeared and I went straight to buy another pair of walkie-talkies.

After buying them, I returned to the house. Dádá Harátmánanda asked, "What happened? How do you have the walkie-talkies again? You found them?"

I explained that when Bábá lifted His foot there was a fifty dollar bill underneath it. Then Dádá asked where it went, and I told him I bought another pair of walkie-talkies. Then He said, "You can't do this with a gift from *Parama Purus 'a*."

I said, "I don't know about this. I went to buy them and now I'm happy."

Then I began to understand, because until that moment, I had not realized that anything extraordinary had taken place. When I began to think, my mind became very difficult to control. Something very amazing had happened that was a miracle of Bábá. It was His gift to me, to alleviate my pain, and in this way to realize His presence.

When I returned to Buenos Aires, I had a very powerful experience. I became like a mad man. Some wanted to take me to a psychiatrist, and others wanted to take me to a psychologist, but I did not understand,

because really I did not feel bad at all. What I was feeling was incredibly beautiful. I felt that I wanted to stay in that state forever. It seemed that nobody could understand me, but I felt I could understand everyone, and I felt Bábá's presence in every being around me.

My wife was very afraid so she took me to a psychiatrist who prescribed medicines. When we returned to my house, Dádá Harátmánanda was there. I told him what had happened, and he said, "Don't take any medicines. Throw them away, but you must tell others that you are taking them." I did this, and then I went to live for ten days in the *jágrti*. There I recovered my normal state of consciousness.

Two years later, in 1981, I traveled to India. I went to Lake Gardens in Calcutta and had a great desire to see Bábá again. When He was leaving the house for field walk, many Margis were there. I did *namaskár* but saw that He did not see me. He did not hear or see me though I gave *namaskár* from one side and the other. There were many people in front of me.

Then Bábá turned and walked down the little path through the garden full of plants. When He was about to enter the house, He stopped and asked, "Harátmánanda, do you know when that little boy Janak from Buenos Aires will come to visit me?"

When I heard this I leaped through the crowd and grabbed Bábá's arm. The security guards pulled me away, but Bábá made a gesture and everyone became calm. Then He asked me, "Do you remember in Venezuela how many problems you had? Do you remember how sad you were?"

At that moment I realized who Bábá really is, how powerful He is and how important He is for us in our lives. Bábá demonstrated to me that He knows all about us and He can do anything. From then until now, with His presence, my life is something meaningful.

Vishvamitra (United States)

I met Bábá for the first time when He visited Kingston, Jamaica. After getting Personal Contact there, my desire to be with Him was stronger than ever. Then Dádá Rámánanda requested me to go to the Venezuelan Embassy and obtain visas for Bábá and His party to visit Caracas. At the Embassy, I decided to also apply for myself, in case an opportunity arose to travel with Bábá.

When I returned to Bábá's quarters with the passports and visas, I asked Dádá Rámánanda if I could travel with them on the plane to Caracas. Dádá replied with a very sweet and smiling countenance, "Yes, you may, if the pilot gives his approval." I was surprised and thrilled at his openness to my request. I could only offer my desire to Bábá at that point and wait to see if He would fulfill it.

When Bábá and His group were boarding the plane in Kingston Airport, I finally had an opportunity to ask the pilot if I could go. "No, the plane is already overloaded with the party of ten and their baggage," he said.

Dádá Yatiishvaránanda, my *ácarya*, was standing beside me. He said to the pilot, "You should let him go. He is very light because he's a vegetarian!" The pilot smiled but did not change his mind.

So what to do? I stood there, waiting. When the party was all aboard, the cabin door was open in front of me. A voice inside me said, "Get on the plane." I instantly obeyed the inner command and entered the door with my bag. I sat in the opening to the baggage compartment at the rear of the plane in full view of the aisle to the passenger section.

The co-pilot came down the aisle towards me. He reached in front of me, closed the cabin door, and returned to his seat in front. As the plane began to taxi down the runway, the pilot looked at me in his rear-view mirror and said, "You back there in the baggage area, come take a seat in the cabin to balance the load."

Frightened and relieved, I came forward to find that the only available seat was directly across the aisle from Bábá! He was resting comfortably on some pillows. I felt overwhelmed by His grace. A smooth and blissful current carried us to Caracas through the starry night.

When we arrived, Bábá exchanged greetings with His devotees, we then drove to a big *jágrti* in Caracas. There I stayed with Bábá, His party and the *ácaryas* and Margis from GT Sector. This proximity to Bábá allowed me the maximum chance to be near Him. For me, this was

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the opportunity of my lifetime.

The highlight of my time in Caracas was going on two field walks with Bábá. His mood and disposition during those walks seemed to be that of my dearest friend and most learned teacher. He taught us about the interconnectedness of all life, and what our role is in fostering progress for all animate and inanimate beings. Most of all, these field walks gave us the opportunity to experience the love that Bábá has for the entire universe as our most personal and universal Friend.

One day after Bábá met the workers in His room, one *ácarya* told me that Bábá had mentioned my name when they were discussing cultural differences. According to the *dádá*, Bábá said they could consult with me regarding these matters because I had a good understanding of social dynamics. I took this story as Bábá's affirmation of my role in His Mission.

It is my fervent hope that these stories help illuminate how Bábá guides us in every moment, whether He is physically present or not.

Dádá Svaprákashánanda

I was initiated in my homeland of Colombia. In 1979 I was working in the Bogotá *jágrti* as an LFT. About 7:30 p.m. on the night of September 25 I received a call from a *dádá* in Caracas. He said that Bábá had already arrived that day in the early morning, and if I wanted to see Him I had to go immediately.

Through a series of incredible miracles, Brother Vishok from El Salvador and I managed to get Venezuelan visas and air tickets the next day. We landed at 8:30 p.m., took a bus to the city center and then asked a taxi driver to take us to the house.

To our surprise, the taxi driver drove around in circles without finding the address. It was a residential district, very elegant, but there was no telephone, not even a person on the street whom we could ask for help.

Suddenly the doors of the taxi were opened violently and we saw that we were surrounded by policemen armed with automatic weapons. They acted as if we were the most dangerous anti-social criminals. They ordered us out of the taxi with our hands up and threatened to kill us if we disobeyed. The terror that we felt was really frightening. The political tension between Colombia and Venezuela was then very high because of a territorial dispute in the Caribbean. We were arrested and taken to the Central Police Station.

It was almost midnight when they finally let us go. We took another taxi. However our hopes faded when we saw the second taxi driver also driving around in circles. So we got down in front of an old people's home. The nurses refused to let us spend the night there, so we hid in their garden until dawn.

We met some school bus drivers chatting at the corner. When we asked the address, they pointed to a house just a few steps away that we had passed in front of several times in both the taxis. We were so happy to read a sign in orange letters that said, "Ananda Marga Yoga."

It was the last day of Bábá's visit. He had not given His *barábhaya mudrá* the night before, but would do so that day.

Vishok and I were chosen to go on field walk with other Margis in the zoological garden. The *dádá* working in Venezuela gave me the enormous honor of traveling in the same car that carried Bábá to Parque del Este. In the car, Bábá demonstrated His great interest in the current situation of Colombia. He discussed with me extensively about the type of

political system, whether democracy or dictatorship existed, the literacy rate, the standard of education and much more. Dádá interpreted for me because I did not speak English then.

The walk was unforgettable: the group of *avadhútas* in their brilliant orange uniforms surrounding Bábá. His figure was fragile yet majestic, dressed all in white in traditional Indian dress.

As I followed Him, I kept asking myself, 'But is it possible that He is the incarnation of Shiva and Krs'n'a? How can I know if it is really true?'

Suddenly Bábá stopped, turned, and looked directly into my eyes. I felt very uneasy, because it seemed clear that He had been aware that I was asking myself about Him.

Never before in my life had I seen eyes so sweet. They emanated much love and peace. Then Bábá directed His eyes just above my head and moved them quickly back and forth. I thought, 'Surely He is reading my past lives.' Then He turned again and continued His walk.

When we returned to the *jágrti*, Bábá was very busy giving the last Personal Contacts. When my turn came, I entered and did *sást'aunga pran'ám*. Then Bábá told me to sit. Out of respect and also fear, I sat more than a meter away from Him. Bábá signaled me to come closer. Then Bábá asked the traditional questions about my name, my *ácárya* and my organizational duty. The *dádás* had prepared me well to answer these questions in English.

Finally Bábá signaled me to sit even closer. He touched my *anáhata*, *vishuddha*, *ajina* and *sahasrára cakras* while He recited some *Sam'skrta mantras*. This made me very afraid, and my only desire was to run out of there. Through signs I asked Bábá if I could leave. He looked a little surprised, but smiled and nodded yes. Immediately I left the room, mentally asking Bábá to forgive me because I was not sufficiently prepared to feel His elevated spiritual vibrations.

After finishing the Personal Contacts, Bábá gave His last *darshan*. At the end we all sang *Guru Pújá*. Then Bábá held His hands in the famous position of *barábhaya mudrá*. This made many Margis start to cry or scream or shout, "Bábá! Bábá! Bábá!" Some of their bodies contorted, yet their faces were full of peace.

I was amazed and wondered what they could possibly be feeling that made them shout so uncontrollably. Why did I feel nothing at all except fear? Did I have a heart of stone incapable of perceiving subtle

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spiritual vibrations?

These and many more questions assaulted my mind. I could find no rational explanation at all for this amazing phenomenon. In fact I had to wait eleven years until September 29, 1990 to realize what someone feels when the *kun'd'alini* is elevated by Bábá's *barábhaya mudrá*. It is very difficult to explain in words; it must be experienced when one is spiritually prepared.

When we went to the Caracas Airport to see Bábá off, we all created an amazing spectacle. Many people came and stared and asked us, "Who is that man? Why do you treat Him like God?"

These are the questions that people still ask. The reply must come from within. The more subtle one makes the mind through meditation, the more one can understand who was and who is Bábá. To see God, one must make oneself pure, very pure. What is important is to try, to make effort. That is the spirit of a true spiritual aspirant.

Didi Ananda Karuna

In the house in Caracas where we stayed there was a very nice plant with a beautiful white flower. Bábá named it “*Sheta Keshara*” which means “white hair”.

I used to cook for Bábá. One day He advised me to cook lunch quickly so that I could accompany Him on field walk. So after I served Bábá breakfast that morning, I cleaned the house, cooked quickly and kept the food carefully in the kitchen. I also had to arrange the sisters who would receive group contact from Bábá that day after field walk. After He returned, I cleaned His room quickly and went to attend general *darshan*.

Afterward He returned to His room and said to His Personal Assistant, “I’m hungry, so I want to eat quickly.” But when I went to the kitchen, I was shocked to discover that while we were out the Margis had eaten everything!

I asked one sister to rush to the market and buy some things I needed. In my bag I always kept some rice, *dahl*, spices, etc., so I started to cook these immediately on each of the four burners in the kitchen. Mentally I prayed, “Oh Bábá, please don’t ring Your bell. If you want Your food quickly, I cannot give You anything. Bábá, Bábá, please, please!”

Just when the rice, dahl and fried eggplant were finished, Bábá rang His bell. So I carried those three items into His room. I washed His hands and set the table. Then when I returned to the kitchen, the vegetables were just finished, so I hurried back to Him with that dish.

Bábá said, “Didi, the food is so hot. What happened?”

I told Him what had happened. He said, “You can’t blame the Margis, because they are new.”

Epilogue: The Chair

In 1993, the *dádás* in Caracas learned that one man who had been initiated during Bábá’s visit had the chair that Bábá had sat on. For fourteen years he had no contact with Ananda Marga, but he and his wife had maintained the sanctity of that chair with utmost devotion. After meeting Dádá Cidrupánanda, they agreed to donate it to the Caracas *jágrti* where it now sits in the meditation hall as a symbol of the devotion of the Venezuelan Margis.

CHAPTER THREE

SPIRITUAL ADVENTURES:

1980 - 1983

After His return from Caracas, Bábá never again left India. Just before the trip He had shifted His residence from Patna to a house in the Lake Gardens district of Calcutta. The house was surrounded by a beautiful garden with plants from around the world, including the cotton tree from Venezuela. In His room upstairs, He worked tirelessly, running a global organization. He also started composing hundreds of spiritual songs that later became thousands. These are collectively known as "Prabhát Sam'giita".

To that house, spiritual seekers came from all over the globe. In 1981, Ananda Marga constructed its Central Office buildings a few kilometers away in the Tiljala district of Calcutta. There everyone stayed, traveling back and forth each morning and night to see Bábá and, hopefully, to receive the blissful "Personal Contact".

Far away in South America, Bábá continued His spiritual work, even dramatically saving His followers from death. . .

Dádá Harátmánanda (continued)

During the year following Bábá's visit to Caracas I developed the incense business fairly well. I traveled regularly to India to attend reporting and each time I purchased more incense and brought it back to support our work in the sector.

One day in 1980, Bábá called me into His room to massage Him. He was in a very sweet and generous mood.

He began to talk in a mysterious way that made me confused. He said that I was sixteen years old, when actually I was twenty-six. He said that I loved Shiva very much and I often prayed to Shiva instead of to Bábá, which was true. He asked, "Did you forget the relationship between you and me?"

Finally I realized that Bábá was talking about my previous life. He said that at age sixteen I had been meditating in a Shiva temple and became intoxicated with spiritual bliss. In that divine state, I had left and started to walk home, oblivious of my surroundings. I did not notice a poisonous snake on the path. It bit me and I died there. Later the villagers cremated my body in front of the temple.

Bábá said, "When this little boy who used to love me so much had to die in this way, that same day I promised that I will not let you die at a young age this time.

"I cannot allow this to happen to you again. So I will give you some secret apparatus that you must keep with you and I will teach you a special *mantra*. Together these will save you from death. But you must promise that you will not forget these."

"I'll try, Bábá."

"No, you must promise."

"I'll do my best, Bábá."

"No, you must promise."

"I'll try, Bábá."

We continued like this for several minutes until finally He became very serious and shouted that I must promise to remember these. Reluctantly, I did. Then He taught me the process.

The next day I flew to Asuncion, Paraguay. I arrived on September 18, 1980. No one was in the *jágrti*, so I put down my bags and walked out in my civil clothes to change money and buy some vegetables.

Within a few minutes, an army jeep stopped me. Without any explanation, they arrested me and blindfolded me and drove me to an unknown destination.

Finally the soldiers removed my blindfold. I found myself in a cell with seven other prisoners. There I learned that the day before a famous dictator had been assassinated in Paraguay. It was General Anastasio Somoza, the previous president of Nicaragua, who had been ousted by the Sandinista Revolution. At that time his friend, General Alfredo Stroessner, the then dictator of Paraguay, invited him to come and take asylum there. The day before my arrest some revolutionaries had murdered him.

So the president declared martial law and the military were rounding up many suspects. They held us in a secret military headquarters for questioning.

I stayed in that cell for seven days. We had no rights at all, so I

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could not make a telephone call or contact a lawyer or even change my clothes. No vegetarian food was available. Each day one or two of the prisoners were taken out and did not return. We did not know if they had been released or "disappeared", meaning they had been taken to a lonely place and murdered.

By the last day, I was alone in the cell. Of course I had forgotten to keep with me the apparatus Bábá gave me to save my life.

Finally the soldiers brought me to a room for questioning. I felt the officer in front of me was a very bad man.

He asked me if I spoke Spanish. I lied and said no. Then he pointed to a symbol of the swastika that was lying on the table. He said in broken English, "You know that symbol?"

"Yes."

"You know what it means?"

I thought to myself that this man cannot understand anything very deep, so I said, "It means peace."

"Peace?" he said. "No, it means Nazi. You have swastika." He pointed to the small *pratik* hanging from my neck. "You, Nazi."

I tried to disagree, but without any success. Then the officer asked again, "You don't understand Spanish?"

"No."

Then he started speaking in Spanish to the officer who had brought me in, thinking that I could not understand. He said, "OK, let's kill him."

Just then the telephone rang. I did not know who it was, but from the way the officer spoke, it must have been his superior. The officer said, "Yes, sir, we caught the killer. He's a Nazi and has a swastika. We're going to finish him off now. . . No, sir, he's definitely the assassin. . . But, sir, he's wearing a swastika. . . But I really think. . . All right, sir, if you say so."

He hung up the phone and turned to the officer who had brought me from the cell. "Take him back to the cell."

"What? Take him back?"

"Yes, take him back."

As we walked back to the cell, he said to me, "You very lucky man! Nobody go back to cell from there. Tomorrow your last day."

When I reached the cell I started singing *kiirtana* to a very beautiful tune that I remembered. I thought, "Bábá, I am so grateful that You gave me the chance to serve You in this sacred orange dress. Now let me go back to You." Absorbed in this thought, I prepared myself for death.

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After a short time, one Paraguayan prisoner was brought in. He asked me if I was Indian. When I said I was, he shook his head and said, "You have no chance. They are killing Indians and Argentineans."

When I asked him what he was arrested for, he said, "I was caught murdering someone. I'll be released in two hours."

"You murdered someone and you think you'll be released?!"

"Yeah, we have a deal with the president. We don't bother him and he doesn't bother us." I thought if he is right, this dictatorship is really strange!

I closed my eyes and quietly started to sing *kiirtana* again. Suddenly he asked, "Are you an Ananda Margi?"

I opened my eyes and looked at this man again. "Yes," I said.

"I know Ananda Marga. Do you know Suraj?"

"Yes, I know her."

"She's my girlfriend."

Then his manner softened. He put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Why are you worried? Don't be nervous. When you are working for the Mission, so many things will happen."

I thought, "This man is giving me philosophy?!"

Then he asked, "Do the Margis know you're here?"

"No, no one knows where I am."

"Write them a letter and I'll take it to them when I'm released. You don't have paper and pen?" Then he tore open the cigarette pack in his pocket and handed it to me with a pen. So I scribbled a short note to the Margis on the back, doubting if this murderer would really be released and if the message would ever reach them.

Before two hours were up, the guards came laughing and announced that my companion was being released.

A few hours later the Margis arrived, and I was released, too.

The next month I returned to India. I was nervous, because I had forgotten to keep the apparatus that Bábá had given me to save my life in danger. When I entered His room, He smiled and asked, "Do you know, my little boy, who made that telephone call? It was I. I called right here from Calcutta. And who was that man in the jail cell who gave you such good advice and informed the Margis of your whereabouts? Was it a thief or Bábá Himself?"

Then I started to weep, realizing how Bábá had saved my life. He said, "I saved your life. If I want blood, I take blood to change history. If I want to save my son who is working for my Mission, then no power on

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this earth can kill him. Bullets can cross hither and thither in the military barracks, but not a single bullet will I allow to penetrate him. I will safely take my son out of that danger.

"I remember all the Tantras and all the *mantras*."

Dádá Dhrtiishánanda

When I was growing up in Bogotá, I had much curiosity to know about yoga and meditation. I came in contact with different books of Swami Vivekananda, Paramahansa Yogananda and other yogis, and I wanted to meet someone who could teach me. After attending different conferences and visiting different groups I saw in the newspaper a small article publicizing a series of lectures on yoga by an Ananda Marga monk. That was 1978 and Ananda Marga was very new in Colombia.

I attended the 3-day conference and enjoyed it very much. After that I learned meditation from Dádá Bhaktapranánanda. I meditated for some days, but then I stopped. At that time I did not realize the importance of doing it regularly.

After this first meeting, I wanted to contact Dádá or any member of Ananda Marga because I liked it very much, but I could not find anyone to give me information.

More than two years passed when I found one leaflet of Ananda Marga with the activities and address. I felt very happy and I immediately went to the *jágrti* -- it was only two blocks from my house! I asked if I could get a meditation review, and luckily Dádá came the next day.

Because I was living near the *jágrti* I went almost everyday. If I did not go, the in charge of the *jágrti* (he is now Dádá Svaprakáshánanda) called me to help him with different projects.

Those were blissful days. We were few, and everything was new for me. I felt like a new world was opening for me. Slowly a feeling for Bábá grew in me with a desire to see Him.

A few months afterwards, during the Easter vacation in 1980, I went with another brother to Lima, Peru to attend an intensive theoretical and practical course of Ananda Marga philosophy in the LFT Training Center. I was supposed to go back in 15 days to resume my studies. The *dádá* who was the trainer could hardly speak a word of Spanish, and I could hardly understand any English, but we understood each other's feelings well. Dádá gave much attention to my *sáadhaná* and discipline, and this helped me a lot to realize clearly the goal in my life.

When it was time to go back to Colombia to my family and my studies, I did not want to leave the training center. A deep feeling had grown in me that I must do something for the human society, my great family. I decided that becoming an LFT for Bábá's Mission was the only way. When I informed my family of my decision, they reacted strongly

because they are very traditional. However I believed that my duty towards my family could be fulfilled by serving the society, because then Bábá would take care of them.

So my life as an LFT started. My first posting was in Argentina. I traveled to Buenos Aires with Dádá Bhaktapranánanda.

When we arrived in Cochabamba, Bolivia, we learned that there were no seats available on the onward bus to Santa Cruz. We then searched for a place to spend the night, but all the hotels were full. Then we went to the Hare Krsna Temple, but the one in charge did not allow us to stay there, I think because of Dádá's uniform.

We had been looking for more than two hours and did not know what to do. It was very cold and raining, and it was almost 10:00 PM. At that time there was a curfew because of political unrest. Nobody was allowed to go out after 10:00 PM and the military had orders to shoot on sight. We wandered through the deserted streets, wondering what to do.

Suddenly a poor man called to us and asked what we were doing and if we had a place to stay. When Dádá explained our situation, he offered to let us stay in his small house. His family was very kind and we stayed in one corner. That night I slept happily, thinking how Bábá was taking care of us. The next morning they gave us breakfast. When we offered some money at the time of departure, they refused to take anything from us.

I spent one month in Buenos Aires helping the *dádá* there, then I was transferred to Paraguay. There was great tension when I arrived in Asuncion because the former Nicaraguan dictator, Somoza, was assassinated there a few days before. So when I got off the bus and asked one policeman for directions to the Ananda Marga *jágrti*, he suspected me because of my beard. Instead of going to the *jágrti*, I was arrested and went straight to prison! (It was the same prison that the Sectorial Secretary, Dádá Harátmánanda, was in one week before for the same reason.)

Inside the policemen threatened to beat me and torture me. Somehow Bábá gave me much strength. I complained about my arrest, but I was feeling His presence and I was not afraid.

After almost a week they told me that I was free to go, but first I had to sign a paper stating that I was treated well. I refused. Instead I accused them of bad treatment. I also demanded back all my things including the reports and newsletters and books that the *dádá* in Buenos Aires gave to me to hand over to SS. Finally they gave me everything. Later the Margis told me that I was very lucky, because people who com-

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plained sometimes disappeared and were murdered. I know Bábá was taking care of me.

When I was an LFT, I developed a strong desire to see Bábá and visit India, but in those days our financial situation was very poor. So whenever *dádds* came from India we were eager to hear the news of Bábá and that gave us much inspiration.

Sometimes I used to think that we were very far from Bábá, and there were so many Margis, so how could He possibly know all of us?

One very hot day I was in Rio de Janeiro with Brother Mukunda. We wanted to drink Coca-Cola to refresh ourselves, but we knew that LFT's are not supposed to drink that because it has the stimulant caffeine. Then we thought that if we only drink it once it would not be a problem, and anyhow, nobody would know. Since we were only going to take it once, we purchased the biggest bottle and drank to our heart's content!

Two weeks later Dádá Harátmánanda, the Sectorial Secretary, came from RDS in India. In one meeting with the LFT's he asked, "Who among you is drinking Coca-Cola?" I was surprised how he knew, and I told Dádá that we did. He said, "Stupid, Bábá scolded me very much because He said that the LFT's are drinking Coca-Cola and I cannot control them." Actually I was happy to hear this from Dádá, because it answered my question as to whether Bábá knows what we are doing when He is so far from us. I realized that He is guiding us even in small things.

Jiivesh (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

At the end of 1979, I left my father's house in Rio de Janeiro to live alone. At that time, many doors opened to me, especially on the spiritual path.

I used to participate in an ecological group called "Conatura". During our end of the year party we learned that an organization named Ananda Marga was interested in starting a vegetarian restaurant with our group. I remember that I was the person who questioned this partnership the most. I said that before organizing any work together we should know better what is this Ananda Marga. This was the first time that I heard about the organization.

After this, I left Rio and during 1980 I traveled to various parts of Brazil, participating in meetings with many spiritual groups. However, I could not find what I was looking for. Since my teenage years, I was a spiritual person. For a long time I nourished the desire of finding my spiritual Master. But it was interesting that in every spiritual center that I visited, even though the doors were always open to me, my intuition said, "My Master is not here."

When I returned to Rio de Janeiro some friends informed me that there would be a meeting with other groups to organize a big ecological event. In that meeting, I heard a lecture by a yoga monk. As I listened to him speak, I felt that at last I had found my spiritual Master. At that moment, I became emotional like I had never felt before.

At the end of the lecture, I went up to him and asked, "Can you give me a *mantra* and individual meditation?" He agreed and invited me to that same place the following day to be initiated. Even without reading any book or receiving any orientation, my intuition told me that I needed an individual *mantra*.

The house in which I was initiated was a very Tantric place. It was being renovated and had no roof. Tiles and construction blocks were piled up on the floor. I realized that Dádá slept there, too. After my initiation, I was about to leave when he said, "Your spiritual name will be 'Jiivesh,' which means 'the controller of human beings'." That name struck me deeply as I was always very worried about human beings. I asked myself how he could know me so well. The interesting part was that I left without even knowing that he was a monk of Ananda Marga, because until that moment he had only given me the instruction in meditation.

After one week, I went back, but he was not in so I spoke to a

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Margi named Uttama. This Margi told me about the organization and gave me a pamphlet with some information and one phrase of Bábá: "In the living being, there is a thirst for the infinite." It was followed by the name, Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti. When I read that name, I felt a very strong energy. I felt that He was really my Master, and that I had been his devotee in other lives.

After this experience, I became a Margi. Until today I am active in the organization, doing my spiritual practices despite the clashes. I feel that nobody can separate me from Bábá as He is always with me. I am convinced that every moment of my life was guided by Bábá so that I could find Him.

Dádá Rainjitánanda

In Belo Horizonte, Brazil in 1982, I learned yoga postures in one private school. I also developed an interest to learn meditation. So I asked the teacher if she could teach me, but she said "No, you need to learn meditation from an authorized teacher." Then she recommended that I read a very interesting book, *The Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda.

After I read that book I was very keen to learn meditation. In the book it said that when one's desire is great, the Guru will come.

One evening soon after reading this book, an Ananda Marga *ácarya* visited the yoga class. His name is now Dádá Bhaktapranánanda and he is from the Philippines. He announced that he would give a lecture on meditation at the University of Law. Another student from the course went with me.

The lecture was very inspiring and it increased my desire to learn meditation. At the end Dádá said, "Those who are interested to learn meditation should come and give their names." I watched almost everyone in the room go forward, write their names and addresses on his list, and then leave. Finally I was the last one. So I started talking with Dádá and I thought, "When his companions come to pick him up, then I will go."

Nobody came and the time passed, so finally I asked, "Dádá, who is coming to pick you up?"

He answered, "Nobody is coming."

Then I asked, "Where are you staying?"

"I am staying in that school where you are learning yoga."

"But there is no bed there. Where will you sleep?"

"Oh, I manage somehow."

"Then I can take you there."

On the way, I told Dádá, "I am also interested to learn meditation."

He said, "OK, just write your name." So I was the last one to apply. He gave initiations all day Friday and Saturday, and my turn was last.

I did not know what to expect from initiation. I had read some other yoga books that described that during initiation the authors saw and felt so many spiritual experiences. But I didn't feel anything during initiation, so I thought, "Maybe I got the *mantra* wrong." I repeated it to Dádá, and he said it was correct. So I tried to meditate. Dádá left the

room, and I continued trying. I thought, "This thing doesn't work!" I had pain in my knees and my back, so I finally got up and left the room, too.

I met Dádá downstairs. I said, "This meditation doesn't work."

He said, "It's not instant. You have to practice every day, twice a day."

Then I asked, "How many times do you practice?"

He answered, "Those of us who are monks practice four times a day." So right from that moment I decided that I would also practice four times a day, and I have done so until today. From this constant practice I have realized that the meditation really works. As the scriptures say, "The Guru will come when the disciple is ready." This is exactly what happened to me.

A year later I decided to go to *ácarya* training. My family was against this decision, especially my mother. So she arranged for me to meet different people she knew in the fields of yoga, religion and the occult. She hoped that they would change my mind.

One evening she arranged for me to meet a psychic lady who had some special powers to cure, to see visions and to give advice to people. It was raining when I went to visit her. I arrived in her studio, greeted her and sat down.

Suddenly she asked me, "Who is the old man with glasses? I can see that he is with you all the time. Is it some relative of yours who has died?"

I said, "No, it must be my Guru."

"Oh. Then really you should meet Him." This was a direct observation from another source confirming Bábá's words, "I am always with you." Usually we don't realize how much He is with us. This experience made me understand just how close He really is. It also reinforced my desire to go to *ácarya* training.

Mukunda (Porto Alegre, Brazil)

In 1980 I was working as an LFT in Salvador, Bahia, in the Boca do Rio slum. I was managing an Ananda Marga school for poor children. One Sunday I decided to do a good cleaning, because the place was dirty.

I started with the bathroom and scrubbed the sink, and then mopped the classroom, and washed the chairs, tables and windows.

After the long, heavy work, I took a bath and changed my clothes. I sat on the bed to meditate. While I was fixing myself to start, I suddenly saw the image of Bábá appearing in front of me giving *namaskár*. I looked from the feet to His head. I saw His black shoes, white *dhoti* and shirt, His glasses, face and hair. When I thought, 'Bábá!', the image disappeared like a flash.

I started my meditation. That day my meditation was very good. I understood that I was preparing myself for Bábá's arrival.

From that experience I remember that He is always with us, watching what we are doing and thinking, and we must do our best for His cause.

One day in 1982, when I was working as an LFT in Curitiba, I felt very sad. So I decided to take a bath. In the bathroom I started singing my favorite *kiirtana* tune. Suddenly I looked at the wall and Bábá appeared inside a picture frame. He seemed to be reclining in a window.

He smiled and looked at me. I did not stop singing and continued bathing. Bábá watched me and started nodding His head as if He appreciated my *kiirtana*. This continued for some time. Afterwards I turned off the water and went to meditate and my sadness disappeared.

This experience reminds me of the great love and affection that He bestows on each one of us. Now I know more than ever that we are all very special to Him.

Dádá Mukrátánanda (continued)

During September 1979 I left South America for Sweden Training Center to become an *ácarya* of Ananda Marga. During my training we had a period that was marked by a shortage of cash. Together with the other brothers we started making some handicrafts to sell to raise some income for our training center. After creating a few "masterpieces", another brother and I obtained permission from our trainer to go to Stockholm to sell the merchandise.

There we found that people did not even look at our artwork! So we started to ask the public for money telling them about the rigors of a winter on the street. Many started to contribute. Then we approached some well-dressed young men. They seemed to listen with great sympathy and then sweetly asked us to follow them so they could help us. But they led us to the police station where they informed us we were under arrest because begging is illegal in Sweden! We went to jail.

We were interrogated separately and detained in separate cells. I asked to telephone to a Margi in Stockholm, but they denied me permission. I was very worried and afraid they might deport me. I knew nothing about the condition of my brother trainee. So I started to fast without food or water. For four days I fasted and meditated all the time.

On the fourth day Bábá appeared to me in my *sádhana*. He appeared in bright light. He said, "Don't worry, my son, you won't be deported." Then I merged completely into that light and my joy knew no bounds. My heart was filled with love divine and my mind was appeased and blissful.

One hour later I received permission to phone the Margi in Stockholm. He then sent a fax to the Immigration headquarters in Linköping.

Then a chef came from the jail authorities. She handed me a list of 100 different types of food including five types of cultured milk, whole wheat bread, granola, cereal bars, broccoli, etc. She politely said, "You can order whatever you want. The government of Sweden will cover all costs. Please eat!" So I agreed and ordered sentient food.

Three days later I was released. When I was handed my passport I saw that it had been stamped for deportation, but it was crossed out on 12 October, 1979, the day that Bábá had appeared to me!

As I walked on the streets of Stockholm, I felt as if nothing in the world was real. When I reached the small *jágrti* apartment, my best friend

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said he could not recognize me at first. He said there was a fine luster around my face.

After training in Sweden, I worked in Europe for more than a year. Then I went to finish my training in Benaras, India.

I arrived there in May, when it is unbearably hot. The well pump was broken. We trainees bathed every day in the pond that was shared by water buffalo! Many events took place during that period, but the most inspiring of all happened every evening in the *dharmacakra* hall during collective meditation.

During *kiirtana* and meditation, I gazed at Bábá's black and white "passport" photograph on the wall. Each evening it seemed to come alive with light that enveloped me. Overwhelmed, I wept aloud. Bábá's smile was imprinted deeply in my heart.

To this day I keep a copy of this photograph. Whenever I look at it I feel a recurring wave of emotion run through my system and I recall those blissful evenings at Benaras Training Center.

Another interesting incident took place in my study of Bengali. At the Sweden Training Center, I never bothered about learning Bengali, even though it is a required subject for every *ácarya*. I thought I would pass with or without learning this language. But in Benaras, when the examiner, *Ácarya Dasarath*, came, he only asked me questions of Bengali. He called me to appear before him and answer questions on thirteen separate occasions during those few days of his visit. He scolded me for delaying his return to Jamalpur where he lived. Finally, due to the tremendous pressure he created, I was able to read four full pages of Bengali without a single mistake!

After passing that examination, I went to Calcutta. When I saw Bábá, He asked, "How is your Bengali now?" And then He smiled!

In June 1981, after finishing at Benaras, I attended my first DMC in Calcutta. After that, I spent much of each day in Bábá's room, witnessing Him at work. At that time He started giving Dharma Samiks'a, which was a personal review of each devotee.

More than two hundred *ácaryas* had come for this experience. First, all the workers posted in India were called, followed by those working abroad. Daily I anxiously waited for my turn and enjoyed watching Bábá at the same time.

After several days a Central *dádá* told me, "Today you cannot

come in Bábá's room. Please stay outside in the hall."

So I did *kiirtana* and *sáadhaná* all day surrounded by a crowd of Margis waiting for their chance. The next two days were the same.

On the third day I found myself watching the cloth *pratik* hanging on the wall as it blew in the breeze of the fan. I started to weep, longing to be in the room with Bábá. So I danced *kiirtana* and wept.

Then one *dádá* came from Bábá's room and asked me to go in.

I watched while two others were reviewed by Bábá, and then I was asked to stand in front of my Guru. The room was almost empty. Only Bábá and five other *ácaryas* were there.

The Central Dharma Pracár Secretary began by asking me whether I was following the Sixteen Points strictly. As I answered each of his questions, he watched Bábá's face for any reaction, but He remained impassive. Finally when I was asked about asanas, I replied that I had not been very regular. Then Bábá pulled back His stick, so I stretched my arms upward and closed my eyes. Bábá hit me very hard on the waist 12 times, but I felt no pain at all. Instead I felt an incredible wave of heat in that portion of my body. Later Bábá asked me to promise to be a good example in society.

Then Bábá started telling stories in Bengali about the life of some great saint. While He spoke, I massaged Bábá's right foot while another *dádá* massaged His left. Suddenly, in the middle of His talk, Bábá turned to me and asked in English, "And you, what do you say?" I was so surprised because He suddenly switched from Bengali that I answered, "Bábá, I love-You!"

He then smiled the most wonderful smile I ever saw. It was so blissful and all encompassing. Everyone in the room smiled and their faces were lit up. The vibration in the room was indescribable.

Later that afternoon I went to give pran'am to Bábá before leaving for Bombay. To my surprise, Bábá addressed me by the wrong name. He called me Sukumar, who was another trainee present in the crowd. When someone told Bábá that I was not Sukumar, He asked, "Where is Sukumar?"

So Sukumar stood and answered, "Here, Bábá!"

"And you, Sukumar, when are you leaving?"

"Tomorrow, Bábá."

"You should leave now."

So we left together. As we boarded a rickshaw, I lamented to Sukumar why Bábá had called me by his name. Then Sukumar explained

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that all he had ever wished was for Bábá to call him by his name. With those words, my heart was put to rest.

But that day, as soon as I put my foot on the Giitanjali Express train bound for Bombay, I fell ill. I developed a high fever and a demon thirst. During that 40-hour journey I only drank water. My body was burning and then shivering.

When I arrived in Bombay, I was exhausted and dirty. I felt like a ghost and my mind was hallucinating due to the high fever. I wandered around the station with my big bag and sitar. I tried to call the jágrti, but no telephone was working. I tried to get a taxi, but the drivers were charging far too high. I felt hopeless and wanted to lie down on the pavement. I no longer cared that if I did my bags and ticket and papers would surely be stolen. In that terrible condition, I started wishing that Cakravarti, a Margi from Bombay, would come and help me.

Suddenly Cakravarti was standing in front of me. I was so surprised to see him that I asked, "What are you doing here?"

He replied, "Today at work my boss told me, 'There is not much work today, Cakravarti, so why don't you go for a walk.'

"Walk? But I have nowhere to go! Where should I walk?"

"And the boss replied, 'Go to the train station.' So here I am!"

Then he took me to the jágrti and cared for me for a week. I took only hot water and lemon.

After that when I went to the airport to fly back to Europe, I was so confused that they told me, "Your plane left yesterday! But don't worry because you can take the next flight that departs tomorrow morning." So I sat under the powerful air conditioners in the airport, and by the time my flight left, I was again totally ill. When I reached the Mainz Sectorial Office in Germany, Dádá SS met me at the door. He realized immediately my condition and gave me a blanket and told me to lie down and served me hot milk and honey.

After a week I finally recovered. For months after that Dharma Samiks'a by Bábá, though, I felt like I was walking on air. Whomever I met on the streets or on the trains told me that they saw peace in my eyes.

Akhan'd'a (Curitiba, Brazil)

When I was LFT, I worked in Bahia and stayed as a guest in the house of sympathizers.

One day I was very confused with some problems that had happened. The house was very close to Lake Pituacu. I walked there to ease my mind. I sat beside the lake and tried to meditate, but I was not able to concentrate.

I was very confused and felt that I was losing my sense of "I"ness. I was very depressed and felt like I would die. I did not know what to do.

As I was not able to meditate, the only thing that came in my mind was to do Guru Pújá to Bábá. I offered all my life to Him. At that moment I felt something. I don't know if it was inside or outside, but a light came in my direction and illuminated my mind. All my worries and anguish and that feeling of dying disappeared and a feeling of internal happiness and bliss arose.

I wanted to express all my happiness somehow. I stood up and started on the path back. I felt that the Cosmic Consciousness was very close to me. I walked feeling full of happiness and gratitude.

After that walk I came back to normal. All the problems disappeared and I realized that no matter what happens, Bábá is always by our side, helping and comforting us.

During the Sectorial Retreat in Curitiba in 1980, I was in charge of receiving the registration money of the retreat and keeping it in a drawer. At one time when there was a big crowd of people, I put some registration money in my pocket, thinking I would put it in the drawer later.

Fifteen minutes later Dádá Harátmánanda, the Sectorial Secretary, appeared in the hall. He stared at me for some moments. I did not know why he was reacting like that, but he seemed to see something in me.

When the retreat was over, I went to work in Brasilia in a children's home. Dádá Sevabhodhánanda was coming to Brazil in Recife, and I had no money to go there and receive him.

When I went to pack my bag, I found the registration money in my pocket. The amount was sufficient to travel to Recife. I thought that I should return it as it was not mine. On the other hand, I needed that amount to travel to Recife, so I had to choose whether to return the money immediately or use it to travel. I decided to use it.

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I did not tell anyone that it was with me. Animesh, a Margi from Curitiba, was in Brasilia and knew that I would need money to travel. He gave me a donation of the cost of the ticket. I decided to accept it, because probably I would need some money for extra expenses.

I arrived in Recife, met Dádá and we gave some lectures together, traveling to Bahia. There I worried about how to return the money because I had already spent it.

We were staying in a sympathizer's house when Dádá left. I was going to travel the following day.

Then I discovered that my bags had been stolen from house. Everything was gone—my books, my clothes, my camera -- everything! I only had the slippers, shorts and T-shirt I was wearing at that moment and a blanket.

I panicked. I cried a lot and asked myself why this happened to me. No one in the house helped me, on the contrary they sent me out.

I went to the streets with nowhere to stay. I did not know anyone else there and I had no one to turn to. The first day I slept in the police station, after that on the beach in the open air.

I decided that my disgrace happened because I had misutilized the money given to me. Bábá was teaching me this lesson. This thought relieved my mind somewhat and I began to do meditation andásanas on the streets and parks. To eat I begged for money and food. Those seven days were very hard. Even with all the problems, I believed that this was a lesson of Bábá. I was confident and hopeful that something would happen, because as He gave me punishment, certainly He would also help me.

On the seventh day, I was walking on the edge of the beach when one woman called me. I do not remember if she asked me the time or what, but we started a conversation. I told her what happened to me. To my surprise, she offered to help me.

She brought me to her house and let me take a shower. She gave me food, clothes, shoes and everything. She advised me to ask for help from the governor. I did this and he gave me a ticket back to Brasilia. They even brought me to the bus terminal in an official black car! During the trip back, I thought about what had happened and thanked Bábá for this great lesson.

Didi Ánanda Us'á (continued)

In 1980, I got the chance to go to Benaras Training Center in India to officially finish my training. Then Bábá fulfilled one of my big desires -- to fly with Him. He had to fly from Calcutta to Benaras and He granted me permission to go with Him.

On several occasions Bábá asked me, "How do you say 'Germany' in Sam'skrta?" Then He would answer, "Sharmaniya Bhumi, which means, 'Land of Intellectuals.'"

When I was posted to work for PROUT, I went to India and carried a small vase with a special plant. As Bábá came out for field walk, I was able to place the plant in His hands. I told Him that I had brought it from Bulgaria in Berlin Sector.

Bábá said, "Yes that is the correct pronunciation of Berlin, with the emphasis at the end of the word, not the beginning. We should always speak the names of different places as they are spoken locally. For example, Paris should be spoken with the French pronunciation. But the French call London as 'Londres.'" Then He spelled it by pointing with His finger in the air, "L-O-N-D-R-E-S."

Bábá got into the car. Then He called me to the window and asked, "How do you say 'Germany' in German?"

I answered, "Deutschland, Bábá."

"Yes, Deutschland means 'Beautiful Country.'" He explained the origins of this word and then said, "As your headquarters is going to be in Deutschland, you should learn this language. In Berlin Sector, you should know three languages that will be very helpful in your work: English, German and French." Then He named each country where these languages are spoken.

On another occasion, Bábá pointed at Didi Ánanda Sukrti and I and asked, "If I decide to send these two little girls to work on another planet, will they be weeping or smiling?" He then pretended to weep.

We replied, "Smiling, Bábá."

Then He explained, "Because we have already covered the whole world and we are making plans to go to the other planets in the very near future."

In all the moments that I spent with Bábá, I knew for certain that, regardless of anything, He always showered His love, affection and grace on me. I realized that He wanted the best for all His children in the universe. I also realized that He had prepared me since my childhood to be

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by His side and to do something “good and worthy in life, not just eating, sleeping and dying.” His unconditional love and sweetness are the greatest inspiration in my life.

Mrnal Kanti (Buenos Aires, Argentina)

When I was eight or nine years old I used to play cowboys with one friend in the back yard of my house. We wore hats and used cartridge belts with toy guns; usually we fought "duels", like in Western films. Sometimes he "killed" me and sometimes I "killed" him.

One day, I do not remember why, my friend did not come to my house to play with me. Still I decided to dress up and play on my own. I remember I made a mental effort to imagine a cowboy in front of me with whom I was going to fight a duel. At that moment I suddenly saw a man sitting on the ground beside me, with his legs crossed, all dressed in white and making a gesture with his hands. It was like a flash, in the twinkling of an eye. The vision lasted perhaps a second, and then disappeared.

I was terrified because I could not understand what had happened. I ran to my house, and told my mother and grandmother, who went out to see if in fact there was someone there. Of course they did not see anything and did not pay any more importance to my story. For some time after that I did not want to play in the backyard anymore because I was afraid that something strange might happen to me.

Years passed and that incident was left behind, along with my childhood games. But a long time afterwards, when I was 22, I was in a room of the Mexico street jagrti in Buenos Aires, where I was going to be initiated in Ananda Marga. It was five in the morning of February 12, 1981. The ácarya, who was traveling through the city, made the appointment at that time because he had to travel. In the room there was a framed photo of Bábá, hanging on one of the walls. It attracted me intensely, and I remained for some minutes staring. I felt as if He was someone well-known to me. I asked the ácarya who was that person in the photo and he replied it was Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, the founder of Ananda Marga.

Suddenly I recognized Bábá as the man I had seen for a moment during that childhood incident. I had completely forgotten it. I could not help feeling amazed. I wondered time after time how was it possible that He was with me so long before. For some time I felt shocked about this, but now that I know more about His philosophy, and have already incorporated the practices in my life, I think I can understand the immensity of His love. He takes personal care of each one of us from the very moment we arrive in this world. We may know it or not, but that is the way Bábá is, that is the way of Personified Love.

Lalitesh (Rio de Janeiro)

I was initiated in Ananda Marga in 1978 by Dádá Sumitánanda. I attended Ananda Marga lectures and retreats, and in September 1979 I went to Buenos Aires, Argentina to meet Bábá. There we learned that He could not come and would only visit Caracas, Venezuela. I could not go there because I had problems with my visa.

Soon after I met Dádá Dharmadevánanda and he insisted that I go to India to have Personal Contact with Bábá. He organized the trip.

When I arrived in Calcutta, there was a certain delay to receive Personal Contact. Everyday we went to Bábá's house and came back at night disappointed. I started to realize that my mind was not concentrated. So I decided to take more care of myself -- food, my meditation, myásanas, keeping my discipline better.

Then the Personal Assistant to Bábá informed us that at last we could get Personal Contact. So again I went to Bábá's house in Lake Gardens.

I was the next to last that day. When my name was called, I climbed the stairs. After I entered the room, I did sást'aunga pran'am . Bábá asked me to sit up. He started to talk to make me relaxed. He talked about Brazil and the Amazon.

Next He started to ask questions about my personal life. He made me think about the wrong things I had done. He provoked in me feelings of regret for having done those mistakes. Then He asked, "Would you like to receive punishment for those things?"

I said, "Yes, Bábá."

Then, politely, He asked, "With love?"

"Yes, Bábá." He took His stick and lightly touched my body. At that moment I felt much tenderness because I was always waiting for a severe punishment. I had heard people speak about their punishment and had become afraid.

Then Bábá said, "So we will give you an opportunity to do something useful in your life." Next He asked me to repeat after Him an oath that emphasized my social responsibility. Finally He touched the top of my head and I left.

This point of discipline touched me deeply. It gave me a strong inner force, even though there was no drastic change. Gradually it came to empower my entire spiritual side. This is the message that I would like to give to others who did not have the opportunity that I had.

Dádá Harátmánanda (continued)

I brought an orange tree seedling from Paraguay in 1983. When I presented it to Bábá, He asked, "What did you bring?"

"This is an orange tree, Bábá."

"How do you say 'orange' in Spanish? Isn't it called 'naranja'?"

"Yes, Bábá." I thought, 'This is interesting. He mysteriously told me in Caracas, 'Bábá knows a little bit of Spanish', but I never heard Him speak in that language.'

"Do you know where this Spanish word comes from?"

"No, Bábá."

"You should know this. OK, let me ask all the Central Secretaries here." Then he asked each dádá in turn. When no one could answer the question Bábá said, "I thought I was the only fool in this world, but now I see that I have many friends!" We all laughed a lot.

"This is intolerable," Bábá said, changing His mood. "You have degrees, how come you do not know this?" Pointing to me he said, "I will transfer you. But if I transfer you, I will have to transfer all of them." Now everyone stopped laughing and became very serious.

"Then how the organization will run then?"

The General Secretary pleaded, "Bábá, please tell us."

Then Bábá's mood softened and He began a long explanation. "The Sam'skrta word 'naga' means both 'elephant' and 'snake'. Here it means 'elephant'. Ranga in Sam'skrta means 'excitement'. When elephants see a green orange tree full with brightly-colored oranges, they become excited and go into jubilation. So oranges are called 'nagaranga' in Sam'skrta. When the word entered the Urdu language, it became 'narangi' and from there it became 'naranja' in Spanish.

"The English language changed the first letter 'n' into the preposition 'an', so it became 'an orange.'

"Don't you think that there is a beautiful link between Sam'skrta and Spanish?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"How do you say the number two in Spanish? It is 'dos' isn't it? It comes from 'dvi' in Sam'skrta that became 'duo' in Latin. 'Tres', the Spanish for 'three', comes from the Old Sam'skrta word 'tri'. 'Seis', 'six' comes from 'sastha'. 'Ocho', 'eight', comes from 'as't'a' in Sam'skrta. 'Nueve', 'nine' comes from the Sam'skrta 'nava'. 'Diez', 'ten' comes from 'dasham'.

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"The Spanish words for mother, father and friend all come from *Sam'skrta*. 'Madre', 'mother', came from the *Sam'skrta* word 'ma'tar'. 'Padre', 'father', comes from 'pitr'. 'Amigo', 'friend', comes from the *Sam'skrta* 'ami'.

"The word for 'carpet', 'carpeta', comes from 'karpata' in *Sam'skrta*. 'Camisa', 'shirt' comes from 'camisete'.

"Is it interesting? Aren't you curious to know what is that link, what is that relationship between Spanish and *Sam'skrta*?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"The Latinic group of languages has three branches -- Continental Latin, Occido-demi Latin and Oriento-demi Latin. From Continental Latin evolved German, Czech, Hungarian, Polish and Flemish. From Occido-demi Latin evolved two languages and a demi-language -- Spanish, Portuguese and Basque. Basque can be called a half-language or a demi-language because Basque is a mixture of Spanish and French languages. From Oriento-demi Latin evolved two languages -- French and Italian. In the Occido-demi Latin group all the prefixes of Latin language have been retained. There are two pairs of languages in the world which can be said to be the closest to one another -- Spanish and Portuguese, Bengali and Oriya. The first two branches of the Latin language are prevalent in South America; that is why South America is also known as Latin America.

"Do you want me to write a little tiny book about this subject? But I am working on another book now."

I said, "Bábá, please do this."

Bábá laughed and said, "This little boy wants to eat the sweets *rasogula* and *sandesh* at the same time! OK, I will try in the future to write a very little book about languages."

Bábá later dictated more than 40,000 pages that were published in textbooks on the science of languages called *Varna Vicitra* and *Varna Vijnana*.

Dádás Nityasatyánanda and Harátmánanda

On June 1, 1979 in the airport in Valencia, Spain, Bábá said, "In 1968, when I first went to Manila, they sang Spanish songs. There, all educated people know Spanish. Before World War I, Spanish was the official language. Then the Philippines came under America and the official language became English. Most of the Margis know some Spanish. Our Filipino *ácaryas* have been posted in South America because they know Spanish."

One night Dádá Nityasatyánanda and Dádá Harátmánanda were sleeping in the same room in São Paulo when Dádá Nityasatyánanda had a dream of Bábá.

He was on a field walk with Bábá. At one point, their way became obstructed by mud. Dádá thought, "If Bábá walks through this mud, His legs will become dirty." So Dádá lifted Bábá, carried Him across, and then put Him down. Then Dádá woke up.

He noticed that their room was full of a sweet lotus scent. He was so excited that he woke up Dádá Harátmánanda and asked him, "Do you smell anything in this room?"

Dádá replied, "Yes, it's like a lotus flower, very sweet." After this, both *dádá s* forgot about the incident.

Nine months later, Dádá Nityasatyánanda was in Calcutta. It was his daily routine to wait for Bábá in the garden. When Bábá would come out of the house, Dádá would sing the latest Prabhát Sam'giita song. One day Bábá turned toward him and said "If you had not lifted me that day, my legs would have become dirty." He smiled and walked away. Dádá was surprised. He went on singing, but could not understand what Bábá meant. He remembered nothing.

Two days later when Dádá was returning to South America, he suddenly recalled that dream and understood Bábá's words. He wept with love for Bábá.

Another time, Dádá Harátmánanda was alone with Bábá, massaging Him. Somebody had mentioned to him that Bábá's navel area produced a special scent. When Bábá was sleeping, Dádá lifted Bábá's undershirt out of curiosity. Bábá woke up and said, "Nonsense fellow! What are you doing?"

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After some time, again He slept. More careful this time, Dádá lifted the undershirt. Bábá woke up while Dádá was sniffing. But this time Bábá smiled and asked, "What do you smell?"

"It's sweet, Bábá."

"Is it like a lotus?"

"Yes."

"Have you seen any pictures of the mythological Vishnu which show a lotus sprouting from his navel, and on top of the lotus flower Brahma is sitting, creating the whole universe?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"It is symbolic. *Parama Purus 'a* (the Supreme Consciousness) creates all, and His nucleus, His creative faculty is the navel (or *manipura cakra*). As His navel produces a lotus smell, mythology shows it so. Do you remember this scent?"

"What do you mean?"

"Do you remember when you were sleeping in the same room as Nityasatyánanda, and he woke you up? It was exactly that smell."

It is clear that for Bábá, our dreams are also a part of reality.

Mukteshvar (Cordoba, Argentina)

It was in 1981 and I was doing my spiritual practices with much dedication. The *jágrti* at that time was on Mexico Street in Buenos Aires. One night, after *dharmacakra*, I was introduced to Didi Ánanda Sumantrita. I was impressed by her youthfulness and kindness. She offered me some *prasád* of Bábá and I kept it in my shirt pocket. I was somewhat skeptical at the time and did not give it much importance. I gave her a deep *namaskár* and returned very content to my house in Florida district. I completely forgot about the *prasád*.

The next day I began my evening meditation at 7:00. I sat in the lotus position and, after withdrawing myself from the external world and feeling myself floating in space, I started to concentrate on my first *cakra*. My concentration was perfect. I continued moving up from *cakra* to *cakra* and it surprised me the way in which I was concentrating and accumulating energy more strongly and efficiently than I ever had before.

When I reached the *anáhata cakra*, I felt as if I was flying. Then I remembered the pieces of *prasád* in my shirt pocket which pulsed with my heart. Without opening my eyes I took two of them with my right hand and put them on my tongue so that they could melt little by little, as Didi had explained.

Then I felt as if a divine nectar was spreading around my mouth and moving down my throat. My excitement was tremendous and it seemed that I was going to explode at any moment.

I continued to go up to the next *cakra* and then to the center of my head. When I got to this point, my state of exultation was tremendous. I felt an extremely strong emotion, that incredible happiness was radiating from the center of my chest. Tears flowed from my eyes like water from a faucet and fell upon the palms of my hands.

At this highest emotional state, a window opened at the top of my head and all the energy which was impossible to control any longer began to expand towards the Cosmos. Whole galaxies were moving at an infinite speed and all the energy which arose within me expanded out through this window into the Infinite. I felt I was the Infinite. It was incredible -- all the Cosmos in my head and, at the same time, seeing my body inert in my room, feeling my heart beat strongly -- it seemed that I was going to explode.

Suddenly I became conscious of my individuality. I thought that if this continues, I would die. I felt a cold sensation like ice begin to move

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upwards in my body. In an instant, all the expansion reversed and the contraction happened much faster than the expansion. When the last part of me returned through the window, it shut hard and I was never able to open it again, though I know it is there.

When I opened my eyes and started to move, my entire body was asleep and my legs hurt a lot. Finally I could stand up and leave the room. My mother had been knocking on the door to ask me if I wanted to eat. It was already 11:00 at night. I could not even imagine how four hours had passed.

Giitá (Buenos Aires, Argentina)

In 1982 I was very clashed with one *dáda* , so I decided to go to the city where my family lives. I told everything to my sister and said that I did not want to stay any more with Ananda Margis. So my sister said that she had a vacation in February and asked me to go with her to our house in Córdoba. She convinced me to go with her.

One night there I had a dream of Bábá. I was sitting beside Bábá on His right side, so close that I was touching him. He and I were observing all the *ácaryas* , who were sitting in front of Him. Each of them was doing something to please Him.

On the left side I saw one *dáda* doing something that I knew immediately was not going to please Bábá. This poor *ácarya* was misguided, thinking that what he was doing would make Bábá happy.

I looked at Bábá, and at that same moment He also looked at me and winked. I understood that He knew the same thing that I had realized.

After this dream I understood that Bábá wanted to tell me that I had to be more tolerant of the mistakes of the *ácaryas* . I realized that I was too demanding and I should be more patient.

Anonymous

I am from São Paulo, Brazil, and in 1978 I was working at an import-export company. I became sick with amebic dysentery, and the medicines doctors prescribed were not curing me. Then I tried a vegetarian macrobiotic diet and it cured me, so I continued. When I traveled to Peru, I also met a fruitarian, and then I only ate fruits for some time.

In 1979, after a year of being vegetarian, I began to feel more and more disappointed with the whole materialistic society. Everything seemed to be very dry and empty for me. I wanted to find something more meaningful.

I saw an advertisement in a newspaper for a yoga lecture in *Sattva*, one vegetarian restaurant that had recently opened. I went on a Saturday night. Dádá Sumitánanda, the Sectorial Secretary, was the speaker. Most of the doubts and questions I had about spiritual life disappeared. Some kind of conviction in the effectiveness of Ananda Marga developed in me. It was still theoretical, though, because I had not yet tried it.

I learned that *anáśanas* course for beginners would start the next week. I decided to attend because I had some health problems. After the second week, most of the problems disappeared. Slowly I started to meet other *dádás*. When they asked me if I wanted initiation, I immediately said yes without any hesitation.

As time passed, Ananda Marga inspired me more and more. In 1982 I went for LFT training in Porto Alegre under Dádá Brahmánanda. The last day of the training Dádá called me into his room. He told me, "You know, I am sure you are going to make a very good *dádá* ." I was shocked, because the thought of becoming an *ácárya* had never even crossed my mind. That idea never left my mind after that, so I guess the *sam'skára* was somehow already there. It took three more years though before I went.

I was first posted to Colombia. On the way there I attended a retreat in Villa Cabamba, Equador on the border of Peru. The region has the distinction that many people there live very long, up to 100 years. Scientists from different countries visited to try to understand why. Two reasons they discovered were that the climate is almost perfect, with no pollution, and the water is 99 percent pure with minerals and nutrients for good health. The place is like a paradise on the equator with many different varieties of fruits.

One afternoon during the retreat we climbed a nearby mountain. We planned to hold *dharmacakra* at the top. About halfway up, I decided to take a different route, because I tended to be individualistic. After walking alone for about 40 minutes, I recognized the same place I had passed earlier and I realized that I was walking in circles! I was in a gorge and surrounded by thorns. Wherever I turned, I was scratched and cut. I started to worry, because I knew within an hour it would get dark, and then it would be impossible for me to find my way back. I was very thirsty.

I realized then that there was nothing else I could do but surrender completely. So I started repeating Bábá's name aloud. After moving aimlessly for another 30 minutes, I discovered a cattle path. By that time I was screaming Bábá's name! I followed it hoping that it would lead me back.

Bábá still wanted to teach me another lesson. I saw in the distance what appeared to be a fountain among the rocks. I hurried towards it for a drink, but it was completely dry.

Finally, when it was almost completely dark, I saw the roof of the building where we stayed. When I arrived, they had already finished their evening *dharmacakra*. Everyone was worried and they were shocked to see me, covered with scratches and cuts.

From this experience I realized that Bábá has a special relationship with each Margi. To make us better devotees, He creates circumstances and situations in which, one way or another, we are forced to surrender.

I worked in Colombia for one year, then in Venezuela for two years. Finally I told the *dádá* I was working with, "If you don't give me the ticket to go to *ácarya* training, I will leave the *jágrti* and get a job to earn the fare!" So he and Dádá Karunánanda, the Sectorial Secretary, decided at the retreat and RDS in São Paulo that after a few months they would buy me the ticket to Sweden.

In the training center, I had a severe accident. One brother did some construction and left a big hole in the floor in front of the bathroom. When I awoke in the middle of the night and hurried to the toilet, I fell into it. Four of my ribs broke immediately. I suffered excruciating pain.

I lay paralyzed for several days. Someone had to carry me anywhere I needed to go. I was afraid I would be crippled like this for life.

One night the trainer, Dada Dhruvánanda, had me brought to his

room. He asked, "Do you realize that maybe you were supposed to die that night, and Baba gave you a new life?" I answered yes, but I was too troubled and confused and afraid to think about it.

The next morning, one trainee drove me to the hospital for some special X-rays. There was a tape recorder in the car and I listened to a beautiful song by Dada Nabhaniilanda. All of a sudden, an incredible spiritual realization came to me in the front seat of that car. I suddenly knew for certain that I was supposed to die that night of the accident. Instead Baba had somehow removed a huge quantity of sam'ska'ras from me through this fall.

I felt overwhelmed with gratitude and bliss. I started crying and crying uncontrollably. I felt as light as a feather, surrounded by Baba's love. I realized that no matter what happened, everything would be all right because Baba had taken over my life. He was controlling everything. I realized that life is an eternal process of surrender.

I believe that from the moment that we surrender and put ourselves in His control, every moment after that is an experience of Baba. Many times we do not realize what is happening, but it is all His play.

I graduated from the training center after two years. Just before leaving for India, Dada Dhruvánanda called me to his room and asked me to do *sást'aunga pran'am* to Baba's photo. When I lay down in that posture of complete surrender, I silently prayed, "Baba, don't ever let me leave the path, even if You have to do it by force."

I went to India in 1987 and spent nine months to finish my *ácarya* examinations. One funny thing happened in my final exam before Baba to demonstrate yoga postures. Before I entered the room, one *dádá* advised me to remove my glasses as I would be performing some difficult *ásanas*. Without my glasses, I can hardly see anything.

The first two *ásanas* Baba asked, I did easily. But when He named the third *ásana*, one of the easiest, *naokásana* or "head to knee," my mind suddenly went blank. So Baba clapped His hands to get my attention and showed me how to do it. He did this three times, but without my glasses I could not see Him at all! None of the other *dádás* in the room could understand why I didn't follow Bábá's hint. So I failed the exam. After we left Bábá's room, I explained what had happened and we all laughed.

For the next three days I studied all the *ásanas* and memorized them very well. Then when the General Secretary asked me to demonstrate a few, I passed immediately. I feel that Bábá gave me that opportu-

nity of intense study to improve my future work.

After passing that final exam, I was scheduled to have Personal Contact with Bábá. For many days He created tremendous pressure on the different departments to do more work. In the midst of this drama, He continuously postponed giving PC.

So I went to Bábá's quarters everyday and waited for hours, but nothing happened. My mind had mixed feelings. Sometimes I felt frustrated and depressed, thinking, "Maybe I am not ready for PC." At other times, I thought that something positive was happening, that Bábá was forcing me to do more self-analysis and reflection. I felt that perhaps my past lives were not too good, and I was burning those *sam'skáras* by waiting for Bábá everyday.

Finally the day came when Bábá's Personal Assistant, Dádá Keshavánanda, told me to go into Bábá's room. Bábá was waiting for me. When I entered and did *sást'aunga pran'ám*, I felt overwhelmed by the spiritual vibration in the room. I felt as if I was entering an ocean of purity.

I felt somewhat lost and sat a bit away from Bábá. He asked me to come closer. Then I understood that if I went closer I would be able to touch Him. I started to feel so much attraction for Him. I kneeled in front of His bed and lay my head on His lap. Then He sweetly touched my head. By that point I was not thinking normally any more.

The next thing I knew Bábá was touching both my *ajina* and *sahasrára cakras* with His hand and repeating some *Sam'skrta mantras*. The whole process probably only took three or four minutes, but it was as if those few minutes contained all eternity. It was as if time stopped.

At the end I did *sást'aunga pran'ám* again and left the room. I was not aware of how I was moving or behaving. Dádá Keshavánanda was waiting just outside the door. As soon as he saw me, he looked very amused. I think he could tell that my eyes were open, but my mind was gone. He didn't let me go anywhere. He told me to sit right there by the door and do *sádhaná*. I have no idea how long I meditated.

Whatever happened the rest of that day was like a dream. Many of the other trainees asked me about my PC. But I could hardly answer because my mind was so high, in another dimension. I think they all left a little disappointed that I could not describe what had happened between Bábá and I.

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I always remember the feeling that I had when I entered Bábá's room for PC. My desire was to grab and catch the essence that was there. Yet my mind and intellect had no capacity to hold such an infinite entity. My feeling was, "You are mine," but my senses had no ability to hold that feeling. Now I realize that it is much easier to feel, "I am yours."

CHAPTER FOUR
YEARS OF GROWTH:
1984 - 1987

As the organization grew, more and more ácáryas worked throughout South America. Ananda Marga opened different service projects in each country: kindergartens, children's homes, free medical clinics, nutrition feeding centers. In the monthly reporting sessions, Bábá always took personal interest in these South American projects.

In 1984 Dádá Karunánanda, the new Sectorial Secretary, sold the condominium flat in São Paulo that had served until then as the GT Sectorial Office. He then bought the house at Rua Alfredo Zumkeller 59 in Parque Mandaqui. The ácáryas and LFT's constructed a dharmacakra hall on top of the house and built another 3-story building at the back of the property.

In India, Bábá gave His Dharma Máhá Cakra discourse twice a year at the global Master Unit in Ananda Nagar, West Bengal. For thousands of years yogis have gone there to meditate. To that spiritual land, Margis from South America journeyed to see their Master.

Dádá Nirainjanánanda

In 1984, I was representing GT Sector in reporting with Bábá. He asked me, "Have you ever seen a llama or an alpaca?"

I said, "Yes, Bábá, I've seen a llama, but I saw it in a zoo."

Bábá laughed and said these animals are mostly found in the Andes. Then suddenly Bábá changed His mood. He said, "Is it not, that the workers and Margis of your sector are mostly engaged in idle gossiping?"

I did not know what to answer.

Then He said, "That is not good, very bad."

"We will rectify it, Bábá." Then He smiled.

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Nirainjana (continued)

For six years after my first two visits I was not able to go back to India. Then in 1985 my life started to change. At that time my financial condition was not stable, but with much effort I bought a ticket.

The day before my journey, I did not have a confirmed reservation. Then suddenly I saw a shooting star and felt Bábá's presence so strongly that I was certain I would go. There were no more seats, but still I was allowed to travel by sitting in a seat of the crew!

I decided to spend a few days in Calcutta. At that time the organization was growing and it was not as big as it was later. Then we could stay closer to Bábá. He greeted us by name and always spoke with us.

The day before I was going to return to Brazil, I bought a garland to give to Him. It was raining, so His car entered the garage. There they put a chair for Him and the Margis sat around at His feet and sang Prabhát Sam'gita songs. I did not know how to sing the songs, but Bábá looked at me and told me to sing.

Then Bábá stood up. Dádá said, "Bábá, Nirainjana is leaving." At that moment Bábá turned to me, so I went to Him and put the garland on Him. He started to talk with me, asking me about which places He could visit when He came to Brazil. So I gave Him some suggestions. Bábá started to walk to His room. Everyone stopped and watched that scene, Bábá walking with me just behind, talking with Him. No one else said anything. Bábá entered the house and I followed up the stairs. The attraction that I felt for Bábá was very strong, and I followed him until the moment that He entered His room. There we said good-bye with *namaskár*.

I was in ecstasy. I went to meditate downstairs. Afterwards some *dádás* came running, saying that Bábá had just composed a song about a devotee putting a garland on his or her beloved. I was very happy because this song described my experience that day.

Dádá Dhrtiishánanda (continued)

After five years as LFT, in 1985 I finally traveled to Calcutta, India to see Bábá with the financial help of Dádá Nityasatyánanda. The first time I saw Bábá was at His residence in Lake Gardens, when He was going on His morning field walk. There were many Margis and *ácaryas* waiting for Him. When He entered the car, I said *namaskár*.

Bábá looked at me and smiled very sweetly. He said, "*Namaskár, namaskár*. I am giving *namaskár* to you because you are giving *namaskár* to Me." That simple sentence and His expression made me feel very light and very happy. This sensation lasted a long time.

I used to go to Lake Gardens twice a day for Bábá's field walk without fail. The vibration created singing Prabhát Sam'giíta for Him while we waited was very spiritual. Almost every time He stopped and said something to us. During Sunday *darshans* I always used to dance *kaos'ikii* and *t'án'd'ava*.

One Sunday night I was the only overseas Margi when Bábá went for field walk. He stopped and asked me if I understood His speech that morning. I said no. (Bábá had given His talk in Bengali and the *dádá* in charge of translating it afterwards did not do so.) So Bábá told the *dádá* to explain it to me, and then He went inside.

Dádá was very busy and it was becoming late, so he told me to stay that night in Lake Gardens. In this way my desire to sleep in Bábá's house was fulfilled. The atmosphere there was very vibrated and we went to sleep late at night. Very early in the morning I heard Bábá calling the *dádás* to give them instructions. That day I dreamed of Bábá and felt Him very close.

I received Personal Contact when I was an *ácarya* trainee. Then Bábá mentioned various instances of my life. He gave me gentle punishment for my previous mistakes and made me promise that I will be an ideal boy of His. He held my cheeks and asked me to smile. Then He gave me His blessings. For many days after my PC I felt His sweet vibration and remembered that special occasion.

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Manik (Poços de Caldas, Minas Gerais, Brazil)

After my initiation in 1980, I moved to New Jersey in the United States where I married. In 1985 I traveled to India to see Bábá. On October 15 at 9:00 a.m. I had my Personal Contact with Bábá. When I entered His room, I did *sást'auंगा pran'am*. He was very gentle and answered with a very sweet smile.

We started to talk about the races of the world. Until that time I just knew of four races, the white, black, yellow, and red. He said that there is one more race, the Brazilian race! Then He took out a key from his pocket and asked me what it was called in Portuguese. I said, "*Chave*, Bábá." Then He explained that in Bengali it is called *chabe*, because the word came from Portuguese.

With the passing of years, I realized a deeper significance of this exchange. I feel that the key is Bábá. If you have Him, you have the key that can open the door of the universe. This is the role of Bábá and His *ácaryas*. This lesson of the key was very important for me.

Then He told about my family, my characteristics, who I was and what I did. He asked me if I wanted punishment for my mistakes. Of course I answered yes. So He asked me to raise my arms and close my eyes. My body started to sweat. I could not imagine the kind of punishment I would receive. With the stick He only lightly touched my right and left sides, then told me to open my eyes.

He had a very sweet smile. He asked me to put my head down. Then He lightly touched the back of my neck with his hand three times. I used to have many physical problems there. He removed most of my pain that day. Today it is much less.

The last words that Bábá told me was that I must be a universal son, that I have to show what I really am by my actions. Then He smiled and asked me if I had one more thing to tell Him.

Suddenly I remembered that my wife had written a letter to Bábá that I had kept with me but had forgotten when I entered the room. So I brought it out and explained who it was from. He told me to give it to His Personal Assistant. I did *namaskár* and left the room. As soon as I went out, Bábá called the Personal Assistant and asked him to read the letter to Him.

On September 20, 1987 I was again visiting India, very inspired and happy. It was my last day before returning to the United States, so I

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decided to buy garlands of flowers to give to Bábá. Usually when I gave a garland, I used to give two, one in my name and one for my wife.

I found two beautiful garlands and carried them back to Bábá's house. I waited for Him until 6:00 p.m. when He came back from field walk.

Usually the Margis stand by the right side of his car, and Bábá gets out of the left side. As I wanted to give the garlands personally, I broke the policy and stood on the other side. When I offered them to Bábá, He became very happy and gave them to Dádá PA. Then He entered the house and I stayed and spoke with a *dádá*.

When I extended my hands, a flower fell from the tree above right into my palms. It was the same type of flower that my garlands were made of. I was so surprised that one flower had fallen from the tree above me into my hand. Automatically I looked up to the window of Bábá's room. He was standing there at that moment, giving *namaskár* to me. He proved once again that He is always with me. It was an individual act that I did for him, and he answered with an individual act for me.

Dádá Nirgunánanda

In November 1985 I was posted to work in Georgetown Sector. I offered a garland to Bábá when I was leaving. He said, "My little boy, you are sincere, so you will be able to do the work. I want to hear good news from there. Don't worry, my son, I will do everything for you."

A few months later when I returned to India to represent the sector in an RDS reporting session, Bábá ordered that every month some LFT's and Bhukti Pradhans from each sector must go to India for reporting. This plan was going to cause a tremendous financial strain on the entire global organization. Because GT was the farthest sector from India, the Central workers urged me to appeal to Bábá for exemption.

Reluctantly I agreed. So I said "Bábá, GT Sector is very far and the economic situation there is not good, so it is very hard for these representatives to come."

Bábá became furious. He said, "Don't you realize that the special grace of *Parama Purus 'a* was with you?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"Then why do you talk about financial difficulties? Whenever I give any task to you, your duty is first to accept it mentally, as if it has already been done. Then when you go to talk to the workers or Margis about it, that force gets expressed in words and that person will also materialize it in his or her mind. If you start doubting, then when you speak, the force is not there. So whenever I give a duty, it is already done. I am just watching my sons and daughters -- how they are doing, how they are enjoying, how they are struggling. I am watching and experiencing their pleasure and pain. You should not doubt even for a moment whether you can do such a huge task."

What Bábá wanted took place. The LFT's and senior Margis were eager to go to see Bábá. Though we faced a lot of economic problems, somehow we managed every month. First LAP Airlines of Paraguay gave us very cheap air tickets to India, then, as soon as that stopped, other airlines lowered their fares.

These experiences show that He wants us to be 100 percent positive, 100 percent disciplined and punctual. Finally, the most important thing is to surrender.

When the Margis went for reporting, Bábá asked them many detailed questions about the natural resources of their countries. He said, "A lot of wealth has been stolen by the colonizers in the early days, and

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later by the military dictators. Now the capitalists are utilizing the politicians to exploit the common masses. There is a huge disparity of wealth because of exploitation. But still a lot of resources are left. If all the resources can be properly utilized, then South America will be one of the richest places in the world. So PROUT will have to work very hard."

Mánavendra (São Paulo)

In November 1986, I was living in the Ananda Marga community in Belem Novo, Porto Alegre. I worked with some children and some of them still live in the Master Unit. It was a moment when I was very disappointed and dissatisfied with my life there. I was blaming Bábá for that dissatisfaction, that Bábá was not giving me the help that I needed. Really I was anxious for self realization, something greater. I thought that Bábá was not helping sufficiently.

At that period someone loaned me a book, *The Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda, a great leader who founded the Self-Realization Fellowship organization. This book has a lot of stories that happened to him in India. This book is full of great realizations. So I used to admire him and was impressed with these stories and a little bit envious. I wanted something subtle to happen to me.

I had practiced meditation for some time and had some personal experiences that revealed the importance of the Guru in my life. I thought that I should have a greater experience. So I felt indignant and started to think that it was a kind of game, a fight between us. I thought that I should change gurus.

The great guru of Yogananda was called Bábáji. I was very attracted to him because of his stories. That night I decided that at midnight after I did my meditation lessons I would intentionally provoke Bábá. I decided to do my *Guru Pújá* offering to Bábáji instead of Bábá. After doing that, I slept.

I had a very curious dream. I was in heaven, in a big hall with a table arranged like the Last Supper of Christ. Behind the table various people in white clothing were sitting in perfect order. Though I was beside them, they did not see me.

On the other side of the hall there was a door. It opened and Bábá walked in towards these people in white. He gave *namaskár* to them and walked towards me. He passed in front of me and looked at me. He continued to the door and did not acknowledge my presence. Then, even though it was a dream, I felt very clashed and disappointed.

Then I noticed that from the floor smoke started to rise. Gradually the smoke formed the shape of a body that did not have clearly defined form. This body had long hair and was very similar to the drawing of Bábáji in the book. His face was very bright. It was not possible to see him clearly and he was like a ball of fire.

This being turned to Bábá at the moment that He was turning the doorknob to open and go out the door. The form said, "My Lord, Mánavendra is here." Then Bábá turned towards me and said, "Oh, Mánavendra, you're here." He walked towards me and took my hand. When he did this, I entered a state of *samádhi*.

I woke up and my body was shaking on the bed. I was really in *samádhi*. I was no longer dreaming and my body vibrated intensely.

It was a very great experience that occurred when I abandoned the Guru and decided to do *Guru Pújá* for another guru. At that moment He gave me very special attention. It was very clear in that moment that in truth, the Guru chose me, and I only participated in that choice. When I wanted to choose another one, He, through a dream, took me back.

In April 1987 I went to India the first time to see Bábá after being a Margi for four and a half years. During this time I was always very close to the organization and the work of Ananda Marga, living with many *dádás* and LFT's. I developed a very strong desire to see Bábá. Sometimes when a *dádá* wanted to take me there, something happened that prevented my travel, which only increased my expectations.

After I arrived in Calcutta I went to Bábá's house in Lake Gardens. I was very emotional because it my the first time to see Bábá. I asked myself how it would be. Bábá used to go out for field walk at 5:00 p.m. From 3:00 I stood waiting for the opportunity to see Him. I got a good place to wait, though there were many people with the same intention.

About twenty minutes before Bábá came out, one *dádá* asked me to help him organize the plants brought to Bábá by different Margis. We organized them by name and origin. I was very disturbed because I had spent a long time waiting so that I could see Him closely, but I had to abandon my place. We worked as quickly as possible, about twenty minutes.

As soon as we finished I went back outside. By then there was a big crowd of people and I was at the back unable to see anything. Then a *dádá* appeared and told everyone, "Bábá will come down right now!"

At that moment it started to rain. Everyone started to disperse in various directions looking for shelter. I was pushed back against the garage where Bábá's car was kept. I was exactly in front of the place where Bábá would sit in the back seat. When He came out He gave *namaskár* to everyone and entered the car inside the garage. He entered the back

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seat and slid over to the other side and was only ten centimeters away from me. Then He turned and I looked into His face. Only the glass separated us. It was a very gratifying moment. The rain gave me the chance to be closer to Bábá, because otherwise it would have been impossible.

After that I had Personal Contact with Bábá in which He told me very personal things.

When my stay in India was over, I prepared myself to return to Brazil. But I was held up while traveling by train and my return air ticket was stolen. The following day it expired and so could not be replaced.

I had to stay in India for three months and I got very tired of the place. The Sectorial Secretary promised that when he came back from South America, he would bring a ticket for me; but some problems occurred and he could not. I was clashed, and I became very rebellious and took a radical determination: 'Until the problem of my return to Brazil is solved, I won't see Bábá. I will stay here in the Central Office of Tiljala, Calcutta. I may die here, but I will not see Bábá again.'

So while the other Margis used to go every day from Tiljala to Bábá's house in Lake Gardens to see Him, I stayed and read books and did other things.

Ten days passed. On a Saturday Bábá announced that He would go to Tiljala because it had been a long time since He had been there. Hundreds of Margis came, mostly from India, and filled the place. Everyone prepared for His arrival with a big festival and delicious foods.

I was completely isolated from that movement. I stayed in the room reading books. When Bábá arrived, I heard all the Margis shout, "*Param Pita Bábá Ki — Jai!*" which means "Victory to the Supreme Father." That day Bábá gave *darshan* to so many people, but I stayed in my room.

On Sunday, the air of the festival continued. In the morning at about 8:00 many people congregated on the verandah to see if Bábá would appear in His window. I decided to wash some clothes. About 9:00 I finished and went to hang them on the line. At that moment I was alone. When I turned back to the room, I felt a very strong, subtle wave enter all my *cakras*. My body vibrated. Then I saw Bábá in the window of a room, looking at me. He had just started His morning walk in the hall of His quarters. This was His habit, and it allowed the Margis to see Him and enjoy His presence. It created a feeling of bliss in everyone, as it had in me.

For me it was a very special moment, because even when I was

trying to avoid Bábá's presence, He created the circumstances that I could not. When He looked at me, I became paralyzed with joy.

I felt ill at ease, because even though you always desire the attention of the Guru, you want to be bigger in His eyes. When He helps you come to Him, you feel very small. He, who is such a perfect and infinite being, exposes all your defects.

These events made me conscious of the affection that the Guru has for His devotees which is constant and permanent, even when we are indifferent to Him.

My revolt ended, and I participated in the rest of the festival. Later I went to Lake Gardens because that day He returned there. The following day I also went there, and something curious happened. It was raining very heavily and there were only ten *dádás*, *didis* and Margis waiting when Bábá came out for His walk. When he left, Bábá saw me and gave me a very direct *namaskár*, looking only at me. One *dádá* said, "Look, Bábá is giving *namaskár* to you!" So I returned the greeting. It was a very special moment for me and showed me that Bábá always helps us and knows what is going on inside us.

These experiences were not something that I earned, but I received in two days those marvelous presents. It was very gratifying.

Didi Básantii

Some months after my initiation in 1986 in São Paulo there was a Sectorial Retreat that I wanted to attend. My family was not very satisfied with my decision to become a Margi, as it caused a radical change in my behavior. I became vegetarian, meditated three times a day, practiced *ásanas*, danced *kaos'ikii*, and all these things disturbed them. The retreat was being held in Paraguay. To go I needed the written authorization of my parents, because at that time I was still less than 21 years old, and I could not travel abroad. Unfortunately I was not able to convince them. As the date of the retreat approached, I became more and more anxious as I was determined to go. On the day of the trip, after some arguments, at last I got their verbal permission to travel, which at that moment did not help.

Somehow I managed to cross the border. When I arrived in Asuncion, it was about 10:00 p.m. I called to the didis' house, but I could not communicate at all because the didi who answered the phone did not speak any Portuguese and I did not understand any English. I decided to take a bus to the retreat site, asking Bábá to guide me.

After half an hour, the bus stopped in an isolated place. A bus conductor that was also traveling on the bus answered my question about where I was going. Then he decided to accompany me there, saying that he knew the place I was looking for. After we got down we walked together for about ten minutes until we saw a sign that said, "Emaus Retreat House." When I saw it, I felt relieved.

The conductor talked with the manager. She said that the retreat would not begin for three days and I could not stay there. But because it was very late and I had nowhere to go, she changed her mind and let me stay there all three days for free.

When I went to my room, I sat down to meditate. I felt Bábá telling me that I should not worry, that He would always be with me.

After that first retreat, I felt immense desire to meet Bábá physically. This robbed me of my sleep for many nights. It became my sole preoccupation. One night when I tried to meditate, I was unable to concentrate. Finally I started to cry, asking Bábá to let me know Him. With this thought I slept and had the following dream:

Six sisters and I dressed in white saris were sitting on the floor in a small room side-by-side. Bábá sat in front of us about two meters away. He spoke in English and had a very sweet fatherly vibration that made us

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very relaxed. I did not understand anything in English and mentally I asked Him to speak in Portuguese so that I could understand. At that moment He looked into my eyes and gestured with His hand for me to go closer to Him. I stood up and went and sat by His side. Suddenly I woke up with a vivid feeling of sitting by His side. It was as if we had known each a long time ago and we were meeting again.

Some months after, I had the chance to go to India and attend the December DMS. I had difficulty convincing my parents to let me go. The flights were crowded and the only seat I could get was on a flight alone, three days before the others in my group went.

When I arrived in Delhi, I discovered that the address of the hotel that they gave me was wrong. I had no address or telephone of anyone in India. I was in the airport with my bags in hand, and I did not understand any English, so my situation was complicated. I had no idea where to go and I was unable to communicate with anyone. Mentally I told Bábá, "I came to India to meet You, so You should help me."

At that moment two people who were on the flight with me approached me and asked in Portuguese if I needed any help. I told them that I needed to find a hotel to stay, but I had difficulty in communicating. The whole morning we spent going from one hotel to another, because the cheap ones were full, and the others were very expensive. Finally in the afternoon we found a vacancy in one hotel. When I sat in my room, I could not believe that I was in India. After five minutes, the two people who had helped me knocked on the door saying they would move to another hotel because they were not satisfied with their room. I thanked them and said that I was tired, so I would stay. We parted and I never saw them again.

The following morning I got a map of Delhi with which I went around without difficulty. I had a strange sensation that it was not the first time that I had been there. On the third day I went to the airport to meet the *ácaryas* who were arriving from Brazil. At that moment Bábá showed me clearly that He was always taking care of me so I would have no problem. The next day we traveled to Calcutta, where I enjoyed immensely the presence of my Guru.

Vishvanáth (Curitiba, Brazil)

In September 1986 in Bábá's residence in Lake Gardens, Calcutta, India, we were waiting for the opportunity to see Bábá. My heart was beating anxiously to see Bábá, my Master, for the first time. There were Margis from Poland, the United States, Philippines and other parts of the world. In the one moment that I took a break from all the waiting, Dádá Keshavánanda, Bábá's Personal Assistant, suddenly called me: "Hey, Vishvanáth, from Georgetown Sector!"

Then I hurried up the stairs of Bábá's house and entered his room. He was sitting on the bed. It was very simple, with a bed sheet on top. I did *sást'aunga pran'am*. At that time my English was very poor. Yet when Bábá spoke to me, He spoke very clearly so that I could understand Him perfectly.

"Come quickly, come quickly, come closer to Bábá."

When I got very close, I did *sást'aunga pran'am* again and we started to talk.

"What is your name?"

"Vishvanáth."

"Ah, very good, very good. Who gave you that name?"

"It was Dádá Brahmánanda, Bábá."

"Ah, now I remember. It was in a wooden house, in a city of southern Brazil."

"Yes, Bábá."

"You were in a room, only you and Dádá. There was much movement there. What was happening that day?"

"There was RDS, Bábá."

"Ah, yes. And you crossed the ocean only to see Bábá?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"Ah, very good, very good. You are a very good boy, very good. You are learning Bengali very quickly, aren't you?"

"Yes, Bábá, I like Bengali."

"You should learn Bengali because there are many similarities between Bengali and Portuguese. Brazil is a very big country. There are places where the language is a little bit different. In the North you speak in one way, and in the South you speak in another way. There exist different words and other meanings."

"Yes, Bábá."

"Do you want an example of how Bengali is similar to Portu-

guese? In Portuguese, how do you call a key that you use to open and close the door?"

"Chave."

"In Bengali you also say, 'chabe.' You are a good boy, always helping the *dádás*, always in contact with them."

"Yes, Bábá, I am always in contact with them."

"Very good, very good. Now meditate with me for a few minutes and wait."

I sat in the meditation position and meditated with Bábá, more or less five minutes. During that time I felt the same thing that I felt before, that I was a drop of water entering the ocean. For me it was an infinite thing, an indescribable sensation, because I can say that I merged into the infinite, that I entered into a very deep ecstasy, but I could not express my feelings. I stopped the meditation because it was very strong for me, I should be ashamed, probably, I don't know if it was a mistake or not, because I know that Bábá wants us to be very controlled.

Then Bábá was very serious and said, "Hum! Hum! Hum!" It was like He was seeing on His mental computer all my bad actions.

He said, "You are a good boy, very good, but in certain period of your life you did these things. . . I will punish you for that, a punishment! Take off your shirt. For these bad actions that you did, how many times should I beat you? Twenty, thirty, forty, fifty. . . ?"

"Forty, Bábá."

"Ah, very good. On which side do you want them?" He pointed to my back.

"Twenty on this side, twenty on the other side."

"Ah! You are an intelligent boy! You are very intelligent! Very good, twenty on each side."

Then Bábá was about to beat me with His stick, but when it touched me it was very light. Then He said, "No, I will not punish you. Bábá likes you very much. You are a good boy and I only have love for you, only love. Bábá has no other negative feeling for you. All the bad actions that you did you must forget. Come more close to Bábá!"

So I went a little closer, just next to His feet.

"Put your head on Bábá's lap." He gently caressed my head and the back of my neck. He was repeating a few mantras and then gave me a kind of blessing. He touched my head and the back of my neck as though He was massaging me. He gently touched my face and said, "From today, you have another body. All the bad actions that you did in the past, from

now on you should forget them. Remember that Parama Purus'a is with you in every hundredth of a second, in whatever difficulty you have. I will always be with you. Bábá needs to establish His Mission. He needs your help to establish His Mission. So, my dear son, from today be an ideal person in the society. You don't need to be afraid. I will always be with you.

"You can go now, because there are many brothers waiting and much work to do."

Then when I was going out, He asked, "Hey, Vishvanáth, do you know Antoni Neitan?"

"Antoni Neitan, Bábá?"

"Antoni Neitan. He was a Bengali poet. He lived here, near Bangladesh, two thousand years ago." (Bábá talked about the place, but I was not able to remember the name of the city.)

"No, Bábá, I don't know Antoni Neitan."

"Ah, but he is already living in Brazil, and very close to you."

"No, I don't know him, Bábá."

I did *sást 'aunga pran 'ám* and went out. Then He called me back again.

"Vishvanáth!"

"Yes, Bábá."

"Are you certain you don't know Antoni Neitan?"

"I don't know, Bábá."

"Very good!"

I did *namaskár* and went out. Then Dádá Keshavánanda said, "Hey, how many minutes, how many minutes? I lost the time. Bábá will ask me. Ah, I think it was fifteen minutes."

Bábá was giving personal contact for about five minutes maximum to the other people.

When I came back to Brazil, I spoke by telephone to my sister-in-law who was pregnant. I told her about the experience that I had in India with Bábá. When I mentioned this name, Antoni Neitan, she immediately gasped and entered a state of shock. Because this name, Antoni Neitan, was the name she had chosen for her unborn son. She was not in Curitiba, no one knew about this child, not even her father and mother. Only her husband knew about the child. Yet in Calcutta, India, Bábá knew all the details of what was happening here in Brazil. Today Neitan is six years old.

Didi Miirá

In 1986 I ran a health food shop in Curitiba. The Margis often came to supply the shop with bread, sweets, tahini, incense, books, etc. I was quite impressed with their mental and physical health and, of course, with their smiles!

So they inspired me to learn meditation. Then my *ácaryá* invited me to go to India to see Bábá, but I was reluctant and somewhat torn. The Margis told me many beautiful stories about Bábá. One side of me wanted to go, while the other did not want to get involved with any organization and wanted to be "free." Finally my *ácaryá* announced that she had arranged my ticket to India and I would leave in two weeks. So I surrendered and felt a very sweet flow. I kept silent about the trip until a few days before my departure, afraid that the dream would vanish in thin air. I was going to see Him! I was not walking anymore, I was flying!

Paraguay Airlines offered the cheapest tickets in those days so first I flew to Asuncion. Dádá Nirgunánanda, the Sectorial Secretary, was with me on that flight, but I thought he was an LFT because he looked so young.

After a long journey, I finally landed in India, the land of my dreams. When I reached Calcutta, my feelings were very sweet and simple. I felt that I was in my father's house. I felt that He was there and so everything was all right.

It is difficult for me to tell about Bábá. I cannot explain my feelings for Him, because words can only give a small glimpse of Him. However I can say that there is nothing in this world like His eyes. They were most mysterious and enigmatic. When He looked at me with His eyes, I felt I was melting in so much love and so much bliss. Whenever I was near Him, I felt myself effortlessly in a permanent state of bliss. I felt myself one with His divine flow.

After three weeks of this constant happiness, when the day to leave came, I felt terrible. I started to cry inside to myself. Who wants to go far away from Bábá?

Since I first began in Ananda Marga I had heard inspiring stories about Bábá's miracles and demonstrations of His spiritual power. Somehow I hoped to personally experience something wonderful like this, but I forgot about this desire until Bábá did something miraculous when I was leaving India.

We were advised that the Indian government was harassing the

organization by blacklisting known Ananda Margis. If officials in the airport discovered that we were Margis, we would be banned from returning to India again. So one Italian brother who was flying on the same flight advised me to hide any Ananda Marga thing deep inside my check-in luggage so it would not be found. There in Calcutta, I got my first pratik locket. It was blue and I became very attached to it as it hung over my heart. I wanted it near me, so I put it inside the small bag that held my documents and money.

After I checked in, I went through Immigration and Customs controls. Then, at the Security Check, a policewoman ran a metal detector over me. The alarm bell rang over my small documents bag. As she took it to search it, I could not do anything, so I called to Bábá mentally with all my might. Suddenly I mentally saw Him in front of me and I held onto Him.

The police officer opened the bag very slowly and, watching me, emptied the contents into her hands. She and I watched as my coins, pen, paper, some money, etc. fell into her hands. I was trembling. Then she put everything back and, watching me very suspiciously, gave the bag back to me.

I walked over to where the Italian brother was sitting. As I sat down beside him, he said, "You're white as a sheet! What happened?"

Silently I emptied the bag into my hands just as the police officer had done. All the same things fell out, along with my blue pratik. I do not know whether Bábá somehow held it in the air or made it invisible. But somehow He miraculously prevented the officer from finding what was there.

This was my first big lesson in surrender. I realized that Bábá fulfills our noble desires. When one cannot do anything more and calls to Him with devotion, then He comes to save His devotees. I cannot forget that experience.

Keshava (Asuncion, Paraguay)

When I was an LFT, I went to India for my first time in 1986 and received Personal Contact with Bábá. When I entered, Bábá asked me, "Where do you come from?"

I answered, "Paraguay, Bábá."

Then I got clashed, because He said, "Oh, Keshava from Brazil."

"No, Bábá, from Paraguay."

"Oh, Keshava from Argentina."

"No, Bábá."

"Keshava from Spain."

"No, Paraguay, Bábá."

"Oh, Keshava from Mexico."

He continued naming different countries. Now I understand that Bábá could have been playing with me, but at that time I was very nervous, and I did not know what to say. He appeared to be a common person of flesh and bones. All I wanted to do was to leave as fast as possible from that room.

Then Bábá touched me on the back of my head. I started to feel bliss. I could not believe it. It seemed as if I was not there, as if my life had changed.

Really my life did change completely, my mind and all my being.

Naviin (Rio de Janeiro)

In 1986 I experienced much frustration in my life, especially from the professional point of view. I always practiced sports, however I also took what are called "Recreation Drugs", in addition to drinking alcohol on the weekends. I realized that I started to depend more and more on the drugs to feel relaxed.

My family owned an island property south of Rio de Janeiro, and we had problems with illegal incursions by unscrupulous businessmen. The situation became so critical that my father felt incapable to handle all those problems. Then I decided that the time had arrived to assume responsibility for the major inheritance of my family. To resolve the problem better, I resigned from my job in the financial market and assumed this responsibility full time. I also concluded that I would need my full mental clarity to succeed. This was when I felt it was better, for some time, to stop drinking and using drugs and become vegetarian.

In November I decided to spend one month on the island. When I went to buy some provisions in a natural foods store, I came upon a book, *Beyond the Superconscious Mind* by Avadhútiká Ánanda Mitra Ácáryá, and I decided to buy it. I thought that the name of the author was exotic, and I had no idea that it was a woman. As it happened, I never opened the book that month.

In February 1987 during the Carnival, I went to a farm with some friends. By then I was already interested in meditation and had read something about it. But what I read did not convince me, so I did not meditate regularly.

One night before dinner I started to read the book. I found the phrase, "This is one of the most elevated practices of meditation, and therefore it should be learned personally by an instructor of Ananda Marga." Then I thought to myself, "What is this Ananda Marga, and where can I find an instructor like that?"

A few minutes later someone knocked on my door and said that the dinner was already on the table. I closed the book and went to eat. Afterwards I sat down to talk with one person that I knew in those days. Suddenly he turned to me and asked, "Are you interested in meditation?"

I was surprised and answered, "Yes, why?"

"Well," he responded, "it was because I had a very traumatic experience recently and was hospitalized. While I was recovering, a friend brought a monk from India who taught me meditation. Here is his card."

To my great surprise, he gave me the card of Ananda Marga, of Dádá Nityasatyánanda!

One hour before I had seen the name Ananda Marga for the first time in my life, and had asked myself where would I find an instructor of that organization. Now I had its card in my hands. I kept it carefully as I felt that I could not belittle those coincidences.

I called the telephone number which was in São Paulo. Dádá Nityasatyánanda answered and referred me to another *ácarya* in Rio de Janeiro, Dádá Dharmadevánanda. I arranged a meeting with him, but when I arrived at the time of the appointment, I found another *dádá*, who heard my story and taught me the first lesson of meditation and some *ásanas*. Soon Dádá Dharmadevánanda arrived and greeted me. Before I left I received from him a card of an old Margi from Rio de Janeiro to contact in case I had any doubts about anything regarding Ananda Marga. In those days the monks were always traveling.

I started to meditate regularly, but due to lack of contact with other people of the organization and by my constant contact with the places of my old habits, I gradually stopped meditating regularly. This took three months until the day that I realized that it had not been a mere accident of fate that I met Ananda Marga, that something was behind this event. So I decided to return to my meditation.

One week later, my family suffered a terrible judicial coup in relation to our property. A group of lawyers through corrupt maneuvers convinced the court to fine my family one and a half million dollars.

We were petrified with this news. I started to reflect about what had happened and the possibility of my family selling everything that we had. I thought also that I would have to look for a new job. However I did not want to go back to the financial market. I wanted to be near people with the same spiritual goal that I was experimenting with. I had recently restarted my meditation regularly and I felt that I was doing the right thing.

One day in a vegetarian restaurant I concluded that I should look for someone in Ananda Marga. At that exact instant Dádá Dharmadevánanda appeared in front of me. I was petrified and dumbfounded. I could not believe what happened.

Finally I greeted him and he smiled and invited me to sit together with the group of people he had brought with him to eat there. During the lunch he gave me the telephone number of the *jágrti* and invited me to start participating in collective meditation.

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I went back to my house very happy with this new "coincidence," with the sensation that I was being cosmically guided.

I started to participate regularly in collective meditation. After some months I was able to resolve the judicial problems in a satisfactory way. It was at this time that I participated regularly in collective meditation and read the book that Dádá Dharmadevánanda gave me, *I Meet My Beloved*, in which he described his personal experiences with Bábá. This caused me to start asking, "Who is Bábá? What is He?" Reading these experiences, I started to wonder if Bábá had been responsible for my contact with Ananda Marga. The idea that one Guru, one personality, on the other side of the world could know everything that I was doing or thinking and could monitor the circumstances to guide the people was too extraordinary for me to accept quickly.

After this, I visited Dádá Dharmadevánanda regularly. A few months later I asked him for advice about many points of my life and what I should do, because I was not feeling right, and I was not trained for this kind of legal work.

Dádá asked me for some time and said that he would give his opinion later. One month passed without his reply, so doubt started to disturb me. One night, when I was lying in bed trying to sleep, I started to think about this problem and my questions about Bábá.

My restlessness reached the point that I suddenly exclaimed in a loud voice, directing my words for the first time to the Guru, "Bábá, what do you want me to do?"

In a fraction of a second, the telephone rang. I became frightened, and when I answered I got a bigger shock because it was Dádá Dharmadevánanda's voice asking me to pick up another dádá in the bus station at 1:00 a.m. because he was carrying many books and did not know the city. I agreed and hung up the phone, thinking, "So, Bábá, is this what you want me to do?"

I went to the bus station and brought Dádá to the *jágrti*. There I told Dádá Dharmadevánanda what had happened. He turned to me and said that he had reached a conclusion regarding my restlessness about my vocation and he guided me exactly what I should do. I realized at that moment that Bábá was just using Dádá to answer my first question, and He always was and is with me and He is my Guru.

From that moment my spiritual life took a totally new dimension as the sensation of having Bábá always with me, assuming responsibility for my true progress as a human being was simply indescribable.

Dhyánesh (Belo Horizonte, Brazil)

In May 1987 I went to India for the first time as a Margi. It is an experience I can never forget in my life. There were about twenty Margis from GT Sector, and the trip was a real adventure for us. We heard rumors about problems other Margis had encountered with hostile police and Communists. We worried whether such problems would also happen to us.

We knew that many West Bengal Communist state police were stationed in the town of Pundag, the small railway station of Ananda Nagar. One of their duties was to catch foreign Margis and deport them.

So the *dádás* arranged that the engineer would stop the train a short distance from the station for three minutes. There were more than one hundred Margis from overseas aboard. We all had to climb down to the ground with our baggage during those three minutes before the train started again.

We hiked to the center of Ananda Nagar and stayed in different rooms of the high school upper hostel and college. Dry straw was laid on the floor of all the rooms as bedding. This aggravated my chronic sinusitis, and after two days I developed high fever. I could not get any effective medicine for this there.

At the same time I was scheduled to have personal contact with Bábá. The *dádás* told me I should wait all day in Bábá's house, as He might call me for this at any time.

So in the terrible summer heat, with high fever, I waited in Bábá's house continuously for three days. Finally in the late afternoon of the third day, I could not bear it any longer and I left for awhile. Then someone told me Bábá was calling, so I ran all the way to Bábá's house. When I arrived, Dádá told me, "I'm sorry, but as you were not here when Bábá called, we had to inform Him and your application was canceled. Sorry for that."

Then I was completely upset. It was the last day of DMC, so at least I had the compensation that I could see Bábá's discourse in the night. So I took a bath and went to the pandal tent.

The crowd numbered about 15,000. I sat among the Indian Margis. When I talked with those around me, I was inspired by how strong their devotion was. Most of them had traveled two or three days to see Bábá. When they talked about Him they started weeping. I could see that they were very sincere. They gave me some food to eat with them. We sat

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together for about three hours until Bábá came.

Bábá entered the hall very dramatically. When He began speaking, I closed my eyes. I felt He was speaking to me as though we were alone together. It seemed as though He was directing His discourse just to me.

Then I felt as though my body was becoming enormous. I became like a giant, floating in the air. Then I could no longer feel my body at all. At the same time I felt very safe and secure because Bábá was in front of me. It made me feel very confident.

I enjoyed those few minutes immensely. It was like eternity for me. Each word and phrase of Bábá seemed to enter my deepest self. I was filled with a joy and happiness that I had never felt before. It was fantastic, both exciting and unforgettable.

When the experience ended, I opened my eyes and looked around at my Indian companions. They were concentrated on Bábá and seemed unaware of what had happened to me. I felt as though I was in my normal state again, and it seemed I was far from Bábá. So I closed my eyes again and started to do *sádhana*.

I think that perhaps all the tension, disease, anticipation and disappointment that I had gone through during the previous days was how Bábá prepared my mind to receive this very mystical experience.

Rajendra (Rio de Janeiro)

In 1987 I was preparing to travel to India to see Bábá. There were many difficulties, as I did not have enough money and did not have enough leave from work. Dádá Ambareshvaránanda inspired me a lot to go. I had a very strong desire, but as I could not resolve these problems, I became discouraged, because it seemed impossible to travel.

One week later I got food poisoning and had to go to the hospital. I received intravenous solution for one day. When I was discharged the next day I went to my parents house to recover. The environment there was very disturbing and I wondered how I could ever get better in that place.

That day I slept and had a beautiful dream of Bábá. In this dream Bábá was young, about 25 or 30 years old. We were both on a ship and it was easy to have His personal contact. Some Margis and *ácaryas* were also on this ship. Bábá behaved as though He was my best friend. We talked a lot. I don't remember everything, but I remember that He said I should learn to speak English better. So I asked Bábá how I could I do this quickly by following traditional methods. He replied, "No, Rajendra, you are going to discover a method to learn that is very quick!"

When I awoke, the pain from the food poisoning had vanished, and I felt like it had never happened. I felt much better than before. It was like I had done a very deep meditation. Coincidentally, that week I got a ticket to India with the help of Dádá Ambareshvaránanda and my vacation from work was approved.

I believe that the significance of this dream to what later happened was that Bábá arranged my trip for me. It was like we had an agreement that I would see Him and I felt certain it was going to happen.

When I arrived in India, the famous problem started: how to get personal contact with Bábá. I remember that it was night when I first arrived in Bábá's house in Lake Gardens. I talked with one *ácarya* who was writing the names of the applicants for PC. Dádá asked, "How many Ananda Marga schools have you opened?"

I said, "I've almost opened one." (Actually I had not started to open any school, but I did not want to tell him that.)

He then said, "Well, Rajendra, you are not going to see Bábá." Then he called the next person to fill out the form.

This was my first big clash in Lake Gardens, because I realized that Dádá did not understand my situation well. I thought that I would see

Bábá and that everything would be all right.

After a week I was allowed to get on the waiting list for PC. As I waited, I did more *ásanas* and other spiritual practices. I remember that when Bábá would go for field walk each day, the Indian Margi sisters would sing Prabhát Sam'giita with much devotion. At that time there were not many people, so it was a very special time. This all left me feeling very inspired.

I found a way to get near the room of Bábá. As I had experience with fish aquariums, I convinced Dádá Keshavánanda to let me clean the aquarium of Bábá. In this way it took a very long time to get close to Bábá.

The days passed and gradually the waiting list decreased. Finally my name was second to get PC. But when it finally became my turn, the time for personal contact that day was finished.

The next day Bábá spent with the LFT's and *ácaryas*. That was when I had the greatest clash since I arrived in India. I thought that there was something wrong even in the universe. I felt like a planet out of orbit, and I did not understand anything at all. I continued going to Bábá's house every day and doing my spiritual practices. One day when I was doing *sarvaungásana* (the shoulder stand posture) I started crying uncontrollably, and no one could understand why.

When my period of stay in India was finishing, Bábá started to take the report from the Bhukti Pradháns. So I got another chance to be in Bábá's presence, and this time it happened. Coincidentally, it took place on the next to last day of my stay in India.

After all this waiting, when someone finally called my name to go upstairs to see Bábá, I do not remember climbing the stairs at all. I only remember that I dove into *sást'aunga pran'am* inside Bábá's room. Then Bábá began to do all the psychological work and it took about 40 minutes.

He said that my Sam'skrta name meant "king of kings." He said, "There are many kings, but among them, Rajendra, you are the greatest." So it was very difficult to control my ego. I thought that He was throwing me into the sky and treating me like this to overcome the depression that I had suffered while waiting. He gave me this quick medicine, and then He talked about Rio de Janeiro. Some things I did not understand, then He started to ask about my background.

I felt as if our relationship was like a father and son. When I used to imagine Bábá, He was always very distant. At that moment, it was like

my father was there, in front of me, talking with me. I was very emotional and I could not catch all the details.

Bábá said that He could see that in the past I had committed some mistakes. He asked me if I thought that I should receive punishment. In front of Bábá I could not say no, so I answered, "It's all right, Bábá, whatever comes from You is OK for me."

He told me to take off my shirt to receive punishment. I thought, 'Now it's going to happen!' Then He took His stick that looked like a bamboo and raised it over His head. I closed my eyes and raised my hands and thought, 'I don't even want to see!' Then he brought the stick down very slowly until it just gently touched my back. Again he raised it as though he was going to hit me. He repeated this process three times.

Then He started to talk about me. He said that I had a big responsibility to grow spiritually and to work incessantly for humanity. He directed me to repeat some promise. I was sitting on the floor, and He was sitting on His seat. Bábá pressed His thumb on the top of my head and asked me to repeat what He said. The words were about evolving myself spiritually and that I must make effort for my evolution and for humanity.

He said, "You are a very good boy, a great boy. And not only a good boy, a very, very, very good boy!"

Then He took my head and placed it next to His leg and started to caress me. I was super emotional, and I did not know what to do. My first impulse was to massage Bábá's knee. He told me to think about everything that He had said, because it was finally time for me to leave.

At that moment the only feeling I had was to do *sást'aunga pran'am*. I wanted to stay in that position as long as possible. So I did it, but then I thought that if I stayed longer I would bother Bábá. So I stood up and did namaskár to him. I turned to leave. Then Bábá said, "Wait, wait, Rajendra! Put on your shirt, because otherwise everyone will know that I gave you punishment!" I realized then that I could do another *sást'aunga pran'am* to Bábá. So I did it again.

Everything that Bábá showed me during that short time was the true role of the Guru. He is the Father that punishes, and He is the Father that loves, the one who gives everything in your hand, both wealth and suffering. All this He showed me.

As soon as I boarded the plane for the flight home to Brazil, I realized this. I felt that the entire universe was inside me. It was as if my personal contact with Bábá had been so full of grace that I could not

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understand it at the time. It was like my desire had connected with the desire of the universe. It was as if I had to think carefully about what I wanted, because I got the impression that whatever I wanted would come true.

I saw at the same time that different people had very different experiences with Bábá. Some Margis were very clashed. One of them who came with me left Ananda Marga for a year; then he came back stronger and now is with us again. For me it was very good to feel all that beauty. My experience made me realize that we should see Bábá like our Father who is very close to us. I think those who had personal contact with Bábá felt this, and it is that familiar contact that will stay with me forever. I hope that everyone feels this.

Karun (Rio de Janeiro)

In 1987 the Brazilian national TV station, *Manchete*, invited Ananda Marga to send a representative, which had to be a sister, to explain our basic principles. At that time Rio de Janeiro had very few sister Margis who could present Ananda Marga in a formal way. Ideally we should send a liberal professional in her mid-forties who could inspire confidence. We could not think of anyone with those characteristics. All we had was an eighteen year-old sister who looked like fifteen.

That night, around four in the morning, I had a dream of Bábá. He came walking toward me, gave me *namaskár*, and asked, "Don't you remember Vikashinii? Sister Regina?" He kept smiling, and I woke up crying for the rest of the morning with a blissful sensation.

Vikashinii was a sister who was not very active at that time, but she fulfilled all our requirements. She was a psychologist about forty years old. I was not sure how to find her in time for the interview which would start at 9:30 a.m. I knew that she was starting a school in the city somewhere in Barra da Tijuca. So I left on my motorcycle, determined to find her. I thought it was very helpful of Bábá in my dream to also provide her legal name which facilitated my search for her.

I found her at 10:00, and was amazed to find that she was well dressed in a white blouse and orange skirt. She immediately agreed, so we raced across town to the station. Though we reached there one and a half hours late, there was still time because something had delayed the interview. She presented Ananda Marga spectacularly.

This is the story of my prophetic dream with Bábá.

Pradiip Deva (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

What was the thing that I remember most from my Personal Contact with Bábá? It was when He said, "But my boy came from so far away to see me. . . and alone?"

I answered, "Yes, Bábá."

"So you were alone during your journey in the airplane and all the way to here?" He asked. I paused a little and said uncertainly, "Y-Y-Yes, Bábá."

Then He leaned forward and, with His head close to me, with a light smile on His face asked, "Wasn't *Parama Purus 'a* with you all the way?"

I, who had been apprehensive about not understanding what had been His intention, smiled and affirmed, "Yes, Bábá!"

He then continued, "You should never forget. You are never alone. He is always with you."

After having seen Bábá, I stayed six months more in India. I traveled to practically all the corners of it and rarely there was anyone with me during the journey. However, I always remembered His words, so, He was always with me. I felt much joy and bliss when I met so many of His devotees, the Margis and *dádás* in India. I could feel Bábá's presence in every home and *jágrti* that I visited.

In Ananda Nagar, one *dádá* who had worked for many years in that divine land asked me, "You know, we in India naturally have spirituality in almost every home. But I heard that in the West it isn't so. Can you please tell me, then, what has brought you to this path and why you selected this Guru?"

I answered him that first it was the books, the philosophy, the social service. Later, as I went deep in the meditation, I started to have a very nice feeling. Every time I did a very good *sádhaná*, I felt happy! Finally I realized it was Bábá who was making me happy with this meditation. However, when I came to see Him, I realized that not only He was the cause of my good *sádhaná*, but He was the goal of it as well.

During the Calcutta DMC of January, 1987, there were about 15,000 people from all over the world there. We were all inside the quarters of Ananda Marga Central Office in Tiljala. So it was very crowded and certainly there were some problems like lack of space and water, but for three days everybody was happy! You could see it in their shining faces as they would gather into groups talking enthusiastically.

Each day Bábá came inside the *pandal*, sat down, and then asked, "What is the program today? Prabhát Sam'giita? So, let us have some songs." He was our host and we were all His guests and everybody enjoyed it. When finished, He would say some nice words to us, give *namaskár*, and ask, "Let us have some *kiirtana*." And then all the thousands of people would sing *Bábá Nám Kevalam* while He was leaving. It was so blissful I cannot describe it!

In this way, He is always with me and with every one of us. I realized that we can have His grace very easily if we do His work, His Mission. We can have Him every night in our dreams!

When I returned to Brazil I translated one of Bábá's books on Neo-Humanism. So, while asleep, I had a dream with Him in which I was living in a house in the middle of a pine forest. He came there with some *dádás*. While I left Him in my room talking with the *dádás*, I went out to get some water for Him. I was there, in the middle of the forest, and I was so happy that I started to sing *Bábá Nám Kevalam*. With my outstretched arms pointed to the sky, I kept waving to the rhythm and sound of the *kiirtana*. Then, when I looked at the top of the pine trees, I saw that they were also waving in the same rhythm! I kept singing and dancing with the trees.

Suddenly, from above, came a golden light. I and all the trees disappeared into that light. What a beautiful message Bábá wanted to convey to me! When we do *kiirtana*, when we sing *Bábá Nám Kevalam*, it is not only us, the devotees, who benefit, but the whole universe!

So, now I realize that He is everywhere and in everything. And, as He said, "You should never forget, you are never alone. He is always with you."

CHAPTER FIVE

BÁBÁ'S FINAL YEARS:

1988 - 1990

During Bábá's last years, many more Margis from around the world traveled to India to see Him. Crowds of hundreds of expectant devotees waiting for a glimpse of Him became normal. He no longer gave Personal Contact to those who were not ácaryas or LFT's. Declining health meant that He was often forced to shorten reporting sessions. Even He was unable to hold the 1990 New Year's DMC at Ananda Nagar because of a mild heart attack that hospitalized Him then.

Yet at the same time He intensified His work schedule. Daily He gave dictation on both social and spiritual topics. He relentlessly instructed how the different programs of the organization should grow. In every spare minute, He continued to compose Prabhát Sam'giita, eventually reaching the world record of 5,018 songs.

Amazingly, Bábá continued to miraculously transform people's lives. He awakened in them profound realizations with the subtlest actions: a few words, a touch, a look, a smile. He approached those in crisis through dreams.

Below are the words Bábá published about the cause and solution of poverty in South America.

Bábá on Poverty in South America

“Poverty belts: In many parts of India, the major portion of China, and certain portions of South America and Africa, people suffer from hunger. . . In South America, all the countries are poor. Venezuela is better off than the rest of South America, but unless it makes more effort to become self-sufficient it will face economic difficulty when its petrol runs out. Brazil, which is a large country, and Peru, are the countries

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which are the worst off. There are also hungry people in Paraguay and Uruguay. In Peru rice is one of the staple foods.

“ . . . We must do something concrete for these people, otherwise the hunger of these downtrodden and distressed people will destroy the peace and tranquillity of the entire globe. You must not forget this fact. There should be an immediate influx of food from outside to these malnourished areas.

“ . . . What is the cause of this problem? The cause is irrational distribution in the economies of the world. The long-term solution to this economic problem is PROUT, but the immediate food shortages themselves must be solved as an urgent necessity. What are you doing about this? You cannot shirk your responsibility. The entire globe is waiting for you. It is our sacred responsibility. Let us shoulder this responsibility.” (from “Multi-Purpose Development Schemes” in *Proutist Economics*, p. 260-263.)

Janak (Petrópolis, Brazil)

My first trip to India at the end of September 1988 was motivated by a strong desire to see Bábá and get Personal Contact. During my 15-day stay at the Ananda Marga Central Office in Tiljala, Calcutta, I was blessed with some experiences with Bábá.

The most common activities of the Margis visiting the Central Office, besides doing our spiritual practices and attending classes, was running to see Bábá each time He went for field walk, struggling to get a seat in the very crowded hall when He gave *darshan*, and being always ready with a strong determination to get Personal Contact. We knew it was very difficult to get, because the organization was growing and there were thousands of Margis with the same desire.

One day I was doing meditation when my strongest and most intimate problems, limitations and aspirations started to fill my mind, probably due to my necessity to surrender them to Bábá.

The next day I attended a class by one *dádá*. At one point he started to present solutions for some of the problems that had preoccupied me the night before, without leaving the topic of microvita. Then he looked right at me and asked, "Do you understand?"

I was very surprised and grateful for the help I had received. Some doubts about the message then arose in my mind. I was really astonished then when the *ácarya* started to give more detailed explanations and added more points that offered specific solutions to all my problems and worries. When he concluded he looked straight into my eyes and said, "Now you understood?"

As I had been a Margi for only a year, I thought that the *dádá* must have read my mind during my meditation the night before. Only later did I understand that he had merely served as an instrument of Bábá without awareness of what was going on. In this way Bábá could pass His message to me. It became very clear to me by this experience that Bábá always gives answers to His devotees.

I had the opportunity then to attend Bhukti Pradhán reporting with Bábá in the MG Quarters of Tiljala. There was an enormous number of *dádás*, *didis*, LFT's and Margis in the hall. I was standing in the back when suddenly two *dádás* grabbed me from behind and pulled me up to the front to stand in front of Bábá with three other Margi brothers.

Bábá whispered into the ear of one Central *dádá* who then asked

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us our spiritual names, the names of our *ácaryas*, where we were from, etc.

We were very nervous and were unable to answer the last question about PROUT. I was especially frustrated that I could not answer a question in front of Bábá, because I consider myself an intellectual. PROUT was the only subject of our philosophy that I had not yet studied.

After I returned to Brazil, I expressed to one brother my sorrow that I did not get PC with Bábá. He asked if I had ever dreamed of Bábá. So I told of the dream I had before the trip:

I was in Bábá's room. He turned to me and said with a cosmic smile on His lips, "I knew you would come! I was waiting for you!" It was the shortest and most wonderful dream I ever had.

Then the brother said that it seemed to him that Bábá really had given me PC in that dream.

Viiná (Petrópolis, Brazil)

In September 1988, in a very Tantric way, all of a sudden I was packing to go to India. Nothing was very prepared, planned or even organized. I arrived in Calcutta where I met Bábá. I confess that in the beginning my curiosity to see Him was much greater than my devotion. At that time I did not love him very much, but after my experience there, I discovered that I could not live any more without Him in my heart.

In India I got very clashed because my temperament is emotional. The human suffering, especially the treatment of old people and children, touched me deeply. I cried a lot because I saw many children begging for food. What made me feel so sad was that I could not carry any of them to my house. As a mother I suffered as if they were my own children and I could not give them shelter.

On the other hand I discovered that the human being can be sweet and soft even without having the basic needs for survival. The Indian people made me believe that this is possible on this planet. I think this is one of the reasons that made me like India so much.

In Tiljala, my life moved according to Bábá's rhythm. I stayed in the *didis'* building where there were sisters and *ácaryas* from different countries. It was a very simple place, without any of the comforts that I was accustomed to have in my home in Brazil. But with the help of my husband, Janak, who traveled with me and stayed nearby in the brothers' building, I was slowly able to adjust to the situation.

On my first day there, late in the afternoon everyone ran out to see Bábá when He was to come out and give *namaskár* to everyone. I did not go because I was very tired from my travel.

On the second day when I went out with everyone, I could realize how divine He was by the crowd of devotees that surrounded Him. I saw Him from very close, and I was impressed by the color of His skin which was like golden wax. It was so clean and smooth that I had the desire to hold and kiss him and smell His fragrance.

I admit that I felt a little jealous of those who were close to Him. I wanted to feel the love that others were feeling. Many were crying, one person fainted, some were shouting "Bábá!", and the majority had eyes only for Him. Nothing else around them mattered. I thought, "Why don't I feel what everyone else feels?"

The days passed. Then on Sunday, a friend of mine from Colombia that stayed in the same room with me said, "Come, today is a special

day. Bábá is going to appear to make demonstrations and tell stories to His devotees. You will like it."

When we arrived at Bábá's house, the gates were locked and a crowd was already waiting. We walked into the crowd, and we got very close to the gate. We waited there for half an hour.

When the gates opened, the crowd ran in. Everyone left their shoes along the way as we cannot enter the Guru's house wearing shoes. I could not see my husband, my friend or even any of the people that I knew. I was astonished by the situation and the speed of the people.

I ran also and entered the hall where Bábá would be. I was terrorized by the crowd that had packed in. Everyone sat extremely crowded together, on top of one another, so that no one could pass in between.

It was extremely hot. I was desperate and crazy, with everyone in that crowded space. My husband was near the front, my friend was near him and I was standing near the back, unable to communicate or move. I could not even imagine how I could continue standing in that situation, much less sit. I felt very sad.

I looked around and could not find any solution. The heat was increasing. On my right I saw a verandah. I thought, 'It's better to go out than to stay here in this oven, and so far from where Bábá will sit.'

So I went outside the doors at the back of the hall. There on the verandah I found two other big doors near the front of the hall that were closed. Two other people were out there. So I thought, 'We are three jokers!' I was glad to find that I was not the only fool that did not run fast enough to get a place in the hall. With this I felt a little relieved.

I kept walking back and forth, feeling the wind in my face. Then I started to talk with Bábá. "What am I doing here, Bábá? I had only suffering until now. I came from Brazil, on the other side of the world, to meet You, and now I am out here alone." I felt completely sad.

At that moment the English woman by my side called to me, "Hey, come stay here because this door will open and we will see Bábá very close." I thought to myself, 'She's crazy. Imagine this door opening! If it was true, so many people would be waiting here for that opportunity!' Still, I had nothing to lose, so I waited with her. Who knows?

Then I heard the crowd shouting, "Bábá, Bábá!" I knew that He must have entered the hall. I felt really frustrated. I leaned against the door, quiet and sad.

Suddenly I heard a click. I could not believe what I saw. The door opened and I was close to Him. I stooped down and then sat without

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believing what was happening. I felt happy, laughing like a child. I was looking at Him and listening to His voice, so different and soft, telling one story in Bengali and I understood everything. In my heart I heard Him say, "Come, I let you pass through this situation because I wanted you here close to me, feeling my fragrance and my love for you. Are you enjoying?"

Dádá Nirgunánanda (continued)

One day in 1988, a worker read a newspaper article to Bábá about hyperinflation, poverty and unemployment in Peru. Bábá immediately called Dádá Ambareshvaránanda, the Chief Secretary of Proutist Universal in GT Sector, and I, the Sectorial Secretary, into His room. He asked us, "I want a reply within 24 hours what PROUT has done and what AMURT has done for the suffering people in Peru."

At that time no *ácarya* or LFT was even in Peru. So I phoned to South America and ordered Dádá Liilánanda and Didi Ánanda Anuradha to rush there. Of course they could not get there overnight, so the next day I lied to Bábá and said that they had both already reached there. Bábá accepted the statement. We believe He did so because, though He knew the truth, He saw our sincerity and accepted it. Later both Dádá and Didi went and worked very hard in Lima. They organized a community kitchen in a poor slum run by the mothers' association that fed all the children every day for years.

Bábá later told me, "AMURT is the immediate solution, PROUT is the long-term solution. You have to make the people economically independent. For that, PROUT has to create economic cooperatives. At the same time, AMURT has to do immediate relief, because you cannot teach hungry people the philosophy. Through selfless service, you can also attract the masses to our Ideology."

Once in 1989 in the middle of the night, Bábá called all the Sectorial Secretaries into his room. He was extremely serious and the room was charged with an intense spiritual vibration. He said, "I cannot sleep because of the suffering of humanity in Peru. If we don't come forward to help them, who will?"

All the *dádás* were touched and felt it in every cell of their bodies. At that moment Bábá introduced a new wing of the Mission called Seva Dal. This would concentrate on doing service, even in the most difficult and dangerous situations. Bábá chose Peru to be the sectorial headquarters of AMURT Seva Dal, Paraguay for ERAWS Seva Dal, Brazil for Education Seva Dal and Bolivia for AMURTEL Seva Dal.

Miirá (Petrópolis, Brazil)

After many adventures, I and my companions reached Calcutta. Bábá's house in Lake Gardens was crowded with *dádás*, *didis*, LFT's, overseas Margis, and many poor people who were waiting for the blessed food that Bábá's workers used to distribute to them.

Bábá used to go out between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. for His field walk. I waited with a group of sisters. Only some potted plants that lined His pathway separated us from where Bábá would walk. When He passed, He gave *namaskár* to everyone. He wore a gray tunic with a white *dhoti* and black shoes. There were three pens in His shirt pocket. Then He entered His car and it drove away for about 30-40 minutes. We sang one of His beautiful Prabhát Sam'giita compositions until He returned.

While He was absent, I felt my thoughts accelerate. Amazingly, He seemed exactly as I had imagined Him to be. It was as if He and I were always together. I felt myself exploding with emotion. How could I love so much a person who did not even know me?

Standing beside the plants, I started to remember the thoughts I had during the trip. I had dreamed of holding Him and kissing Him and staying with Him. How I could have thought such things, because even those who are spiritually elevated and dedicated to the Mission and strictly follow the Sixteen Points do not get such grace. Why would I get it? I also wondered about the reason He did not receive women alone for Personal Contact.

With these thoughts in my mind, Bábá returned His walk. After He got out of the car, He passed very close to me. I looked at Him and thought, "Thank you for everything, Bábá!" At that exact moment, He turned to me and gave me a smile that made me dissolve like ice cream in the sun!

The following day I had bad diarrhea. I could not understand why, because until that time everything was so perfect that I was feeling like the happiest person on the planet. I felt like a child who starts to walk always protected by the hands of her father. Yet even with a fever of 40ø (103øF), I did not miss the opportunity to see Bábá again in Lake Gardens.

As usual He appeared at 6:00 p.m., did *namaskár* and entered the car. What really impressed me was that none of the eighty people standing around the car moved away as it slowly reversed beside us down the driveway. It passed just beside me. When the back window came to me, I

looked in. Bábá looked straight into my eyes. I did *namaskár* and Bábá returned the greeting and said some *Sam'skrta* or Bengali words.

Then I felt the heat of Bábá. I could not hear or see anything except light everywhere. I felt as though my body no longer existed. Bábá was inside me and I was lost in that ocean of light.

When I became aware that Bábá's car had gone, I felt great sadness. I started to cry like a child. I have no idea how long I was in that state.

After the experience, I went to the verandah and lay down. I was feverish and not well. There I started to mentally talk to Bábá, saying, "Oh Bábá, why don't You cure me? I know You can do it if You want to. But maybe I don't deserve it."

I was really in a very bad condition. Though I tried to meditate, I could not. I remember one *dádá* who had become sick in Petrópolis. He returned to India so that Bábá might cure him. I wondered whether he was better now and where he was.

I realized that Bábá must then be in His room directly over the verandah where I was. I mentally started to talk to Him again. I said, "Bábá, I believe so much in You. I left everything including my daughters for Your love. I am here only for Your love. Please don't let me die here so far from my house. My daughters need me."

Then the driver of Bábá's car called me to go with him to a doctor who lived just on the corner. So I followed him. When I reached the gate, who should appear giving me *namaskár*? The same *dádá* whom I had just been thinking about! Then I realized how incredible Bábá is.

The doctor examined me and gave me medicines. When I got home, I changed my clothes to go to bed. Then an LFT who was sleeping in the next room brought me some delicious food with much pepper and spices. She said that it was a present from Bábá. I ate it with deep gratitude. If my parents had seen me eating it in my condition, they would have said that I was crazy.

When I woke up the next morning, I was completely cured! I meditated and practiced *ásanas* as if nothing had happened.

Another night that I went to see Bábá, I found Him in a very serious mood. I became worried, because someone told me that He was not happy because the *didis* and *dádás* were not showing enough progress.

I returned to the *didis*' office and was alone in my room when an English woman named Málati entered. She lit the little stove and put an aluminum pot on the fire to boil, saying that she would prepare a meal for

us. I woke up and started to peel the vegetables. While we worked, we talked about Bábá. She told me about her love for Him. When He was in jail, she used to visit Him frequently. We ate dinner together and cried a lot because we have the same person in our hearts. The most interesting thing is that although we did not speak the same language, we could talk about Bábá for more than two hours! As a friend of mine used to say, "Bábá is Bábá. . ."

In one *darshan*, Bábá talked about the children of Brazil. At that moment He looked straight into my eyes. Though I was in the hall with more than 200 people, He knew who I was. I became emotional and started to mentally speak with Bábá. I expressed my hopes and desires. One year later I realized that many of the hopes and desires I had expressed in that moment came true.

One night at 12:30 a.m. we went to Bábá's house in Tiljala to watch Him walk in His garden. I climbed onto some bricks beside the wall and stood there exactly in front of His house so I could watch.

I started to visualize Him coming and looking straight at me. My mind became very agitated. When He came walking from behind the house, I thought, "How could I, a person so insignificant, be before such a superior being?"

Suddenly He stopped and looked in my direction. My cells exploded with emotion. Then He turned and came towards me. He stopped in front of me. "If love had a form," I thought, "it would have the form of Bábá."

Tapeshvar (Brasília, Brazil)

“The feet of the Lord emanate flowers to the Universe.”

In 1988 in Tiljala, Calcutta, I attended a *darshan* of Bábá. I had a very strong desire to touch Bábá's feet. In the *darshan* there were many people, and the hall was completely full when I arrived. I thought, ‘How can I touch Bábá's feet if nobody even lets me sit near the front?’ I could not squeeze into the back of that big hall, standing.

Then one person called me outside on the verandah where many brothers were waiting to dance *t'án'd'ava* for Bábá. As it was my first experience in a *darshan*, I decided to get closer when the door opened. Soon the door opened and they entered and danced *t'án'd'ava* for Bábá. Immediately after, I passed through them and sat very close to Bábá.

During the entire lecture I watched Bábá's feet and admired them. I felt that I was really in love. . . .

When Bábá finished, everyone prostrated in *sást'aunga pran'am*. But I thought to do *sást'aunga pran'am* directly on Bábá's feet, so I jumped forward and touched his feet. I closed my eyes and lost consciousness.

When I came back to my senses, my hands were full of flowers. Bábá was leaving the hall and many devotees were running in my direction and asking me for some of the petals. I gave a few of them away, but soon another fifteen people were also asking for some. I gave a little to each one and rapidly left, because still more people were coming. That day I realized that from the feet of the Lord emanate flower petals.

Nirainjana (São Paulo, Brazil) continued

In 1988 I had a crisis with my wife and we separated. It was very difficult for me and I suffered a lot. I was very sad, because my revolutionary marriage was broken and we had four children. I wanted to see Bábá.

My father was going to Europe and he invited me to travel with him. I took the opportunity so that I could go to India, because that was my objective. My father did not like Ananda Marga and he did not want to know about the organization. I could not tell him that I wanted to go to India, so I wondered how to get there.

When I was in Europe, I asked everywhere about ticket prices, and I discovered that they were very expensive. We then went to Israel on a business trip. When we finished, I told my father that I would stay there for a while as a vacation. Instead I went to Greece and finally to India. It was the cheapest way I could find.

When I arrived there in December 1988, I was depressed and confused and I thought about what Bábá wanted from my life. The *dádás* received me very well, and Dádá Sarvátmánanda, who was General Secretary of the organization, gave me a place to stay next to them. I slept there, I had very good food, and I used to spend all day in Bábá's house. I did not want to leave that house for even a minute. I meditated day and night because I wanted to understand what was happening. My legs ached from so much meditation. I realized that my suffering was a spiritual opportunity because I had never meditated so much in my life. I spent all the time in Bábá's house, and He stayed just above me. I realized that suffering brings us closer to God.

After a few days it was already time to return. Nobody in my family could know that I was in India. To go back I had to take a plane from Bombay to Bahrain, another plane to Greece, then connect with other airlines. All my flights were already booked to arrive in Brazil on Christmas.

When I arrived at the airport in Bahrain, my connecting flight had already left. The airline staff told me that I had to wait for one week, and like this I would lose all my connections and could not arrive in Brazil in time. I got very angry with them, and demanded explanations. I asked for another flight, however they refused to pay for the ticket. I argued, but they were only willing to pay for my hotel.

I thought, "Bábá, I came to India and you betrayed me. My jour-

ney was so good and now you have forgotten me. How can you do this?" Then I started to think about this, pacing back and forth, not knowing what to do. I was angry with Bábá.

Then the manager of the company answered the phone. Suddenly he looked at me with astonishment and shock. He hung up the telephone and called me over. He said, "The plane that you missed has to come back because of technical problems." At that moment I felt Bábá's presence very strong. I had to turn away because I could not control myself and I started to cry. I had thought badly about Bábá, and suddenly he gave me a very strong proof that He was with me.

The plane returned and it did not even stop at the passenger terminal. Then a car came and picked me up with my baggage. I entered the plane and nobody understood anything. The passengers were astonished that I entered then. I was in a state of grace. I asked myself how Bábá could do this thing so powerfully, to bring a Boeing jet back as no one could discover any defect in the plane.

My experience with Bábá did not stop when I arrived in Brazil. One bag did not arrive, and I was very worried that my family would discover that I had gone to India. I was managing an agricultural business of the family. A few days later the company representative telephoned to my father and said that my bag had arrived from India. So he discovered about my secret journey and the seriousness of my relation with Bábá.

On January 6, 1989, I was with my family at their house in Ubatuba. There is a stone there on the beach on which I like to meditate. In my meditation I started to feel Bábá's presence. I felt very light. When I returned after meditation, my family was already eating dinner. My father started to argue with me. He disowned me and said that I had nothing more to do with them, and that the business that I was doing was no longer my responsibility.

Suddenly I found myself in a very difficult situation, separated without money or a job or a place to stay. I felt that it was clearly a play of Bábá, but at that time I could not understand the reason for it.

I went to the *jágrti* in São Paulo to live and work. It was a very good experience, and I could meditate for a long time each day. It continued for about a year and a half.

When I was there, we did much business with India. The tickets at that time were extremely cheap, averaging only \$350. I used to go and come very easily. I went to many Dharma Mhá Cakras in India. I under-

stood that Bábá wanted me to be close to Him. That was the spiritual result of my father's fight with me. I realized a lot and had several spiritual experiences in India with Bábá.

During Dharma Mhá Cakra in 1989, I was able to attend several meetings that Bábá held in His house: with AMURT representatives, the Bhukti Pradhans, etc. One morning I was waiting on the stairs for the next meeting that I could attend. The place was already crowded. The rhythm and excitement that Bábá gave to the organization was incredible.

Suddenly Bábá decided not to continue the scheduled meetings. He abruptly came out walking very fast and entered his car to give *darshan*. It was early, so neither the driver nor the *dádás* were prepared. Everyone came out running after Him. When I went down in the melee, I could not find my slippers because someone had taken them, so I found another pair to use.

That night Bábá was scheduled to give His discourse. I was with some Margis from Brazil, so we decided to eat only a little and to meditate a lot. We went to a tree where Bábá used to meditate in the past. The place had a very powerful vibration and we could meditate a long time. At night we went to the huge tent crowded with Margis. Bábá gave his discourse and everyone felt a very strong vibration.

At the end He did *barábhaya mudrá*. At that moment I saw light coming out from His hands like luminous rays all around His body. It was a very powerful experience and I cannot explain in words what I felt. At that moment I was absolutely sure that Bábá was Parama Purus'a.

I started to meditate and I could not stop ideating on that image. It continued for a long time in my mind. I meditated for several hours. When I opened my eyes, there was nobody around me anymore. It was very late. My body felt so light that I thought I was floating.

Then I started to feel remorse because I had taken the slippers of another person. I was feeling very pure, and I should not have done that. I felt very bad and thought, "I must return these slippers." I went back to the house of Bábá. When I arrived there, Dádá Keshavánanda, Bábá's Personal Assistant, was awake and he saw me come. He called me, so I told him the story of the slippers and about my experience. He said that this type of confusion often happened with all the crowds of Margis in Dharma Mhá Cakra.

He invited me to stay and meditate beside Bábá's room. I stayed there all night feeling a very strong attraction for Bábá, even though His

physical body was on the other side of the wall. I was so close, and it was a tremendous inner experience. I cannot describe in words what it was like. My life after that realization with Bábá changed completely and I was much more sure who was Bábá.

In June 1990 I went again to India. The organization was becoming big and it was very difficult to be close to Bábá. But even in that situation I had some little experience with Him. One Sunday we were in the darshan hall and I was going to do t'án'd'ava with some other brothers. Bábá came and I started to dance. I danced t'án'd'ava very strong, with tremendous concentration, thinking, "Bábá, I am here to fight for You." When I started to think this, Bábá turned and stared at me very seriously. This image of Bábá was engraved in my subconscious. Sometimes when I do t'án'd'ava, I again see this image of Bábá clearly. It was a wonderful grace. I think that when I can bring this image clearly to my consciousness, it is the best meditation that I can do.

In one of the darshans, I was sitting in front of Bábá when I started to meditate. He was in my Guru Cakra. When I opened and closed my eyes, I could see His real image in me. I began to feel that I never wanted this image to go out of my mind. I asked Bábá to please never leave me. It was as if He came to me and I came to Him. This remains like a photograph in my mind, and until today I keep this like a wonderful gift. I think that the strongest part of my meditation are these memories which are still alive and do not dim with time.

Didi Bāsantii - continued

In 1988-89 I was working in Venezuela as an LFT, supervising two Ananda Marga schools that were six hours away from each other and because of this I could not be absent for long. After many months I started to miss spiritual company, called satsaunga. I wanted to meet other LFT's and ácáryas again, to talk about Bábá, to sing and dance kiirtana together. I felt alone and frustrated with Bábá that He wasn't taking care of me. Finally there was RDS in Colombia, seven hours away by bus.

I arrived at Maicao at the border area at 5:00 p.m. Then I learned that there were no more buses to Colombia until the next morning. It was a very remote and dangerous area; I learned that there were also no buses back to Venezuela. I had no extra money, and there was no hotel anyway. I asked one woman if it was possible to sleep in the police station, but she said that they were worse than the criminals! I was crying inside, and thinking, 'Bábá, what to do now?'

As I had no place to stay, the woman I had met on the bus told me I could spend the night in her house. Most of the people around there, including this lady, were Guajiros -- tribal people with a reputation for being very violent. Still, there was no option, so I remembered my Guru Mantra and went with her. When her husband came to meet her, I was afraid because his vibration was very crude (he was a butcher), but again I had no option.

We drove far into the jungle to a lonely house. It was seven o'clock at night when we arrived. Outside were many pigs, dogs and chickens. The old house was made of bamboo with no furniture or decoration except a tangle of hammocks. The astonished faces of many children of different ages surrounded me. They started speaking in their own language, surprised at the presence of a stranger. I was also nervous, not knowing what would happen.

As it was getting dark, the woman showed me a hammock I could use. I was hot and wanted to take half bath, but there was no water. I wanted to meditate, but there were chickens running all around me, so it was impossible. I was carrying a book in my bag, Bábá Loves All, because I was trying to learn a little English. Inside was a photo of Bábá that I always carried when I travel, so I placed it next to my heart and lay down in the hammock. For a long time in that position, I could not sleep because I was cold and hungry. The previous day had been fasting, and

that day I was very busy and nervous, and I could not get any sentient, vegetarian food. So I could not sleep, and I was very angry with Bábá. I thought that He was not taking care of me.

With this thought in my mind, I fell asleep and started dreaming that I was at Ananda Nagar. Hundreds of Margis, LFT's and ácáryas were present. Everybody was running around like crazy, looking for the place where Bábá was giving darshan. Finally I found Him. When I entered the room, only sisters were there. Everybody, including me, was wearing a white sari. The vibration there was quite strong.

There was one place near Bábá, and I could have sat there, but I was sad and so decided to sit far away. Physically Bábá looked younger, like in some of His older photos. He was so handsome, looking at me and smiling. In His expression, I felt that He was telling me, "Don't you see? When you really want to, you can find me, and I'm always with you."

I remained serious, and my ego was unable to absorb the sweetness of that smile. All the people present were totally absorbed in His presence. The faces of His devotees were shining, reflecting the Cosmic love that was inside the hall. He was telling many shlokas (Sam'skrta verses).

The vibration was becoming more intense and everyone's eyes were closed, their minds absorbed in Him. Suddenly He gave barábhaya mudrá and I felt such strong energy coming to me. I felt myself totally lost, trying to understand what was happening to me internally. Bábá went out, but nobody could move, except me. I went out because I wanted to do sádhaná. I went into the next room, and two LFT's were there doing blissful sádhaná, but I went out again because I wanted to be alone at that moment.

I woke up just at daybreak. I was not feeling fear, hunger or cold anymore. I felt blissful, feeling that I had just spent the whole night with Bábá.

The lady came and showed me a lake where I could bathe. Afterwards she brought me to the bus depot. Five hours later I reached RDS. Then I started crying, feeling so sorry that I had doubted Bábá. How could I think that he would forget me even one moment? But while crying, I was still completely in bliss.

In May 1989 I went to India with many Margis and LFT's from GT Sector to attend DMC. After four days in New Delhi, I received a

message that I could not attend DMC because there were many problems in my field, and I should go back immediately. The next day everyone was going to Calcutta. They were very happy, and I was so sad, crying like a child in my room. My desire to see Bábá was very strong, and I could not accept that I was in India and would not be able to see Him.

The next morning, a sister from GT Sector asked me when I was leaving for Calcutta. I started to cry and told her it was impossible for me to see Bábá that time. Then she told me she was sure that something would happen and I would attend DMC. Later one *dádá* also told me that if I really desired to see Bábá, He would satisfy me.

That night I went to the airport with two others. On the way I asked Bábá to please do something, because I really wanted to see Him. We were on the waiting list. The airline staff informed us that the flight was completely full and we could only try again after five days. I was so happy because I could now go to see Bábá and return in time for the flight.

As soon as I reached Ananda Nagar, I took a bath and hurried to Bábá's house. He was walking on the roof as we stood below and sang *kiirtana*. Then He sat in a chair, and I felt that He was looking at me and saying mentally, "Acha, finally you came." I cried like anything.

The next morning, though, I had to leave again. I went to a Margi's house in nearby Bokaro. He was to buy my ticket and take me to the train because at that time I could not speak English. I spent three days with him. The last night before I had to go to Delhi, I could not meditate. I was crying and mentally fighting with Bábá. Why did He bring me here if I cannot be with Him? I asked Him to let me stay, and promised to try to solve the problems back in my sector after I saw Him.

I had to leave that night at 11:00 p.m. Before going to the train station, I did *Guru Pújá* and asked Bábá to do something because I did not want to go.

Suddenly a storm blew up and all the lights in the city went out. The Margi said that we would have to wait until the electricity came on again, but it never did that night.

The next day when he tried to get me a new ticket, he was told there had been an accident the previous day so travel to Delhi would be impossible for a few more days. He came home and told me that he could not do anything more because DMC was starting the next day and he had to leave for Ananda Nagar. As it was impossible to reach Delhi in time for the flight, I went with him. When I saw Bábá the next day in *darshan*,

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I felt Him telling me, "Well, this time you gave me a little trouble to bring you here!"

I cannot express how happy and blissful I felt. Those days at Ananda Nagar were like a dream. Even now, when I close my eyes, I feel that I am still there with Him and I will be forever.

Dádá Pavanánanda

In May 1989, I went to Calcutta for World RDS reporting as the representative of GT Sector. I was very excited because it was the first time that I was going to give my report directly to Bábá.

Bábá had a system of taking reports from each sector in a particular order. GT Sector was the fifth sector. After He heard the New York Sector representative, the fourth, He declared that the reporting was over and He left the hall. I could not believe it. I asked Dádá Keshavánanda, "Is it possible that Bábá will continue later?"

He explained, "As Bábá has declared that the RDS is over, He probably will not have another meeting. But don't worry. After Bábá goes for field walk, He may come into the hall and speak with the representatives again."

I felt very sad. I thought, "If Bábá does not take my report, then what was the use of my coming to India?"

That night, we waited in the hall. But after His field walk, Bábá went directly up to His room. So I went back to Dádá Keshavánanda. He said, "Let's see tomorrow what happens."

The same thing happened the next day. Then one senior dádá who was doing good work in Africa said, "Don't worry, Bábá is always here. You can see him next time. Just go back to your field and do your work."

I felt that everything in my existence was shattered. I started crying. Tears were rolling down my cheeks. Everyone in the hall was so surprised. Several workers came and tried to calm me down, but I just cried louder and louder.

Upstairs Bábá heard my crying. He called Dádá Keshavánanda and asked him, "Who is crying downstairs?"

"Bábá, it must be Dádá Pavanánanda."

"Why is he crying?"

"Bábá, he told me that he was very disappointed that You could not take his report."

"He's right. I should have taken his report. Tell him not to worry. Tell them to bring garlands tomorrow morning when I go for my field walk."

During that era, Bábá usually did not accept garlands from the representatives because of His poor health. So when Dádá Keshavánanda came downstairs to tell us this news, everyone was so happy that we would get a chance to physically give garlands to Bábá. They all came up

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to congratulate me.

The next morning Bábá came into the hall and personally accepted our garlands one by one. When my turn came, He said, "Now are you happy?"

"Yes, Bábá."

"Yours is a very big sector. You have so much work to do there. So please do your work sincerely. Do your work. I will always be with you." Then He gave me a big namaskár.

After this exchange I felt so much bliss because I had the chance to talk personally with Him and to be so physically close that I could put my garland around His neck. I realized that it was His play to first disappoint me until I felt so much pain of separation, and only after that to give me such a profound devotional experience that I could never forget.

Ramesh (Acre, Brazil - continued)

In 1989 I traveled to India with the intention of having the darshan of Bábá. Mayajiit from Rio de Janeiro and I traveled together by train to Ananda Nagar. On the journey, when I was sleeping, we were robbed. The thief grabbed my money belt from my waist in which I had all my documents including my passport, my return ticket and my money. I immediately awoke and started to chase him, but he jumped off the train. For a moment I considered jumping off the train to catch him, but instead returned to my seat thinking, "No, it didn't happen by chance! There must be a reason why it happened in this way!"

In Ananda Nagar I thought about this all the time. I realized that after the DMS I would have to go to Calcutta to start the process of replacing my lost documents. I also felt a desire to dance t'án'd'ava in front of Bábá there. So I wondered if I would have the opportunity to do this, and if I was deserving of it.

In Tiljala I was in my room when one dádá entered asking, "Would you like to dance t'án'd'ava in front of Bábá?" Automatically I said, "Yes!"

After the t'án'd'ava, Bábá gave a lecture in Bengali. He mentioned that Brazil is the country with the biggest Catholic population in the world. He also said that the unit of Rio de Janeiro had started another Master Unit.

Then He gave barábhaya mudrá. At that moment many people cried with emotion. Finally we did Guru Pújá. I was sitting near the front of Bábá. I closed my eyes, and while I sang, I imagined that I was offering a flower to Bábá. But when I imagined that flower and the face of Bábá, an image of the universe in the form of a spiral of stars and galaxies arose, moving in front of me. This movement was circling toward the nucleus. It gave me a euphoric sensation and satisfaction.

While I was imagining all this, the face of Bábá disappeared from my mind, leading me to wonder where He was. So I opened my eyes and watched Bábá doing namaskár to everyone. I did namaskár in return. At that moment I understood why Bábá had taken all my documents: that event was necessary so that I could have this contact with Him.

Later Bábá gave back everything that was taken from me. Within a few days I had my replacement ticket with an authorization letter from the Brazilian Embassy to travel. By Bábá's grace, everything was solved

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and I came home without any problem. With this experience I realized why Bábá says that nothing in this universe is impossible to Parama Purus'a.

Didi Valaka

I was born in Italy and initiated in Verona at the end of 1988. A short time later I traveled with a friend and her 3-year-old child to South America. Actually, I knew almost nothing about this continent, and I was not sure why I was going. But I had a strong feeling that somehow I would find my purpose in life here.

Just before we left, one Margi sister gave me the address of a jágrti in Bolivia. She told me she had heard it was very nice and that I should visit it.

We flew to Peru and traveled around the country for three months. During that time, the desire to meet Ananda Margis grew stronger and stronger in me. Then, the day before we crossed the border to Bolivia, I mysteriously lost the address that I had guarded so carefully.

So the next day in La Paz, I left my friend in the guest house and started my search to find Ananda Marga. I was sure that somehow I would find it. I spent the whole day traveling across the city and inquiring at the telephone office, the municipal hall and the cultural center. Then someone suggested that I try the School of Philosophy. It was closed, but one person there said she had seen an Ananda Marga *dádá* when he gave a lecture there once. She did not know his address, but said she knew that he used to visit the Hare Krishna vegetarian restaurant.

So the next day my friend and I went there to eat. I wondered again how I would find Ananda Marga. Then one nice man I asked said that he was an Ananda Margi. I was so happy! He gave me the address of a Japanese Margi in Santa Cruz. So we went there.

In the bus terminal I telephoned to my mother in Italy whom I had not contacted for two months. She was very excited. She asked me, "Are you working with some priests?"

"No, of course not. Why do you ask that?"

"Because I visited one psychic palm reader and she told me that you are going to work with priests and you are not coming back."

"Don't worry, Mother, of course I'm coming back."

In Santa Cruz, the Margi we met was very nice, but she explained that no *dádá* or didi stayed in Bolivia. Then she handed us an invitation that a *dádá* had given her during his last visit. It was for the Sectorial Retreat in Paraguay that would be held soon in July 1989. This was fantastic news for me, because we were planning to go to Paraguay at just that time.

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When we arrived the *dadá* at the reception table was quite surprised to see us come in with our backpacks and the little girl. Then he was even more surprised when he learned that we had come all the way from Italy!

I was so happy in that retreat, because I felt like I was with my own family, like I had known everyone for a long time. I did not want to leave them. One *didi* spoke to me and asked me to stay after the retreat and work with them there on their Master Unit. I immediately thought, "Wow, this is what I really want!"

At the same time I was obligated to continue touring South America with my companions. So then I thought, "No, I can't stay, I have to finish my trip and go back." These different thoughts tore me apart, between what I wanted and what I thought I should do. So this dilemma made that retreat like both heaven and hell together. I cried almost continuously for three days.

During one meal Brother Manavendra from São Paulo asked me, "Why don't you become an LFT?" That was exactly what I wanted to do, but I couldn't. So I started crying again so much that I had to leave the room.

Finally I decided that I had to stay no matter what. I told my companion, and then she started to cry. But internally I was so happy. I knew from that moment that I would become a *didi*, because to be with Ananda Marga was all I wanted.

I worked six months as an LFT in Porto Alegre, then I went to India, and from there to the Ácarya Training Center in Davao, Philippines for a year. Afterwards I was posted back to South America.

So from this experience I realized that Bábá was guiding me and helping me to find Him. I realized that my earlier intuition that I would find the purpose of my life in South America was true.

Indra Devi (Peru)

In 1989 I met Ananda Marga. I had a nervous problem that developed in my work as a teacher for 25 years. After six months I had the opportunity to go to a retreat in Asuncion. There I asked Bábá to please give me a sign so that I could really believe in Him.

One day during free time for some strange reason I felt very tired, so I went to my room and lay down and fell asleep.

I dreamed that I was walking. On the horizon I saw what looked like a star. Slowly it came nearer to me. When it was very close I could see that it was a light blue color and really beautiful. It made a strange sound. Then it went about four meters away.

Next I felt that this light was enveloping me. I entered an ecstasy so profound that even if I wanted to, I could not open my eyes. Finally, when I opened my eyes I saw a light blue color all around me. I felt no pain or sadness, only peace and a tremendous joy. Suddenly, about two meters away, appeared a reflection of a person. He appeared to be Bábá. I really felt that He was my Master, and I wept with joy.

When I awoke, I realized that Bábá had given me the sign that I had asked for. I can never forget this experience. Every time that I meditate I remember this and I feel happy and peaceful.

Málatii (Uruguay)

In the summer of 1989, when I was quite a new Margi, I traveled to Peru. There I toured through the ancient and mystic Inca ruins at Machu-Picchu. While I was there, I regularly meditated on the mountains.

At that time I did not have a very clear idea about Bábá or Ananda Marga, though I was searching my inner feelings. One night, after my meditation, I looked at the stars, and a very special emotion came into my soul. After contemplating deeply, I fell asleep on the beach and had the following dream:

I saw a garden that was full of beautiful flowers, trees and exotic plants. Many children were playing and singing. In the center of the garden stood a green house.

Suddenly I was inside the house, and I saw many *dádás*. I was searching for something. I tried to enter one room, but two *dádás* were guarding the door. They refused to let me go inside, even after I insisted.

So I started to cry. Then, as if by magic, the door opened. A beautiful celestial light came out. Inside the room I saw that somebody in white was sitting. As I looked at his face, I realized that it was Bábá. He smiled at me and invited me to come in.

When I entered, everything immediately disappeared. The next thing I knew, the morning sun was shining on my face and I woke up.

This dream changed my life. It made me feel the inner call of my Guru. I never imagined that I could meet Him in a dream. So I left my tour of the Machu-Picchu ruins, and started another journey in Bábá's Mission. From that night, I feel that the Cosmic Force is my eternal companion on the path, and this Cosmic Force is Him.

Naviin (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) - continued

One night I was almost asleep when the picture of Bábá arose in my mind. It was not a dream. It was a thought that arose as if by incantation. In my vision, He was walking, dressed in white. My body rapidly became so hot that I started to sweat. Soon after everything returned to normal.

Soon after this another spiritual experience happened. I was on my island, late in the afternoon, almost asleep, when I started to hear one sound in my mind. It was a very sweet instrumental melody. I cannot describe now what kind of instrument it was or if there were more than one. As I listened to the melody, I started to cry a lot.

I did not know if this was a dream, because I was seeing everything in my room. The most curious part was that the tears were extremely pleasant. I felt very relieved by this crying and I did not want to stop. I do not know how long it lasted until I really awoke. Then I did not know if everything had been a dream or if I had really cried until I noticed that my pillow was soaked with tears and my face was drenched. I had cried for a long time.

I fell asleep again and started to dream that I was with Bábá. In that dream He was explaining something about grammar.

I wanted to see Bábá personally, but I heard that He said He would pass His last years in Brazil, so that this made me feel unmotivated to go to India. I knew that He was not giving Personal Contact often.

In mid 1989 I was again on the island at night, trying to sleep, when suddenly arose in my mind a very strong desire to see Bábá quickly. So I concluded that I had to go to India. I went in October through London with a group of Brazilian Margis. In London I met one Brazilian *ácarya*, Dádá Mukrátmánanda, and we met again in Ananda Nagar in India. In Calcutta, before we went there, we were informed that Bábá had suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized. That made me clashed, because I had made many sacrifices to travel to see Him and now I could not.

We went to Ananda Nagar anyway with the hope that Bábá would still go and give DMC. When we arrived there, we were disappointed again, because we learned that He would not go. I was desolated and sitting inside the huge pandal tent with about 5,000 people waiting for the beginning of the reading of the Bábá's New Year *Ananda Vanii* message to the Margis in different languages from around the world. I put my head

down in my arms and looking at the ground, I asked Bábá, "Was it for this that You brought me here? To come here and not see You? Not hear You? In the end, why did You bring me here?" At that instant Dádá Mukhtámánanda called me and asked me to read the *Ánanda Vanii* to the 5000 people in the Portuguese language. I was perplexed because again when I mentally called to Bábá He answered instantly what He wanted from me. At that time His answer was an order, something a little bit frightening: "I cannot be here physically, but I always assume responsibility for what has to be done."

I was very moved with the responsibility. After the DMS, we went back to Calcutta. In the first days of 1990 I had the chance to see Bábá several times, walking in His garden. On one of these walks, the Margis stood along the wall, shouted "*Param Pita Bábá Ki!*" and Bábá responded in a good mood, "*Jai!*", which means victory. It was the first time that I listened to Bábá's voice. From that moment I realized more intensely the lesson that He had prepared me to continue my spiritual path even when He was not physically among us. Now it is our responsibility to establish His Mission.

Jiivesh (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - continued)

Before Bábá left His physical body, I had the opportunity at the end of 1989 to go to India to see Him in person. Though I always said that I did not need to go to India to see my Guru because He was inside me, I cannot deny that the longing to see Him physically grew inside me each day.

My travel to India was spiritually very meaningful for me. First I went to Ananda Nagar, but Bábá was not there as He was in a hospital in Calcutta. After He was discharged, I went to Calcutta to see Him. All of us used to run to the wall surrounding His house to watch Him when he went out for his daily walks in His garden. One day He walked rapidly next to me about one and a half meters away. A big leaf that was in front of me prevented me from seeing His face so that I could only see His body. In my anxiety I asked myself what that leaf was doing exactly there!

One day before my departure, we all went to the wall again to try to see Bábá. That day I went earlier to get a good place as it was a real mess due to the huge number of Margis.

When Bábá left His house, He stopped and did *namaskár* to everyone and walked towards the gate. After I returned the *namaskár*, I thought that it could not be the last time that I would see Bábá. So I ran to the gate and climbed it so I could see Bábá perfectly. Our eyes met. I felt that while His eyes were looking at me, He was also looking to the infinite. I left India in a state of ecstasy, very happy that I could see Bábá personally.

Dádá Rainjitánanda (cont.)

I went to work in Romania at the beginning of 1990. Bábá had designated that country for us to do All Round Service (ARS). So I went there just after Communism fell. There were many opportunities, but somehow we were not succeeding in our efforts. We wanted to open a children's home there, but we were unable to find a suitable house and were facing many difficulties.

I used to go many nights to do *kápálika sádhan'a* (a higher meditation practiced by *avadhútas* and *avadhútikás* to overcome fear). One day in my *sádhaná* I heard Bábá say, "I am going to do the work here, so why do you worry about it?" Then I felt very tranquil, and sure enough, many positive things started happening after that.

To reach the cemetery, I had to drive across an area where construction equipment was located. One night I saw that there were many guards and police with dogs. I turned back because I could not go that way. Then I thought, "I have come tonight to do meditation, so I will not go back without doing it." So I followed a different road out of Bucharest and drove through a village. The village was very beautiful. On the other side, I found a large deserted field, so I decided to do my *kápálika sádhan'a* there.

A few days later I returned to Germany. There I received a phone call from the Regional Secretary. He told me, "Dádá, we found a house for our children's home. We want to buy it." So I flew there to finalize the purchase. When he drove me to the place, I was amazed to find that it was in the same village I had discovered when looking for a place to do meditation. Now we have bought a second house there to enlarge the home and give us land for cultivation.

We never know how we are doing the work and in what way we are working. I feel Bábá is working through us and we are not even aware what is happening when we visit different places.

Sahadeva (Asuncion, Paraguay)

My relationship with Bábá was very internal. In 1990 I arrived in Tiljala, Calcutta. When I was called for PC, everything happened very fast. I entered and Bábá was sitting at the end of the room. It looked like a movie. The vibration was incredible. Actually I did not understand what was happening and my mind was blank. We had a conversation. The relationship between us was like between a grandson and his grandfather.

He asked me many things such as where I was from and how old I was. Then He said, "You are so small. You came from so far. Didn't you cry when you came?"

"No, I didn't cry."

"Oh, but your parents were crying."

Actually my parents did cry.

Suddenly after the introduction, He stopped and put His hand to His mouth. He closed His eyes and said, "Hmm..." I felt that He was penetrating into me and looking beyond.

Then He told me about another LFT. In this way, He told me many personal things that were very useful for me.

Next he asked me to take off my shirt. I thought He was going to beat me. He raised His hand holding his stick, and I closed my eyes waiting for the blow. Then He gently touched me with the stick, and at that moment I felt light and free. He said, "I couldn't punish my little boy."

He touched my *sahasrára cakra* and repeated some *Sam'skrta mantras*. Then He said, "Now you are going to be a very good boy." Bábá's hands were very soft.

At that moment I was nearly crying. He asked me to come closer. He was almost touching my face, saying, "My very good boy." I grabbed His hands and held them very tightly. Then I began to cry uncontrollably like a crazy man. At that point, He grabbed me with both hands and smiled, saying, "Wouldn't you like to sit in Bábá's lap?"

"Yes." But when I got up I realized that I was so big that I decided only to sit beside Him. Bábá said, "No, no, sit here on my lap!" So I sat on the left side of His lap. I wanted to embrace Him; but for some reason He didn't allow me.

When I left the room, I felt as though I was separated from my life. I did not know what to do. This memory of sitting in Bábá's lap comforts me very much.

CHAPTER SIX

MAHÁPRAYÁN'A, BÁBÁ'S GREAT DEPARTURE: OCTOBER 21, 1990

The spiritual family of Ananda Marga received a tremendous shock when, without warning, Bábá suddenly left His physical body as a result of a heart attack. This was especially disturbing because long before an impression had been created that Bábá would not leave until 2005. This widespread misconception apparently served Bábá's purposes, for He worked steadily until the last moment of His life without interruption. Only afterward did it become apparent that He had given numerous hints of His imminent pre-planned departure that only became clear in retrospect.

In South America, two people received premonitions of Bábá's departure, and one of them also saw a clear vision of His physical departure. These accounts are followed by three spiritual experiences that took place immediately afterward and dramatically demonstrated that Bábá was still spiritually present. Finally we include the story of how Bábá appeared to one Margi who was so disappointed that she could not receive His Personal Contact.

Vishvanáth (Curitiba, Brazil) continued

On Thursday, October 18, I was working alone in the bakery of Brother Prem Kumar, preparing the bread. At 7:00 at night I started to feel very strange, that all the energy in my body was draining out. I started to feel cold and very bad. I became so weak that I had to sit down on the floor. I stayed there, feeling dizzy, and my hands trembled.

It happened with no apparent reason, because the week had gone very well. I had not felt anything wrong that day either. I had no health

problem that could have caused all that.

Soon Prem's father-in-law arrived. I told him what happened. I could hardly stand, but I managed to finish preparing the bread. Then I went home to bed.

I suffered with a very bad flu and had to stay in bed all Friday and Saturday. Friday night I started crying bitterly with no apparent reason. I became very depressed. Sushila came to see what was the matter, because I did not stop crying and shaking. After one or two hours, I was totally exhausted and fell into a deep sleep.

I dreamed that I was in a long line of people, similar to those waiting in the banks of Brazil. I asked myself, "Am I inside a bank?" There were many people and the line was moving very slowly. When I had almost arrived at the end, my mother and my aunt appeared. My mother said, "Ah, Vishvanáth has already been with him."

My aunt asked, "Is it true? You were really with him? Imagine being close to a person like that!"

Mother said, "Yes, he went to India and was next to him."

Then I asked, "Who is he? Who are you talking about?"

They did not answer but left the line with reverence. So I realized that their reverence was a *pran'am* or *namaskár*. When my turn came, I saw that there was a small table with a big black and white photo of Bábá. From that time I understood that all were giving reverence to Bábá, as if He was departing. So I gave *namaskár* to Bábá. At exactly that moment I awoke.

On Monday, October 22, I went to the house of Prem to go with him to the bakery. He told me that my sister-in-law had called. She said that she received a phone call from Germany with the news that Bábá had left His body. We did not believe it. Then I started to think that my sudden, strange illness might have been a premonition that my deepest self felt of His departure. I also believe that Bábá later came in my dream to prepare me for the news.

That same night I telephoned to São Paulo. Dádá Tapesvaránanda answered. I asked him if Bábá had really left his body. He was surprised and said, "How do you know this? Who told you?" I mentioned the call from Germany. Then with much emotion, he replied that it was true.

Although Bábá left His body, from the day that I received the news through the dream, I have never felt away from Him. On the contrary, now I feel His presence all around at every moment. Thank you, Bábá.

Jaganáth (Petrópolis, Brazil)

On Sunday, October 21 I went to *dharmacakra* in the Petrópolis yoga house. I arrived late and Dádá Dharmadevánanda signaled me to sit close to him.

In my mind I started to see the scene of the Central Office in Tiljala, Calcutta. I saw the large front compound, without the hut and sand pit of the ostrich that used to live there. In the center of the compound there was something that looked like a big mound. The vision I had was colored violet. Many people were sad, entering and leaving. I did not see Bábá anywhere in this vision.

I told this experience to Májájiit, who had been my companion when I traveled to India in 1989.

Dádá asked me to come back the next morning because he wanted to speak to me. When I arrived at 9:00 a.m. one woman was talking with him, so someone asked me to meditate. I entered the meditation room. Nobody was there. I sat and meditated in front of Bábá's picture.

Suddenly I saw the body of Bábá coming out of the frame of the photograph. His body was very pale, as if His soul had left His body more than 24 hours ago. His body was covered with a cloth that had the design of the swastika on it.

This was a big shock. My mind was conditioned that Bábá would not leave his body before coming to our Ánanda Kiirtana Master Unit in Juiz de Fora.

I could not control my emotions. I went into Dádá Dharmadevánanda's room and shouted, "Bábá left His body!"

Dádá said, "No, He's in *samadhi*, I don't accept this." I told him that I had seen His body, and he asked me how. I described my vision.

At 4:00 p.m. we received confirmation by telephone that Bábá had left. Dádá had already heard this, but he thought that Bábá was only in *samadhi*.

Some days later, Lalitesh went to India to attend the cremation ceremony of the mortal remains of Bábá. He returned with a newspaper showing pictures of the ceremony. The picture was exactly how I had seen the vision. In the center of the courtyard, a large brick mound had been constructed in the shape of the six-pointed star of our *pratik* symbol. The violet color that I saw in my vision was the smoke of the sandalwood used in the cremation. Only I did not see Bábá's body lying on top of the mound in my vision. This experience shook my way of life.

Mohan (Chile)

In October 1990, I was living alone in a cabin on a mountain near C'rdoba, Argentina. One day, I felt a desire to visit the city, even though there was no need because I had everything there. Still I went, and when I reached the *jágrti*, Dádá Bhavamuktánanda arrived. He immediately called a meeting of all the Margis. He told us that Bábá was in coma. He did not tell us of His departure.

So I stayed in the *jágrti* with some Margis, and we did a lot of *kiirtana*. All week I worried about Bábá.

One night before I slept, I started reading an article about Bábá's teachings on ecology. I felt it very deeply, and I thought that Bábá's teachings are very connected to nature, taking care of the planet and the different species.

That night I dreamt that I entered a very attractive house. There was no one inside. I started to feel strongly that this was Bábá's house. I looked around. I walked upstairs to the next floor, but still there was nobody. I continued up to the attic. While I was walking upstairs, a big light illuminated me. It was like being near the sun. An immense light, so strong. All my mind filled with this light. I knew that this light was Bábá, and His love filled me.

Then I awoke and I heard the telephone. When I answered, a Dádá told me that Bábá had left His physical body.

That day I realized the great role that Bábá played for the planet. He gave us the task of caring for it, preserving it, enriching it. I felt all His love concentrated on ecology. After that we found the Ananda Mayadiipa Master Unit very near to the mountain where I was living where we are working hard to make Bábá's ecological ideas a reality.

Naviin (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) continued

The departure of Bábá shocked me a lot because I had a very strong desire to have His Personal Contact. I thought that one day He would come to Brazil. I simply did not understand His departure.

I wanted again to be sure that He was still with me. Once again on the island I was trying to sleep. The sensation of abandonment and disillusionment started to take hold of me. I simply had not resigned myself to His departure, as it was so sudden. He did not give any warning of this. So I was very sad and did not wait for a sign from Him after everything that had happened.

It was a very disturbing sensation. I wanted to have my Personal Contact and I wanted Him to tell me personally that He would always be with me. In that state, extremely sensitive and disappointed, I decided to talk to Bábá, even though I knew it would be very difficult for Bábá to reply.

I was on the island without electricity or telephone in the total darkness at night. It was like a cavern 200 meters deep in the earth in absolute silence. If I asked something to Him, how could He answer? The first time I had spoken with Him mentally, there was a telephone by my side that suddenly rang, but now I had nothing. I continued to think about it, lying on my back in the absolute silence. Finally I decided with tears in my eyes and all the force of my mind to ask a question that was really worrying me. Mentally I asked, "Bábá, are You really with me?"

In the same instant that I finished my question, just in front of my face appeared one lightning bug flashing intensely. I started to cry, regretting that I had given so much trouble to Bábá to attend to my capricious request. At that same time I felt eternally grateful for His consideration.

From that day I never again doubted the eternal presence of Bábá in my life.

Janak (Petrópolis, Brazil) continued

In May 1990 I wanted to travel for the third time to see Bábá. After two previous trips to India, much *kiirtana*, various clashes and some progress in meditation, my devotion for Bábá had increased. It was natural, then, that I felt a desire to be near Him again.

However I thought, 'I have already been there twice, so this time I should satisfy my family's desire and take them to the United States for vacation. Then at the end of this year or at the most in May of next year I will go to India to see Bábá again.'

So when Bábá left His physical body on October 21, 1990, I was very disturbed. I felt guilty for not having chosen to go to India first. At the same time I felt betrayed by Bábá because He did not wait for me, but left before I could see Him again. So I was very clashed.

I decided to go to the yoga house in Petrópolis. On the way a drunk man suddenly stopped in front of me and said, "You speak English! You are a good soldier of God!" I had never seen him before, and he certainly did not know me, either. I felt it was clearly a message of inspiration from Bábá.

Yet my frustration at not seeing Bábá physically one more time continued to increase every day that week. A few days later I went back to the yoga house. As I walked, I thought about the many spiritual messages I had received in my life. I wondered how I, with so many imperfections, could help society, and how I could get spiritual emancipation.

Suddenly, in that distracted state, when I passed in front of a record store, one song exploded at high volume: "*Muita coisa vai fazer você mudar!*" ("Many things will make you change!"). It was the refrain of a Brazilian hit song, and someone in the store turned the volume too high by mistake. The speakers woke me from my worries, transmitting the message that I felt must have come from Bábá.

When I arrived in the yoga house, I picked up an Ananda Marga magazine. On the back cover was a story told by a *didi*. She had written, "When I was personally with Bábá for the first time, He said, 'I knew you would come. I was waiting for you.'"

These were the same words Bábá told me in the first dream that I had of Him in which He gave me personal contact. I became very emotional and cried. Finally I understood that I had no reason to feel frustrated or abandoned because He left. Bábá was always with me, even without His physical body.

Somá Devi (Juiz de Fora, Brazil)

Since I joined Ananda Marga in 1980, I always wanted to go to see my Guru, but in those times Margis from here could rarely go to India. The years passed until 1990 when I had the opportunity to make one dream come true, to live on an Ananda Marga Master Unit rural community, Ananda Kiirtana. During that year I felt a very different energy. I told my family that the next DMC in December would be very special, that something extraordinary would happen that I felt would be very good. I felt Bábá's speed would accelerate. Yet when I was questioned about my intuition, I did not have any logical reasons for my belief.

I was very inspired on the Master Unit and decided to open a kindergarten school there. I was invited to go to India in September, but I thought, 'First I want to please Bábá by opening this project, then I will go to visit Him in December DMC.'

The school opened on October 12, 1990. After one week of regular classes, I received the shocking news that Bábá had left His physical body. It was a tremendous clash for me, as I realized that I would have to go through this life without seeing my Guru. I cried a lot. A feeling of deep pain was in my heart. My mind could not accept the news.

After one month I had a very special experience. Every Sunday I used to go to the school to clean and organize everything for the classes the following week. Our school was very humble — there was one carpet and some educational materials. We used to sit on the floor because there were no chairs or tables. That Sunday as I cleaned I sang children's songs and much *kiirtana*. I finished cleaning as the sun set, which was when my children usually arrived to walk me back to our house.

I thought, "Bábá does not love me, because I wanted to see Him tremendously and I could not."

That day my children did not come. As I was going through the door to return home, I sensed an image of someone sitting on the carpet. I stared and saw that it was Bábá meditating there. I doubted my senses, but I felt that Bábá was calling me to sit in front of Him and meditate. The feeling was very real.

I sat in front of Him and closed my eyes. I felt Him enter my *anáhata cakra* and felt Him in miniature in my mental plate. Very quickly He came out and returned to His normal size in front of me. I sat in His lap. He placed one hand on the top of my head. With His other hand He touched each one of my *cakras*. I felt a very strong energy going upwards

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in my body. When Bábá touched my *sahasrára cakra*, it seemed as if I was in the middle of the cosmos. I saw stars and other planets. It is very difficult to express what I felt and what I saw then.

Then Bábá disappeared. I started to cry uncontrollably. Finally I did *Guru Pújá* and left the school.

When I walked home along the dirt road, I felt like I was under anesthesia, that I could not feel anything. I heard a buzzing sound in my right ear. At first I thought it was an insect, but then I realized that it was internal. I enjoyed the sound profoundly.

When I arrived home, everyone was already in bed. I wanted only to enjoy the silence.

I had not been able to go to India to see my Bábá, but He came and gave me Personal Contact. My deepest desire to see my Guru was realized.

My prior intuition about December was correct. We all cried in His physical absence, but Bábá filled us with His love.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EXPERIENCES WITH BÁBÁ AFTER MAHÁPRAYÁN'A: 1991 - 1995

After Bábá's physical departure, all those who love Him must seek Him within. The following experiences demonstrate how Bábá continues to guide and inspire spiritual aspirants through visions and dreams.

Sam'gamitrá told the next beautiful story to several people after her first visit to India. Tragically she died there in a swimming accident on a subsequent visit. We compiled this version from the memories of those who heard it.

Sam'gamitrá (Bogotá, Colombia)

In 1991, after Bábá's departure, I traveled to India. It was my first time and I was alone. The plane arrived in Delhi in the middle of the night. I had no idea what time it was because I had not changed my watch since I left South America. I had the address of the Ananda Marga office in South Extension, so I gave that to a taxi driver and he agreed to take me there.

The driver could not find the address. There were few lights, no road signs and only a few of the houses had numbers. It was so late at night that there was nobody on the streets that he could ask. I did not speak much English, either.

I became very nervous. Then he said that he would drop me at the police station. This made me more nervous, because the police where I come from are not very trustworthy. I begged him to keep looking. We drove around and around on those dark streets.

Finally the driver stopped and said, "No more. I will take you now to the police station."

I was crying and mentally asking Bábá to please help me. Sud-

denly, from one building I heard the sound of people singing "*Bábá Nám Kevalam*." It must be 5:00 a.m. and the Margis were doing *Pancjanya*. I pointed to the apartment where the singing was coming from, the driver checked and of course found that it was the *jágrti*.

I paid the driver and rang the bell. After a few minutes Dádá Santoshánanda, the one in charge, came to the door. We exchanged *namaskár* and I introduced myself. He asked me if I had any difficulty finding the place. I told him what had happened and how it was only when I heard the Margis singing *kiirtana* for *Pancjanya* that we could find the right address.

Dádá looked at me very strangely. Then he said, "Sister, it is 3:00 in the morning. Everyone is sound asleep. When I heard the bell, I awoke."

Then we both realized that Bábá did a miracle when I asked for His help.

Guyana Margis

Ananda Marga came to Guyana in 1991 when Dádá Jiveshánanda first arrived in Georgetown, the capital. The next four stories are the devotional experiences of the early Margis.

Jaya Devi (Georgetown)

At the retreat we had in Madhuwini in Timehri, Guyana in 1991, we did long *kiirtana* on the last day. I felt so much bliss that I wanted to cry. Then, while meditating, I saw an open field where Bábá stood dressed in white. White and yellow flowers lay around me. Unfortunately I could not see His face. Seeing Bábá, I really felt so much joy and spiritual upliftment.

Viveka (Georgetown)

On the top floor of my house in Georgetown is a small room built like a tower where I always meditate. One day in meditation I heard a strange sound like the tingling of bells and the singing of beautiful voices. The sound was so sweet that it made me very, very happy. I cannot describe how good I felt. I never heard that sound before or after.

Another time, while meditating, in the same room, I saw myself sitting in a huge, grassy field surrounded by thousands of *dádás*. They were all dressed in orange, and I also wore orange. I felt so fantastic, sitting and meditating with all those thousands of *dádás*.

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Shaunkar (Georgetown)

In 1992 I was working two different jobs to raise money to go to Brazil for the DMS. Each day I worked as a goldsmith, and every night I worked as a security guard.

On Christmas morning, at 5:00, I was directing traffic on the road in front of the factory where I worked. Suddenly I felt very fearful, as though I was about to die. I felt that an accident was about to happen. So I started to sing *kiirtana* while I directed traffic.

After singing half an hour I felt fine. Then I spotted a car coming very fast. I waved it to stop, but it continued straight at me. I stood my ground and dared him to stop. He raced past so close he nearly ran over my foot.

Then I heard a crash behind me. The car had an accident 25 meters down the road. I remembered my earlier premonition and felt that Bábá had saved me because of the *kiirtana*.

Maniká (Georgetown)

I found Ananda Marga at the end of 1991 when I suffered much grief. First my husband died, then my only son, Ananda, who was only eighteen years old. He was such a good boy who wanted to be great. He told me often that if he could rule this world, he would make everyone become good.

Five weeks after his death, I was walking home down Camp Street from a friend's house when I heard the singing and drumming of *kiirtana*. I continued past the house where the music was, but then I stopped and turned back. Again I tried to go home, but I kept hesitating and turning around.

Finally I asked at the gate if I could go in. When they said yes, I went up to the *jágrti* and stood in the door and watched the Margis dance *kiirtana*. I did not know what it was; I had never seen anything like that. One Margi invited me to join or sit, but I continued to stand. After an hour I finally sat. Someone offered me a book, but I couldn't concentrate on it. The young boy Rajesh reminded me of my son. At the end I bought the book and made a donation.

Rajesh and two other Margis visited my house shortly after and invited me to attend their Diipavali program. I thought, what love is this that they have? I had never seen such love.

So I attended the Diipavali program where I met Dádá Nirvedánanda. After *dharmacakra* we ate together and I talked with Dádá. He told me a little about Bábá.

That night when I slept, a young boy appeared in my dream. He said, "Come, let me show you the Master." I went with him. From a distance I saw a bridge of crisscrossed iron, painted in white. Then we reached a place where two large photos of Bábá stood, both front and side views. Bábá appeared young and wore no glasses. When I reached the photos, they became Bábá Himself.

A few weeks later I went to the Ananda Marga retreat in Madhuwini. On the first day during collective meditation I cried again thinking about Ananda. I asked the Lord why he couldn't live. Then I heard Bábá's voice saying, "What height do you want him to go? He has reached the highest height. There is no place higher for him to go." I felt better.

But during meditation the next day I was again crying. After fifteen minutes I opened my eyes, closed them again and sat quietly. With my eyes closed I saw something like a cloud appear. I kept watching with

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my eyes closed. Suddenly I saw someone emerge. It was my son. Instead of wearing shirt and pants, he wore a white shawl and white Indian *dhoti*. I couldn't see his face properly. He said, "Mommy, I am happy. The pains I felt, I had to bear. You must not worry, Mommy, I am happy. You must stay with Ananda Marga."

At that moment Dádá clicked his fingers to signal the end of meditation and we all opened our eyes. I was made speechless by the beautiful vision I had seen.

Five months later, though, I grieved again. I suffered from terrible depression, thinking I was going to die. Finally one night I prayed sincerely to Bábá and Lord Shiva, "Please help me, I can't go on like this. I prefer to die than to go on like this."

That night I dreamed that I was holding on to a high rock. I was crying and screaming for my son, shouting, "Brother, show yourself to me!" Then the same white cloud appeared and Ananda burst out. He was above me and spoke in a soft, sweet voice. "Mommy, I said not to grieve, I am happy."

I replied to him, "No, no, I am not satisfied."

Then he said, "All right. Look now to the East." When I turned to see, I saw him there in a pinkish, reddish light. The light surrounding him had a border of golden light. It was so beautiful. I was too shocked to speak and woke up. I felt much better and relieved.

Another time I dreamed I was in a big cathedral. I was looking through a book of saints. Then I saw my son's photo there.

I try to keep remembering these experiences Bábá gave me to find peace.

Rágini (Curitiba, Brazil)

In 1988 when I was initiated into Ananda Marga, I had many doubts about the Guru. I looked at the photo of Bábá and questioned if He was a real Guru as people said. One day, when I arrived home to meditate, I opened the door and the first thing that I saw was Bábá's photo. I felt Him saying, "I'm glad to see you."

I was not thinking about my relationship when suddenly this thought entered my mind. I wondered, 'Where did this thought come from?' It was when I saw His smiling face.

I was far away from Ananda Marga for some time because I still had many doubts about the Guru. One night, I dreamed that I was at a retreat, in one place with many *dádás* and *didis* and I was walking somewhere. When I looked back, I saw Bábá in a big city and He was very enormous over the city in the posture of meditation. When I woke up, my doubts had disappeared. I think it was necessary that He appeared in this form so that I could believe He is a real Guru and He is everywhere.

Recently I developed a strong desire to hold Bábá's hand, even though it was no longer possible. Then one night I dreamt that I was in India to see Bábá. He was in front of me, sitting very close. He took my hand and I felt it was really happening. I felt very emotional. I felt His hand holding mine and I do not know why, but water started coming out from my hand. Then He touched my leg and again water came out from my leg. I felt that in some way He was cleaning my mind.

He played a lot with me, and expressed much love for me. I looked at His face and took off His glasses and stared into His eyes. (This was another curiosity of mine.) He told me about God. Then I awoke. It was very real for me.

Sharadá (Buenos Aires, Argentina)

In September 1993, Dádá Cittabodhánanda, who was visiting the Buenos Aires *jágrti* in Flores, decided to organize an intensive meditation program called *Sádhan 'a Shívir*. He invited me to work with him and quickly I became busy helping to organize an inspiring day for everyone.

I felt a great desire to make a garland for Bábá. Dádá suggested that I ask Dádá Jishnúdevánanda to teach me how to make it. Both of us agreed that the flowers should be yellow. I went to buy them at the wholesale market since we did not have much money.

I was very disappointed when I arrived and found that it was closed. Where could I buy cheap flowers? I knew it was not possible, and my beloved Bábá would not get His garland. So with a heavy heart, I started to return to the *jágrti*.

Then I saw a retail flower shop, and I stopped and stared at a branch of flowers that I really liked. Without any explanation, the owner of the shop smiled and donated those yellow flowers! At that moment I understood that Bábá wanted to console my pain, and really He succeeded.

Unfortunately He was still not going to get a garland, because the flowers were not enough, but some beautiful yellow flowers would be placed near His photo.

Very thankful to the store owner and smiling internally at how Bábá resolves our problems, I returned to the *jágrti* and told the story to Dádá Cittabodhánanda. Then he surprised me when he said that I had sufficient flowers to make a garland. Dádá Jishnúdevánanda agreed. That was a moment of great happiness and I realized for the second time that day that He is always near His children.

I still remember Dádá's words, "When a devotee desires something very sincerely, Bábá will fulfill it. How could He not allow you to make a garland for Him?"

Never I will forget that Sadhana Shívir, nor the first garland that I made for my Guru.

Supriyá (Chile)

In 1987, I had my initiation in a dream. An unknown Master, dressed in white, appeared among the clouds. He held my hands in profound mystical silence. Then He kindly put on my wrist a sandalwood bracelet with a symbol that looked like a pratik. I could not see His face.

Later I felt I understood the significance, because at that time in my life I was undecided between two spiritual masters. That is why I feel He did not identify Himself. It took Him seven years to come to me physically. When I decided to follow Bábá's way, I did not want to read about any other spiritual masters until I developed a love for Him. I thought that my mind should be fixed in Bábá like a beam of light so I would not be affected by the clashes of everyday life in the organization that could separate me from my path.

One day I told my husband that I wanted to be blind, deaf and dumb unless I could feel Bábá, because at that time I did not feel anything for Him. I made it a habit that before going to sleep every night I would look at His photo and ask that He would come to me in my dreams.

I always wanted to have Personal Contact with Bábá, but this never happened. On October 21, 1990, the day that He left His physical body, I heard His voice when I was doing my *sáadhaná*. He said, "Go to the forest at midnight because I will be there."

I have never forgiven myself for my lack of courage to face the darkness of the forest. My fear did not allow our meeting.

In July 1994, He finally came to me. I had many problems at that time in my work with the Ananda Marga schools. I was bored and disillusioned about everything.

On that very night when my mind was in such a crude state, He came to me in my dream and gave me Personal Contact.

We were at a festival in India. It was during the early years when Bábá used to be very near the *ácaryas* and Margis because the organization was very small. Groups from different countries came and presented themselves. I was supposed to present the children of our Belem Novo kindergarten. But when I saw one *dádá* singing to Bábá with so much devotion, I ran to the *didis*, because I, too, wanted to sing for Him. I asked if I could please sing in Spanish because then it would flow directly from my soul. They agreed and I became very happy as I rehearsed.

Somehow I missed the appointed time and someone else presented my children on my behalf. When I arrived, Bábá was leaving. I was

furious and frustrated. I said, "I will not sing anymore, Bábá is gone." So I stood by the door.

Then the door opened and Bábá came in with two *ácaryas*. When He saw me, He stopped and put His hand on my cheek and said, "Did you think that Bábá forgot His little girl? Bábá never forgets His children." He continued walking. He turned and with His hand gestured me to come near. "Come," He said, "sit here with your Bábá."

We sat side by side. He asked if I was feeling well. Although I said yes, He did not seem to be pleased with my answer. He held my hands and asked me again, "Are you OK?"

He touched the back of my neck. My back straightened and I fell backward like a piece of wood. I experienced tremendous ecstasy. My eyes became white and I was in a state of marvelous happiness.

Then something started to change. My stomach bloated as though I was pregnant. I felt as if I was having an epileptic attack. It was very impressive, and everyone around was absorbed in what was happening. Bábá was very concentrated, keeping His hand on the back of my neck. His other hand was on my stomach. Gradually the shaking diminished and my breathing became calm. I was lying in the same place and my belly became normal, but there was a big scar on my left side.

Bábá was sitting at my side, looking at me sweetly. He said, "Now you are OK. This will never bother you again. You are cured." It was very dramatic. It seemed that something very bad had left my body during that attack.

I sat down and cried. I could not stop. I held His hands and He let me caress Him. I can still feel the sensation of His soft hands, warm and a little wrinkled. He held my hands in the same way that He had in my dream seven years before. He stared into my eyes and I stopped existing. Nothing else mattered. I wanted time to stop and to merge in Him.

The *ácaryas* showed that they were impatient because there was little time and other people were waiting for their Personal Contact with Bábá. I stood in front of Him, still crying without stop. We stayed a few seconds doing something like *namaskár*. It seemed that all night had passed. But I had to let go of Bábá's hands because the *ácaryas* would not allow me to stay longer.

After a few more steps, Bábá stopped and again gestured to me to come close. He put His hand on my face and said sweetly, "Go peacefully, because I will always be by your side. Your Bábá never forgot you." I was taken out of the room, unable to stop crying.

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When I awoke, my pillow was soaked with tears. It was impossible for me to separate the dream from reality. I was crying and repeating over and over, "My Bábá, my Bábá, you came."

That day was like a rebirth for me. I have no doubts that He was physically here with me. It was something so significant to me. Yet until now I only told one *dádá* this story, because I did not want that someone would hear it and not believe it. It was such a divine encounter, because it reflected such an intimate and secret relationship. I confess my difficulty to share it with you all.

I realized once more that He is always by my side. He was always here, He will always be here. I realized that He also cured me of some health problem (my stomach is my weak point). Most important of all, I realized that I cannot live without Him.

Kalpaná Devi (Bogotá, Colombia)

This experience took place during my LFT training in Belo Horizonte in 1993. Didi sent us to the market to collect donations. All of us trainees went, singing kiirtana and very happy to do collection.

One person did not want to give anything. I felt clashed because I thought, 'Why is it that some people have no heart?' So I closed my eyes and remembered my Guru Mantra.

When I opened my eyes again, I looked at the eyes of that man carefully. I saw a brightness in his eyes, and I saw Bábá there.

From that moment he changed his behavior. He gave us a lot of vegetables, and he told we could come back anytime and he would always give us something. Then I thanked him and thought, 'Thank you Bábá, you are the greatest one who always protects us.'

Once I was very depressed and my meditation was not very good. I told this to a didi who said it was due to my sam'skáras that I had to burn somehow. So that night, thinking and thinking, I fell asleep.

I dreamed that Bábá was walking down a very large staircase. From afar there were many people. I asked myself, 'What's going on?' When He reached the bottom, He took my hand and led me to where all the other people were. He told me, 'Now I have to go. But before I leave, I want you to promise me that you and all these people will help each other to establish my mission on this earth.' I saw all the brothers and sisters saying, 'Yes,' and I also agreed.

Suddenly, I woke up. I felt completely different, filled with joy and happiness and contentment. I also felt strong desire to do a lot of service, to do something concrete for my Guru.

I started to meditate more deeply than ever before. Since that day my sadness disappeared and my joy remains. Now I feel nearer to my beloved Bábá, and I feel Him in my heart. Now every time that I have a problem or feel troubled, the thing that really helps is to talk to my Guru, and then everything passes away.

Dádá Mánavendra

I arrived in South America in March 1993 to work in Rio de Janeiro. I tried my best to learn Portuguese, but learning a language takes time. I soon realized, though, that one can understand and communicate through feelings and gestures. I found the South American Margis sweet and friendly in general, and I enjoyed their company even when I could not speak with them much.

During my third week I went to attend dharmacakra in the new Ananda Marga unit in Juiz de Fora. I found myself caught in a situation where I was the only *ácarya*, there were no senior Margis, and no one spoke English. I was expected to give a spiritual talk after collective meditation. The unit secretary, Candra Kánta, had also invited many new people whom he oriented briefly.

During collective meditation, I felt very nervous. I knew few Portuguese words. What could I say?

I thought of Bábá and mentally told Him, "I am Your representative, trying my best to do Your work. You put me in this situation. If I am embarrassed, You are responsible." Then I resolved to do my meditation and not think more about the problem. I remembered Bábá's advice to one *dádá* who felt that he was not qualified enough to do His work: "Just go on doing the work. It is my headache to think of you."

As I continued meditating deeply, I felt a spiritual vibration in the room. After the collective meditation, I mentally remembered my Guru Mantra and began speaking.

To my surprise I found myself explaining basic scientific, logical points about our spiritual practices in broken Portuguese. Candra Kánta, a relatively new Margi, immediately understood each point and illustrated it clearly. Everyone understood and said they liked it.

After they left, Candra Kánta told me that I gave a very good lecture and he also liked it. I realized that Bábá had given this talk and not me. This gave me confidence and helped me realize that nothing is impossible by His grace.

Amrtá (Bogotá, Colombia)

On Jan. 20, 1995 Amrtá, the Bhukti Pradhán of Bogotá, Colombia passed away. He was 37 years old. He was initiated ten years before by Dádá Divyapremánanda in Barranquilla where he was living at the time. In 1987, he helped open the Ananda Marga school and medical project in the slum of Las Malvinas which is still running today.

In 1991 he moved to Bogotá and was elected as Bhukti Pradhan. There he pioneered the construction of the AMURT community development center in the slum of La Esperanza that is transforming the lives of the people there.

Amrtá personally inspired hundreds of people to the path of meditation and spirituality. He was a fountain of optimism and inspiration to both new and old Margis. In his spare time he tirelessly translated dozens of Ananda Marga books, articles and stories into Spanish.

In the last few months of his life, Amrtá struggled with chronic anemia. When most people would be bed-ridden, Amrtá continued to work for Bábá's Mission. He recorded this story a few months before he died.

I had different kinds of spiritual experiences in Ananda Marga, such as seeing Bábá, visiting His house, seeing His things, etc. But the only very clear dream that I had of Bábá during my entire life happened in November 1993 in Jaipur, India.

I cannot remember the entire dream, but I clearly recall the last part when Bábá was speaking to me. Out of repentance I bowed my head in shame. I started to cry and cry, more and more from the depth of my heart. My own tears woke me up.

When I woke up I realized that my two hands were holding Bábá's feet. I was grabbing them as though I was drowning in the ocean and they were my only salvation. When I realized that it was just a dream, I still refused to accept that I should open my hands for fear of losing Bábá's feet. The sensation was so strong that I could not even speak for several hours.

During the following few days, I felt very sensitive. My eyes were often watering and I always felt that I was about to cry. Always I am aware that what really happened was that Bábá was showing me that my only path was to hold him more strongly every time. I feel that I can

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classify my life as a Margi into two phases: before this dream and afterwards. It was a very strong experience.

When I returned to Colombia, I tried very hard to remember this part of the dream and not only to visualize but to feel the experience of holding Bábá's feet. I become emotional each time that I remember it. I feel that it was His grace to experience this.

DMS TOUR OF 1993

After Bábá's physical departure, Dádá Shraddhánanda was elected to be the new President of Ananda Marga and the senior spiritual advisor, with the Sam'skrta title of Purodhá Pramukha. For six weeks in mid-1993, he visited four countries of South America with several Central representatives. This historic tour as Bábá's representative had a profound effect on many, as the next two stories show.

Prem Kumar (Curitiba, Brazil) continued

This experience took place during the Dharma Máhá Sammela (DMS) in Porto Alegre, Brazil on 21-24 July, 1993 in the presence of Purodhá Pramukha. I consider it very beautiful, spiritual and, most of all, devotional.

On the 21st night when Dádá Shraddhánanda arrived, I saw that he was modest, simple and very humble. He did not appear, maybe, as everyone expected the president of a great world organization to be. He did not demonstrate any of this. He seemed to emanate the vibration of a normal dádá.

The day before DMS it seemed as if his vibration started to change. When Dádá gave his darshan after the noon meditation, I felt that he was different, that his facial expression had modified, and I started to feel more energy. It was as if Bábá was preparing the environment one day before so that His DMS would start appropriately. There was much kiirtana and it was very devotional, too.

His behavior made me curious, so I consulted some senior Margis in whom I had the most confidence. I asked them if this was really happening or if it was only my impression. They removed my doubt and confirmed that, yes, they felt it, too, because Purodhá Pramukha had spent a long time with Bábá, and His presence was unmistakable.

That afternoon Dádá gave contact to several groups of Margis, and I got permission to join one group. When we entered his room, he asked us questions about Sixteen Points and Guru Mantra, and gave advice for all Margis. During this meeting, the vibration in the room was fantastic.

I was watching Purodhá Pramukha, when suddenly I saw Bábá sitting in front of me. He was profoundly beautiful. I tried to control

myself, but the will to express my emotion was very strong and the only way I had was tears.

Then Dádá said that the time was over. Everyone stood and bid pran'ám by touching his feet. When I touched the feet, really, I was alone with Bábá, touching His feet.

As soon as we left the room, all the Margis came and asked what I had experienced. They were eager to know what had occurred to cause my tears, and if my experience with Dádá was the same as I had experienced with Bábá. Among those Margis was one who had experienced Personal Contact with Bábá and he was curious to compare.

I replied that Bábá continues to be present and He was there in the room. Soon one will feel that Bábá is always with us. But my emotion as I spoke was so strong that I could not continue. I begged apology and ran out crying deeply. I do not wish to give the impression that I am very emotional, but my feeling for Bábá is something very personal. I could not explain exactly what had happened in the room, but in their hearts they probably understood it better.

We will all experience this at one time or another, because Bábá is always calling the attention of His children to His presence. We only have to surrender to feel Him. In every moment, in every person and in every manifestation He is present. My experience in DMS gave me this realization and made me more devotional.

Nirlimá (Asuncion, Paraguay)

I was initiated in 1987, but I did not do my spiritual practices properly. I was doing social service, but many things I could not assimilate and integrate with my personality. Finally, by Bábá's grace, the visit of Purodhá Pramukha in 1993 changed my conception of what Ananda Marga is.

When we learned that Purodhá Pramukha was planning to come to Asuncion after holding DMS in Porto Alegre, we had a meeting with the Regional Secretary, Dádá Virajánanda. Not one of the Paraguay Margis wanted him to come because we did not have enthusiasm. After that Dádá became disturbed with us, so first of all I realized that I had a problem of ego that I could not control. When we became aware of the situation, we started to organize for his visit. Everything turned out fantastically.

In Porto Alegre I had my first experience with Purodhá Pramukha. I was not prepared to talk with him because I had only second lesson. I thought, "What will I say to him if he asks me about the sixteen points? I don't know anything, I only do service, meditate and feel a communication with God, but not with Bábá."

One of the changes that happened in my life was when Dádá Purodhá Pramukha asked me, "For how many days have you not eaten meat?" I felt in that place that it was something very heavy and very crude that I was still eating meat. I felt in that subtle environment, that I was the crude one. I felt very bad. That was the last time that someone said anything to me about eating meat, because after that I stopped.

I never wanted to face a change. I wanted to feel all the happiness in Ananda Marga, but I never wanted to change my habits and lifestyle. This was the first strong impact with Purodhá Pramukha.

Afterwards, when he came to Asuncion, I had another interesting experience. He asked me if I really loved all the children of the Ananda Marga schools I was supervising. Of course I said, "Yes, I love all the children." But afterwards I realized that it wasn't true. I loved a group of children in one school, but the children in another school I did not like as much because they were very poor. I understood that I was partial, that I was discriminating. In this way Dádá showed me how I have to develop a Neo-Humanistic outlook in my life.

Sudámá (Porto Alegre, Brazil) continued

In 1994, I was passing through a difficult time in my professional life. In those months I felt a loss of energy in my body. I was not doing *ásanas* regularly, my meditation was not concentrated, and *kaos'ikii* and *t'án'd'ava* — everything was difficult.

This great problem at work forced me to go to Argentina in search of a solution. I arrived on Sunday and thought to go to dharmacakra at the *jágrti* in Flores. There I felt a different vibration that had begun on the airplane, a very positive vibration. After *kiirtana* and meditation, a *dádá* gave a lecture which told the story of a Indian Margi sister who felt *Bábá* on her left side. From that time she felt motivated to confront and overcome the difficulties of life. I realized the importance of *Dádá's* words that *Bábá* is always present in the most difficult moments of each person's life.

I returned to the hotel that night. The next morning I awoke early and did *kiirtana*, meditation, *ásanas*, *kaos'ikii* and *t'án'd'ava*. For the first time during this difficult period, I was able to do all my lessons properly. With the thought of *Bábá* beside me, I was able to solve all my problems. My time there was incredible because I felt that *Bábá* was very close to me, not physically but psychologically.

When I took a bus to the airport I found that the seat beside me on the left was vacant, and I imagined that *Bábá* was sitting beside me. When I boarded the airplane, it was mostly full, but the seat on my left was empty. I smiled and thought to myself, "*Bábá* is here."

After those days, my life changed radically. I perceived that when you call *Bábá* in difficult moments, He is by your side. With this experience I have the force until today to keep myself strong in my practices, overcoming all the difficult moments of life.

Candra Kánta (Juiz de Fora, Brazil)

Before I was initiated in 1991, I was a punk and then a hippie, and I had a crazy family and a crazy past. I meditated sincerely, but at the beginning of 1994, I started on a torturous path. I started taking drugs again, got heavily into debt, and started to practice black magic, which is called Avidya Tantra in India. I surrendered myself easily to these evil forces.

The drugs made me weak and dependent. I took so much that I was able to stay awake for ten days and nights without food or sleep.

Even in that terrible time, Bábá never abandoned me. I felt His presence trying to protect me all the time, and this touched me deeply. But I was living between two paths, the path of life and the path of death, and I was not able to hold onto Bábá strongly.

In one of the sessions of black magic that I participated in, one of the leaders asked, "Who is that bald man that I see is with you?"

I answered, "It must be Bábá, my Guru."

He said angrily, "That Bábá is always following you!"

When I sat for meditation, I used to ask Bábá with fervor to take me away from the nightmare I was living. However the drugs still continued to be a part of my life.

Finally, one day in desperation, I decided to commit suicide by jumping from the top of my two-story house. At the moment that I leaped, though, I felt that I did not really want to die, but I wanted to be free from the bondage of the drugs and suicide seemed the only way out.

Miraculously I survived, though both my legs broke. I underwent surgery, and platinum rods were inserted. I had to stay in bed, and when I used a bedpan, I could clearly see in my urine particles of the drugs I had taken. I tried to repeat my mantra 24 hours a day. Gradually my body cleaned itself of the toxins it had and I started to get stronger. I learned that the Guru can and will take care us even in terrible situations. He sent a friend to look after me while I recovered. Today I want to meditate deeply. I know that Bábá saved my life.

Vishvanáth (Curitiba, Brazil) continued

There are times in life that become very hard and oblige us to take certain attitudes that do not appear good for others.

My son, Sanjay, had a skin infection and he did not let anyone get close to him to apply the medicine. He cried a lot, screamed and got very mad. In his attempts to defend himself, he got very aggressive impeding our treatment of him. Because it was necessary to apply the medicine, I took a drastic attitude. I slapped his face to shock him and stop the crying.

This upset my wife, Sushila. She criticized me, saying that I had no self-control and did not know how to educate a child. What was the value of my ten years in Ananda Marga if I still did not learn self-control? Why did I use a pratik and sing kiirtana in the jágrti, talking about Neo-Humanism, preaching love in society, while with my own son I took that attitude?

Hearing all this, I became very discouraged and thought that really I was insignificant and not a good person. I felt I did not deserve to be a Margi because I was harming the organization's reputation by behaving in this way. So I took off my pratik and threw it in a drawer. I closed it and felt very sad and depressed. I thought that I would not go to dharmacakra that day, because I did not deserve to be in Ananda Marga.

Immediately after thinking this, the telephone rang and my wife answered it.

"Hello. Is there where Vishvanáth lives? I don't know him personally, but I am very interested in Ananda Marga and I would like to talk with him. I want to go with him to the meeting that you have today."

The moment I heard about this, the image of Bábá's face rose in front of me. I heard Him say, "I want you. You are my son, I want you. Don't think about this anymore. You are not insignificant, and I have much love for you."

I felt very happy then. I went to the room and took out the *pratik* from the drawer and started to cry.

Dádá Vidyadiishananda

One day in 1993 a man named Valvido approached me in a supermarket in Belo Horizonte. He asked me about my clothes and my organization, so I explained a little about Ananda Marga. Then he said that an older lady he knew well had been badly injured in a car accident. She was in the hospital and felt very lonely. He asked me if I would be willing to visit her, so I agreed to go with him the next day.

I found her lying paralyzed in the hospital bed. Her name was Gina and she was about 55 years old. Her lower spine was fractured. She signaled me with her hand to sit down and weakly asked me to sit beside her.

She asked a little about me. To ease her mind, I told her a few simple Bábá stories. Then I told her that whenever she felt lonely she should sing the universal *mantra*, “*Bábá Nám Kevalam*.” I explained that it means “Only the name of the Supreme Father” and told her to repeat it as much as possible. I gave her a leaflet and a booklet about *kiirtana*. Then I told her that I would travel to Argentina the next day, and I would call on her when I returned after two weeks.

Gina telephoned me when I returned. She was very excited, saying that she was completely well now. The doctors were amazed how she had recovered in only two weeks and was now able to walk and drive normally. So I invited her to come to the *jágrti*.

There were several Margis present when she arrived. When she entered the *dharmacakra* hall, she suddenly started crying loudly. Then she fainted.

We had no idea what had happened. When she became conscious, she pointed to Bábá's photo and said, “He was the man who came and visited me in the hospital after you left for Argentina. He came and sat in the same chair where you had sat. He said, ‘Don't worry, you will be cured very soon.’ He came to see me four times and always made me feel much better. Once when I asked him, ‘Who are you?’, he only said, ‘I came to see my daughter.’”

We were all amazed that Bábá had physically visited and cured this woman. Later she asked for initiation.

Párvatii (Porto Alegre, Brazil)

In December 1994 in Alegrete, Rio Grande do Sul, my husband and I were staying with my father. He had prostate cancer that entered in the terminal stage in less than six months. He was hospitalized and received blood transfusions from many people. It was just before the Ananda Marga retreat, and due to these circumstances we did not know whether we should travel or not.

Suddenly, a few days before the retreat, his condition improved so he was discharged from the hospital. He suggested that we travel, so we decided to go, surrendering his life to Bábá.

We asked Bábá to bless him, as my father was a very good person, honest and he loved animals. He also had worldly habits like smoking, but we could notice that he was a person completely different from others. He was born on a farm, however he never liked to kill animals. When he was small, his mother asked him to kill a cow, and he felt very bad for doing this.

When we returned from the Porto Alegre retreat to Alegrete, we found him very well, and he received us with much happiness. Soon after this his condition worsened. He developed very strong pain and had to go back to the hospital. That night we decided to sleep at home.

During the night I had a dream in which Dádá Shubhashisánanda took my father and said, "Let's take advantage of this dream to give a bath to your father, because he has entered a coma. Let's do *Guru Pújá*. Help me."

Then we took my father and put him in the shower. He was sweating a lot, so we took his hands and started to recite the bath *mantra*, when Dádá shouted, "Quickly, we don't have much time! Let's do *Guru Mantra*!" At that moment we all repeated *Guru Mantra*.

I awoke, very impressed. It was the middle of the night. I told the dream to my husband. Then I could not go back to sleep again, because the dream made me very nervous. So I thought about Bábá and repeated my *Guru Mantra*.

Then I slept and had another dream. This time my father was sitting with Bábá in the lotus position all in white. Both of them were smiling, side by side.

The following day my husband and I went to the hospital. There we were informed that he was in a deep coma, in the same way that I had

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dreamed. We went to his room, and in a few minutes he gave two deep breaths and died.

At that moment we smelled a very strong aroma of incense. The nurse who was in the room smelled it too and asked me if I was using perfume. His expression was very beautiful and soft. His departure seemed to be more like a family reunion than a death watch, so everyone accepted his death calmly.

I am sure that Bábá was and still is with him. I realized this in my dream the night before, and it helped me immensely to accept his death.

CONCLUSION

Spiritual experiences come in all shapes and sizes. Some are very dramatic, and some are touchingly simple and sweet. They are wonderful, exhilarating and enlightening. They cause us to look within ourselves to the depths of our souls. Whether they happen to us or we hear of them from others, they inspire us.

Yet no mystical experience, however dramatic, can carry us to the goal of human life: inner peace and true fulfillment. In every living being there is a thirst for the infinite. Spiritual experiences awaken this thirst, intensify our longing, and humble us with the greatness and grace of the Supreme.

The sustained effort of regular meditation is essential to focus and purify the mind. Meditation creates the willforce to confront and overcome difficult external obstacles, developing human vigor and vitality. The spiritual journey is the path from imperfection to perfection, building true character and awakening universal love for all of creation.

For reasons only known to Himself, Bábá sometimes blesses a spiritual aspirant with a profound spiritual experience. We cannot earn it, rather it is a blessing due only to His grace. What we choose to do with this inspiration — whether to struggle harder in our spiritual practices, or to give them up and return to the mundane life of material attachments — depends on us.

We believe that Baba is an expression of the infinite Supreme Consciousness, so the stories and experiences of Baba seem to be infinite in number. Therefore we call this book "Volume One." We invite those who have other stories to send them to us at the publisher's address so that they can be considered for the next volume.

Bábá Krpahi Kevalam — "All is His grace."

APPENDIX ONE

GLOSSARY

ÁCÁRYA: Literally “one who teaches by his or her example”; the teachers of personal meditation lessons in Ananda Marga. Though there are some family people in India who are *ácaryas*, all the *ácaryas* in South America are renunciates.

AJINA CAKRA: Psychic center located in the center of the head.

AMURT: Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team.

ANÁHATA CAKRA: Psychic center located in the center of the chest.

ANANDA MARGA: Literally, “the path of bliss”, and also used for the global organization which propagates this spiritual path, founded in India in 1955.

ANANDA NAGAR: The global Master Unit community and headquarters of Ananda Marga, located in West Bengal state, India, near the town of Pundag. It comprises more than 1000 hectares. In the past many great yogis meditated there so it is one of the best places in the world for meditation.

ÁSANAS: Physical yoga postures practiced to purify the body and benefit the mind by harmonizing the glands, hormonal secretions, blood circulation, nerves, etc.

AVADH⁷TA: A senior monk of Ananda Marga, literally “one who is thoroughly cleansed mentally and spiritually.”

AVADH⁷TIKÁ: A senior nun of Ananda Marga.

BÁBÁ NÁM KEVALAM: *Bábá* means “dearest one, most beloved, or divine Father,” *Nám* means “name,” and *Kevalam* means “only.” The

universal *mantra* of Ananda Marga, used in *kiirtana* and for introductory meditation.

BARÁBHAYA MUDRÁ: *Barábhaya* means "blessing without fear." The greatest attraction of Dharma Mhá Cakras was Bábá's *barábhaya mudrá*. Almost everyone felt its effect sharply expand their consciousness. It often caused Margis to enter *samádhi*.

BHUKTI PRADHÁN: Literally, "District Head", the local elected representative of Ananda Marga.

CAKRAS: Literally "circle." Psycho-physical centers located along and above the spinal column.

DÁDÁ: Literally "elder brother." A male *ácarya*.

DARSHAN: Literally "to see" or "to see with intuition". Spiritual aspirants refer to being with their guru as *darshan*, used in reference to the occasions when Bábá gave discourses with the Margis.

DHARMAKAKRA: Literally "circle of spirituality." Formal group meditation.

DHARMA SAMIKS'A: Literally "analysis of one's adherence to the path of righteousness." It was a program that Bábá conducted for a few months in 1981, during which He called all Margis to Calcutta in order to individually analyze their personal conduct and health.

DIDI: Literally "elder sister." A female *ácarya*.

DMC: Abbreviation for "Dharma Mhá Cakra." *Mhá* means "great," so DMC literally means "The Great *Dharmacakra*." A series of formal *darshans* by Bábá over a few days, climaxing with His *barábhaya mudrá*.

DMS: Abbreviation for "Dharma Mhá Sammelan." *Sammelán* means "gathering," so DMS literally means "the great spiritual gathering." A series of formal sittings by a special representative of Bábá. Since His physical departure, DMS's have been conducted by the Purodhá Pramukha or one designated by him.

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GENERAL SECRETARY (GS): After the President, the highest global authority who supervises all departments and trades.

GEORGETOWN (GT) SECTOR: The organizational division of the South American continent.

GURU: Literally "one who leads others out of darkness." Spiritual master or preceptor. Ultimately the Guru is a purely psycho-spiritual entity, which guides the spiritual aspirant toward his or her life's goal. Thus, one who serves as Guru is only an expression of that aspect of the Supreme Consciousness which is found in the disciple's innermost being.

GURU MANTRA: A personal *mantra* that is remembered before doing any action, taught as the second lesson of Ananda Marga meditation.

GURU P'JÁ: A *mantra* sung together with *mudrás* by which the devotee offers his or her ego attachments to the Guru.

INITIATION: In *Sam'skrta* it is called "*diiksa*", which literally means "giving spiritual light." Personal individualized instruction in meditation by the Guru. In Ananda Marga it is usually given through the medium of an *ácarya*. At the time of one's first initiation, the Guru establishes a psycho-spiritual bond with the disciple. The spiritual energy force (*kula kund'alín'ii*) is awakened.

JÁGRTI: Literally "place of spiritual development." Ananda Marga yoga centers, including group meditation hall and living space, are called *jágrtis*.

KAOS'IKII: Literally "a dance to develop the layers of the mind." Yogic dance invented by Bábá. Especially suitable for females, though also good for males. Harmonizes most of the glands of the body, which helps in maintaining psycho-physical parallelism.

KIIRTANA: Singing of God's name, with dance. In Ananda Marga it is chanting "*Bábá Nám Kevalam*" together with a dance in which one holds the arms high and steps from side to side, touching the big toe of one foot behind the heel of the other foot. A purely devotional practice for the purpose of bringing one's mind into a concentrated spiritual state before beginning silent meditation.

LAKE GARDENS: The Calcutta District where Bábá's residence (called *Madhu Malainca*) is located.

LFT: Abbreviation for "Local Full-Time Volunteer." Usually done temporarily, during which time the Margi lives a completely yogic lifestyle, does full-time social service work and gains invaluable experience. Must be preceded by LFT training.

MANTRA: Literally "a sound which liberates the mind from all bondages." *Bábá Nám Kevalam* is Ananda Marga's universal *mantra*. Personal *mantras* are given individually by an *ácárya*.

MARGI: Literally "one who is on the spiritual path." One who follows Ananda Marga ideology, including the practice of Ananda Marga meditation.

MASTER UNIT: Model comprehensive Ananda Marga rural community of at least three hectares. Minimal projects include organic agriculture, yoga therapy center, and social service projects such as school, children's home, cottage industries, ecological water system including pond, and other kinds of farming projects like bees, flowers and herbs.

MUDRÁ: Meaningful gesture. See *barábhaya mudrá*.

NAMASKÁR: A *mudrá* of greeting and parting. Pressing the palms against each other, the thumbs first touch the forehead, and then the heart-region. The meaning is "I greet the divinity within you with my mind and heart."

PA: Abbreviation for Personal Assistant of Bábá.

PARAMA PURUS'A: Supreme Consciousness; Infinite Entity; God.

PERSONAL CONTACT: A special personalized psycho-spiritual experience given by Bábá to Margis. Personal contact was given to men individually and to women in small groups.

PRABHÁT SAM'GIITA: Literally "songs of the new dawn." A body of 5018 spiritual, psycho-spiritual and social songs composed by Bábá be-

tween 1982 and 1990.

PRACÁR: Literally “propagation,” to propagate spirituality through lectures, distributing leaflets, contacting the public, etc.

PRASÁD: Food which is infused with intense spiritual vibrations. For ordinary food to be infused with such vibration, it should be kept for a long time in the middle of a *kiirtana* and meditation program. Alternatively, the Guru may immediately infuse the food simply by His touch.

PROUT: Acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory, the comprehensive socio-economic theory propounded by Bábá under his legal name, P. R. Sarkar.

PURODHÁ PRAMUKHA: The senior spiritual advisor of Ananda Marga. After Bábá's physical departure in 1990, the Purodhás elected Dádá Shradhdhánanda to this post.

RDS: Abbreviation for “Review, Defects, Solutions.” System of collective reporting and planning for the Ananda Marga mission, held every one or two months at both the Central Office in India, and in each sector.

SÁDHANÁ: Literally “sustained effort;” spiritual practice; meditation.

SAHASRARA CAKRA: The psychic center at the top of the head.

SAMADHI: Technically means “state of complete absorption.” Thus if one is totally absorbed in a spiritual thought, it is a kind of *samádhi*. There are many different types of *samádhi* relating to passing through spiritual levels or *cakras*. In the higher forms of *samádhi*, one feels himself or herself to be one with the Cosmic Mind.

SAM'SKÁRA: Mental reactive momentum; potential mental reaction. Consequential action necessitated by a previous thought or action. Each thought or action is like a seed sown in the mind, changing the mind from its original equilibrium, and requiring a reaction to return to that equilibrium. Popularly (though wrongly) called “karma.”

SAM'SKRITA (“Sanskrit”): An ancient language developed by Tantric

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yogis. Each letter of the alphabet relates to a different human instinct, and a different psychic sound natural to all people. The mother language of most European and Asian languages.

SÁST'AUNGA PRAN'ÁM: Posture of respectful salutation to the Guru, literally "straight as an arrow." Lying face down, with arms and legs extended straight.

SATSAUNG: Literally "the company of God," used to refer to the inspiring company of other spiritualists sharing stories of God and mystical experiences.

SECTOR: In the Ananda Marga organization, the first geographical division made below the global level. There are nine sectors, each named after centrally located cities: Hong Kong, Manila, Suva, New York, Georgetown (South America), Berlin, Cairo, Nairobi and Delhi.

SECTORIAL SECRETARY (SS): The highest organizational authority in the sector, who supervises all departments and trades. The post has been held in GT Sector (South America) by Dádá Sumitánanda (1975-79), Dádá Harátmánanda (1979-83), Dádá Karunánanda (1983-86) and Dádá Nirgunánanda (1986-).

SIXTEEN POINTS: A summary of the most important Ananda Marga practices.

TÁN'D'ÁVA: A vigorous dance for male spiritual aspirants, originally formulated by Shiva. It develops the glands in such a way that enhances courage and fearlessness.

TANTRA: A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by Shiva 7000 years ago. It emphasizes the development of human vigor and the overcoming of all fears and weaknesses, through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations. Also the scriptures that expound that tradition.

TÁRAKA BRAHMA: Supreme Consciousness in Its liberating aspect; He who links the material world to the spiritual world.

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TILJALA: A district of Calcutta where the buildings that house the Central Office and residence of Ananda Marga is located.

VISHUDDHA CAKRA: Psychic center located in the neck.

YOGA: Literally means "union." Yoga is the paramount teaching of Tantra. It consists of physical, mental spiritual and social practices which increase the subtlety of one's being, and assists in uniting the individual with the infinite Cosmic Being. Though physical postures or *ásanas* are frequently equated with yoga, these are only a part of yoga. Meditation is the fundament upon which yoga's other practices are based.

YOGII: One who practices yoga.

APPENDIX TWO

GT SECTORIAL RETREATS

No.	Date	Place
1	Feb. 1974	
2	July 1974	
3	Feb. 1975	Rosario, Argentina
4	June 1975	Asuncion
5	Feb. 1976	Escola Agricola, Porto Alegre
6	July 1976	São Paulo
7	Feb. 1977	Buenos Aires
8	July 1977	Asuncion
9	Feb. 1978	Sitio Dr. Emilio, São Paulo
10	July 1978	Argentina
11	Feb. 1979	Belem Novo, Porto Alegre
12	Sep. 25-27 1979	Caracas, Venezuela DMC
13	Feb. 1980	Asuncion
14	July 1980	Curitiba
15	Feb. 1981	Sao Conrado, Rio de Janeiro
16	July 1981	Equador
17	Feb. 1982	Viamao, Porto Alegre
18	16-18 July, 1982	São Paulo 3rd Sectorial SDM
19	Feb. 1983	Colegio Ward, Buenos Aires
20	July 1983	Sitio de Dr. Emilio, São Paulo Global Conference
21	Feb. 1984	Rio de Janeiro
22	July 1984	Asuncion
23	8-17 Feb., 1985	Universitaria de Horco Molle, Tucuman
24	10-14 July, 1985	São Paulo
25	Feb. 1986	Tucuman
26	22-27 July, 1986	"Emaus", Luque, Asuncion
27	4-8 Feb, 1987	Circulo Operario, Porto Alegre, Worker Relief Camps
28	15-19 July, 1987	Dom Bosco, Cachoeira do Campo, Belo

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Horizonte

- | | | |
|----|------------------|---|
| 29 | 4-9 Feb. 1988 | Colégio Hermanos Mristas, Lujan, Argentina
14th World Conference, ETC 10-12 |
| 30 | 27-31 July 1988 | Instit. Medianeira, Campinas, São Paulo |
| 31 | 3-8 Feb. 1989 | Porto Alegre 9th Global PU Convent. |
| 32 | 19-21 July 1989 | "Emaus", Luque, Asuncion |
| 33 | 9-14 Feb., 1990 | Villa Marista, Buenos Aires |
| 34 | 19-24 July 1990 | Ananda Kiirtana M.U., Juiz de Fora |
| 35 | 12-16 Feb. 1991 | Ananda Daksina M.U., Porto Alegre
20th Global Conference, DMS by Ac.
Cidánanda Avt. |
| 36 | July 1991 | Cordoba |
| 37 | 3-7 Feb. 1992 | Ananda Daksina MU, Porto Alegre |
| | April 1992 | Global Workers Relief Camps |
| 38 | 21-25 July, 1992 | Casa Salesiana, Ypacarai, Asuncion |
| 39 | 8-12 Feb. 1993 | Ananda Kiirtana MU, Juiz de Fora |
| 40 | 19-24 July 1993 | Ananda Daksina M.U., Porto Alegre
DMS with Purodhá Pramukha |
| 41 | 12-16 Feb. 1994 | Ananda Daksina MU, Porto Alegre |
| 42 | 18-24 July 1994 | Ananda Kiirtana MU, Juiz de Fora |
| 43 | 24 Feb.-1 Mar 95 | Ananda Daksina MU, Porto Alegre |
| 44 | 17-21 July 1995 | "Emaus", Luque, Asuncion |

WHAT IS ANANDA MARGA?

Throughout human history, it has been known that the lasting things in life lie within the mind and spirit of every person. In the effort to realize these potentials, the ancient sages developed the spiritual sciences of yoga and meditation. These refined techniques have been proven to be beneficial for all levels of human life. They heal and strengthen the physical body, bring concentration and balance to the mind, and give deep peace and happiness to the spirit.

Ananda Marga offers these scientific practices at a time when they are needed more than ever to help us face the many demands of our hectic modern world.

The physical postures of yoga are called "*ásanas*". The daily practice of the stretching postures gradually strengthens the glands and inner organs, balances the hormonal secretions, tones the nervous system, improves the digestive, immunological, cardiovascular and respiratory systems, thus improving health and vitality.

Meditation, which is part of yoga, develops the mind and deepens its awareness. The yogic practice of concentration increases memory and intellectual ability. This leads to expansion of mind, to understanding and tolerance. Meditation increases will power and self-control, so that we may attain a healthy mind and a balanced, integrated personality.

Through this integrated development of body, mind and spirit, an expanded consciousness naturally arises which gives a deeper understanding of one's own life and of the entire universe. This mental expansion helps the human being to identify with the joys and sufferings of not only all fellow human beings but to feel and understand the needs of the other living beings who share this planet as well. Such a profound respect and concern for all life serves as a motivation to work selflessly for the all round upliftment of the entire humanity.

Spiritual wisdom, peace of mind and self-realization are also achieved through the practice of meditation on an ideal. Meditation is a never-ending source of inspiration and Supreme love. It provides people with a new outlook of spiritual humanism, or Neo-humanism, freeing the mind from dogmas and superstitions and awakening our feelings of love and concern for all beings of the Universe.

Volunteers of Ananda Marga in South America, through its multi-

faceted activities are dedicated to providing a full spectrum of services from disaster relief to education to the arts. Ananda Marga is a dynamic blend of inner discovery and social activism, through a holistic approach to the worlds problems. Its aim is to establish a healthy and progressive society.

EDUCATION

Ananda Marga considers education as a minimum requirement of life which must be guaranteed for all. Throughout South America, it has opened schools for people from all levels of society. For those deprived of basic skills, literacy campaigns and health and nutrition programs have been set up in poor urban and rural communities.

Providing quality education for children is a fundamental step to ensuring a positive future for society. Ananda Marga schools teach cultural and ecological awareness, morality and cooperation through a variety of games, songs and stimulating activities that develop both the intuitive and rational mind as well as universal sentiments.

RELIEF AND WELFARE

The relief activities of Ananda Marga are dedicated to assisting victims of natural and human-made disasters as well as improving the quality of life for the poor and underprivileged.

The Ananda Marga Universal Relief Teams (AMURT) are groups of volunteers which have been offering emergency relief to victims of floods, droughts, typhoons, earthquakes, famines, etc. since 1970.

In order to bring all-round relief to the society, hundreds of projects like children homes, medical centers, asylums for the old, the blind and the disabled have been opened in more than 140 countries.

Of course, the best assistance is that which encourages and enables people to develop themselves. Cooperatives, cottage industries and rural communities help individuals harness their own resources for securing the basic necessities of life and for gaining greater socio-economic independence.

MODEL RURAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Ananda Marga's integral development centers called Master Units are self-reliant communities which meet local needs in an ecologically sustainable way by the maximum utilization of local resources, both natural

and human. Through the application of alternative energy sources, innovative water conservation, organic agriculture, reforestation and non polluting industries, these model projects elevate the standard of living of the local residents while restoring balance and beauty to the environment.

Simultaneously, comprehensive welfare service projects, educational facilities and cultural centers achieve the wholistic development of each individual in areas which have been neglected by present socio-economic systems.

ARTS AND SCIENCE

Cultural and intellectual expression are powerful tools to touch the heart and transform the society.

Renaissance Universal is a global organization of scientists and intellectuals dedicated to using their talents toward spiritual and social upliftment. In journal articles, research papers and conferences, members investigate a wide range of topics including future studies, new ideas in medicine, psychology, and economics.

The Renaissance Artists and Writers Association brings together artists and writers of all disciplines. Members use their creative talents in projects ranging from cultural festivals and theater and musical performances to recording studios and poetry journals.

Ananda Marga's motto is "self-realization and service to humanity." Around the world, the teachers and volunteers of Ananda Marga invite you to transform yourself and thereby help to transform society. For further information, and to learn of the center in your country, please contact the publisher.

How can someone who lived on the other side of the planet transform the lives of South Americans?

This book presents the experiences of 70 men and women with their Master, Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, affectionately known as Bábá. He founded Ananda Marga, "the path of bliss", with the goals of self-realization and service to humanity.

Through his representatives, his teachings about yoga and meditation are being spread throughout all of South America and the world. Those who come in contact with this mysterious and exquisitely sweet journey, discover a pure love, selfless and mystical, that they never imagined existed on this earth.

This love awakens the thirst for the infinite, naturally expanding one's consciousness and stirring a profound feeling in the depths of one's soul.

Bábá's Love for South America will help all to know and understand more about this true spiritual Master.

Ananda Marga Publications

ISBN 85-86044-01-6



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