

# **DIVINE LOVE**

**European Experiences  
with Shrii Shrii Anandamurti**

Volume 1



# Divine Love

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Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

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To our loving Baba  
Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiji

*tumi nayan májháre rayecha  
tái nayan pári ná dekhite  
nija rupete perecha lukote*

*tumi virát purus' an'u ye savái  
tava áshray sakale labhi  
tava karunáy tava preranáy  
tomári pathe pári calite*

*tumi ácha dev amita káler  
saptaloker ameya vale  
he priyatama nikat'atama  
ghare váhire theko sukhe dukhete*

**You are in the midst of my eyes.  
That is why my eyes cannot see you.  
You have hidden your self in your own form.**

**You are the great consciousness that is in every atom,  
everybody takes your shelter.  
By your grace and by your inspiration  
I can proceed on your path**

**You are always there Lord, for eternity.  
You are the all-powerful in the seven realms.  
Oh, nearest and dearest one always remain with me  
in pain and pleasure, inside and outside.**



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# Introduction

Facts and figures can never give a true picture of human events. Unfortunately most accounts of the human story only contain dates of battles, names of kings and presidents, and the details of treaties and documents. This approach is even more inadequate when it comes to describing the lives of great personalities of the past.

We can read about the doctrines of Buddha or Krishna, for example, but how did it feel to be in their company? What were those teachers really like? Were they humorous or were they grave? How did they guide their followers? Unfortunately we will never know the answer to these questions because this kind of information was never written down.

Here lies the importance of this collection of personal experiences with Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, the founder of Ananda Marga. These are first-hand accounts written by ordinary human beings who found their lives transformed by their contact with a most extraordinary spiritual master. You can find out what this great man said by reading His books, but you can get a glimpse into what He was like by reading the essays contained in this volume.

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti is the spiritual name of Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, the founder of Ananda Marga. His disciples refer to him as Baba, which means "loving father". Baba was born in Jamalpur, a medium sized town in the eastern Indian state of Bihar, on the full moon of May in 1921. As a young boy He did not display many signs of his future vocation, though He was able to tell people about future events. However, by the time He was 18, He began initiating people into the ancient practice of tantra yoga.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Baba personally taught meditation to people living in His locality, while maintaining a job as an accountant with the Indian Railways, which then had a large centre in Jamalpur. In 1955 He gathered together some of these early disciples and formed an organization called Ananda Marga (The Path of Bliss).

The purpose of Ananda Marga is to bring about a spiritual renaissance in society through the spread of morality, spirituality

and social service. In the early days of the organization, Baba trained acaryas (pronounced "acharya") as His representatives. These acaryas were lay members (householders) of Ananda Marga. They were entrusted with the job of giving instruction in meditation and teaching the Ananda Marga philosophy. In the early 1960s, Baba created an order of monks and nuns, who also worked as acaryas alongside the householders. The organization then spread rapidly to all parts of India and launched an ambitious social service program.

In 1967 the first teacher was sent out of India, landing in Nairobi, Africa. Two years later Acarya Adveshananda Avadhuta introduced Ananda Marga in Europe. This book contains the personal accounts of members of Ananda Marga hailing from Europe as well as the stories of the monks (dadas) and nuns (didis) who have worked for Ananda Marga in Berlin Sector (Western Europe and parts of North Africa). The stories cover the period from the late 1970s and continue up to the present. Though Baba left his physical body on October 21, 1990, many disciples still feel His presence.

Many of the essays describe meetings with Baba in India, while others come as a result of Baba's historic visit to Europe in 1979. There are some broad categories and venues of the experiences that are described:

1. Personal Contact: Baba used to meet personally with disciples, giving them blessings as well as pointing out and correcting past misdeeds.
2. Organizational Meetings: Baba frequently called his disciples to India in order to review organizational progress.
3. Dharma Samiks'a: In 1981 Baba reviewed the spiritual development of His Ananda Margiis, calling them to India for a special personal meeting with Him. Several thousand Margiis received this spiritual review and some are described in this volume.
4. Darshans and Dharma Maha Cakra: A glimpse of the Guru is known as Darshan, and when Baba gave discourses in front of a group of disciples these sessions were called Darshans. On special occasions, large gatherings of devotees were designated as Dharma Maha Cakra or DMC. During the DMCs Baba gave spiritual discourses and also the Varabhaya Mudra (in which

His blessings were conveyed to the entire congregation).

5. Field Walks: Small groups of devotees used to go with Baba on His twice daily walks.

6. Dreams and Personal Realisations: In some of the stories Baba is not physically present, but the devotee has felt His spiritual presence.

We have recorded these stories to preserve the legacy of Baba and especially to preserve the memory of His visit to Europe. In addition, these stories are being published to inspire present and future spiritual seekers who wish to walk on the path to eternal bliss. Out of respect and love for Baba we have capitalized personal pronouns related to Him. The first use of all Sanskrit terms are either in quotation marks or italicized and explained in the glossary.

While Baba is a spiritual giant who defies description, we hope that this volume of personal experiences will give readers a chance to experience some of the love that He showered upon the human race during his brief sojourn on this planet.

The first stage was conveyed to the entire congregation by a...  
...the human race during his first sojourn on this planet...

...with which in 1915 the...  
...1915 in order to lay...

1. Physical Contact...  
...and the purpose of...

2. Spiritual...  
...and the spiritual...

3. ...  
...and when...

# Chapter One

## 1971 - 1979: Early Days in Berlin Sector

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*"... by then I had the realization that Baba is inside of me and guiding me all the time. I realized that I should not have any kind of expectations, just be open minded. He is always there to guide us."*

Akashii

Ananda Marga was first introduced in Europe in 1969 and gradually intensified. By the late 1970s organisational centres dotted the continent, with thousands of young devotees enthusiastically adopting a new spiritual way of life.

While Ananda Marga was expanding very rapidly in Europe and other parts of the world during the 1970s, the movement faced a difficult test in India, the land of its birth. Founded in the eastern state of Bihar in 1955, Ananda Marga spread to all parts of India in the 1960s and attracted a large following amongst the middle class, including educators, the civil service, police officers and other officials.

This rapid growth caught the attention of some politicians, notably members of India's then-influential Communist Party, who feared that this new spiritual and moral movement would become an obstacle to their interests. To stop the rise of Ananda Marga, these officials fabricated a case against Ananda Marga's founder, and had Him arrested on December 29, 1971.

On April 12, 1973 Baba was poisoned while in jail. This led Him to undertake a fast, in protest of the poisoning as well as other points, such as the treatment of some Ananda Marga acaryas.

Baba was acquitted of all charges and freed from imprisonment

on August 2, 1978 (after which He broke His fast). During the period when the legal proceedings were taking place, His jail cell became a place of pilgrimage, visited by Ananda Margiis from around the world. Most of the stories in Chapter One capture the magic of that era, when Baba dispensed His love and blessings while seated on a cot in India's Bankipur Central Jail.

*"Now from the very start of your life in the distant past and up to the final culmination of all your movements and marches you are with Him, you will be with Him and under no circumstances can you be away from Him. So He - the Parama Purus'a - is the only object of ideation.*

*"The root meaning of the term ba'ba' is 'the dearest one' or 'the nearest one'. As He is the Supreme Father, the Parama Purus'a, He is Ba'ba' of the entire creation; and because you are the created beings, you are His loving children, you are also His Ba'ba' - because ba'ba' means 'nearest and dearest one'. As He is your only object of ideation, as His name is the only projection of your microcosmic entity, only thought-projection, only introversal projection - intro-cum-extroversal projection - so His name should be always with you - in your mind, in your tongue, in your vocal cord, everywhere. And I feel, and I also realize, and that is why I say, when His devotees, His children, sing Ba'ba' na'm kevalam, He also sings Ba'ba' na'm kevalam. Kalya'n'amastu (Let there be welfare)."*

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

12 May 1979, Fiesch, Switzerland, A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 12

# None Could Really Tell Who Baba Was

Avtka. Ananda Rama' Ac.

When I was initiated in 1972 in Berlin, there were a few Margiis gathering regularly for DC in Wannsee. The music group 'Sweet Smoke' just came back from India traveling overland in a van. They were telling of Baba and many mysterious stories about Him. But none could really tell who Baba was. My mind was unsatisfied.

I enjoyed my meditation, yet I had a burning desire to understand Baba. I questioned how He could be realized and still need eyeglasses, have a family and not appear like the classical image of an ascetic yogi with a long beard. I was desperate to know Him. Then Baba came in my dream. He was sitting on a chair and I was sitting beside him on a small chair. Suddenly it dawned on me that now all I had to do was just turn my head and I could see for myself who Baba was. For a moment fear and shyness gripped me, but I thought this was the chance for me to know Him. So I turned my head and looked up at Him. At that moment there was not a figure but a powerful jet of brilliant light striking me. It was not glaring like sunlight, but a very soothing and pleasant effulgence. I was totally filled and satisfied with the idea that He is something beyond my normal understanding. After I awoke and over the following days this experience lingered on, inspiring me to continue on the spiritual path.

That first Ananda Marga unit was full of life. We went to graveyards to meditate, did regular service, prakar and demonstrations for Baba's release in front of the Indian Embassy and along Kurfursten Dam. I remember printing the first European newsletter "Vistara" on a small hand printer that we sent to other budding units around Europe started by Dada Karunananda.

The stories around Baba continued like little pieces of a puzzle forming a bigger picture. A few stories stayed with me until I met Baba physically. One was that He would always do namaskar first and nobody could beat him. Another was that He could speak all languages of the world. I also heard about a devoted sister who simply embraced Baba in her boundless devotion.

This made a deep impression on me, as I was groping to understand the term 'devotion,' which was not in my usual vocabulary.

I was an acarya when I met Baba for the first time in 1978 in Bankipur Jail. As I was nearing Baba's cell, I had the thought that I would outdo Baba by doing 'Namaskar' first as I entered the door. But when I parted the curtain on Baba's cell and as my eyes fell on Him, He was already doing namaskar sitting on his cot. He beat me in doing Namaskar first!

I was so thrilled to be with Baba - who is one with the infinite knowledge of the universe. I could ask Him any of the mysteries of this universe that only He would possibly be able to answer if He was truly who I thought He was. So I asked, "Baba, do you speak Hungarian?" (my mother tongue). Baba responded, "I can understand a little." Pleased, I said, "Baba en nagyon szeretlek" - (I love you very much). Baba nodded His head and smiled in a knowing way. I carried on with my next question in an indirect way, "Baba, I think you speak all languages of the world." Baba promptly replied, "Yes, by your grace!" At this I was totally speechless, my breath stopped, my mind shocked into silence. I could not ask any more questions! Baba took advantage of this and turned His attention to the other Didi who was with me. He knew I would have plagued Him with a lot more questions. She was to leave for her new posting in Africa and Baba said to her, "Be like a jewel in that dark continent!"

When we had to leave, I thought maybe this would be the last time I would see Him, because it had been such a miracle to see Him at all. The thought of that great devoted sister came to my mind. Not really clear how to carry out my intent, I embraced Baba lightly touching His cheek with my cheek and whispering 'Baba' into His ear. As I withdrew, Baba was in namaskar pose with a big smile... I was relieved, for I knew we were not supposed to come so close to Baba, but He took it with grace. Great devotee or not, I expressed something that had stayed with me so long; I felt I had embraced a soft and transparent cloud.



## Experiences as a Local Full Timer (LFT)

Ac. Daneshananda Avt.

In order to make money to go to LFT training I took a job in a factory which produced charcoal in big ovens. One day as I started work, I had just said my guru mantra (the second lesson of Ananda Marga meditation, which reminds the aspirant of Cosmic Consciousness even while doing worldly work) and then I felt a tap on my back. Suddenly I saw many of my co-workers running up to me. They said that they had seen a big iron bar falling on my back from 10 feet up.

They pointed at the bar lying on the ground next to me. Five to ten working men in hard-hats and overalls were all scratching their heads in disbelief. They said that the bar should have broken my back and that I should be seriously injured. I told them that I had only felt a slight tap and that they were all mistaken, the bar had missed me.

Internally I thought, maybe really the bar had hit me and maybe Baba saved me. But I was not at all sure and I told the experience to just one Margii brother. A few weeks later, we were sitting together with many Margiis singing songs and telling stories when that same brother encouraged me to tell my story.

I became immediately afraid and said, "No, no, it was nothing." But he insisted so I closed my eyes and I felt a beautiful strong presence and then a voice telling me, "Yes, it was me, and if the bar had broken your back it would also have been me." I realized how foolish I was to think that Baba had not been there, and that He is always present determining when we will undergo the consequences of our samksaras. It was a deep realization for me and for the first time I felt tears streaming down my cheek as I thought of Baba.

On another occasion, I was hitch-hiking to reach Hammerfest, a city on an island in the north of Norway. I got a ride with a Finnish person. We could not communicate at all because of language differences. We were driving on a mountain plateau. Suddenly he stopped the car, walked to a small shack by the road, took out a snow-scooter, and then drove away disappearing over the horizon. I was left stranded.

As I was standing there I felt quite lost. I could hear each car that came, ten minutes before it arrived and for ten minutes after it had passed me. It was very cold, and I didn't know what would happen. As I was hitch-hiking I started to pray: "Oh, Baba please let me get a ride so that I can get to where I am supposed to go and do dharma pracar (spread spiritual teachings)."

As the hours went by I had some realizations. I understood that as I was standing there being cold and frustrated, my samskaras were being burnt and I was progressing spiritually. I also felt strongly that everything happened according to His will. Then I changed my prayer: "Oh Baba, you are gracing me too much with all this attention. I don't want my own spiritual progress. I want the spiritual progress of others, so please let me get a ride so that I can go to Hammerfest and do some pracar."

It was a wonderful and deep realization for me. On this hitch-hiking trip for three weeks Baba took care of me. I did not spend any nights outside in the snow, and I always got food to eat, even though I had no money with me. I had so much faith at that time, that if I had no place to stay for the night I used to simply stand on a street corner and wait for somebody to invite me in. It never failed.

## "This is Baba!"

Rajesh / Iceland

Before I came into Ananda Marga, in 1974, I lived in different places and had various jobs. I had a desire in my mind to do something for my society. I was radical-minded and saw that there was a lot of injustice being done to the workers in the places where I was employed. I saw that the companies were making huge profits and paying little to the workers. I tried to find some ideology, something which would help me to fight against injustice. I started to read many books, some Marxist books for example. However, I never believed in those theories. I thought they might be useful as a weapon against capitalism but I never joined any leftist organization.

I had read some books about psychology, Jung, Freud, etc., and I was moving into something which I had not known before, some internal things. I could feel that something was happening inside of me, some development. My dreams were often very clear and strange. I had one remarkable dream. I was on a ship as if I was going abroad; there were a lot of people many of whom were speaking English. I felt many were carrying flags. First I thought the flag was red, and suddenly I saw the flags were an orange colour. I had never seen that colour used in any political movement, so the colour was surprising. This was half a year before I joined Ananda Marga.

What moved me into a spiritual path was one book I read. I was trying to find a gift for my sister for a Christmas present. I was in a bookshop and on the shelf I saw Autobiography of a Yogi. I thought maybe my sister would be interested although I was not interested myself. She hardly opened the book. One day I took it and started to read it. Reading only a few pages, I started to become very interested. It changed my view about yoga. I had had a completely wrong opinion. I had heard about yogis coming from India and collecting a lot of money and fooling people. But this book told about a great yogi and his experiences. It had a tremendous effect on me. For the first time in my life I felt a very subtle vibration in my mind. I thought, "This is something; this is a spiritual vibration." Before I never had such a belief in these things. It created a devotional feeling in me. I understood that some force was working internally in me.

Next summer I went to England, for a summer holiday. I was 25 and it was 1975. My sister lived in England and I went to visit her. Then I got a job there. I was helping in a man's garden and fixing his house. I only earned room and board. I started to paint and also to contemplate about my inner changes. At the end of the summer I decided to go back to Iceland. I told my sister that I do not know what to do in Iceland, but I have a strong feeling that something new is going to happen. One thing was sure for me, I wanted to learn meditation.

When I got to Iceland this desire to learn meditation grew stronger. I started to believe there was something divine in this world. I kept all my bad and good habits. One bad habit was drinking wine. In Reykjavik I wanted to go out one night and meet my friends. I went to a bar and started drinking but felt that this activity had no value. I went out of the bar, and knew that this activity was bad for me. I saw how superficial it was. I revolted internally.

I prayed to Yogananda, I felt a divine presence, person or power and asked him to help me to learn meditation. I promised that I would change my life. So I felt better after this. I went to my uncle and slept until the middle of the next day and woke up. I was frustrated by the state of society and I had stopped reading the newspapers. But a paper was lying on the table and I went briefly through it and on one page I saw a picture of someone they called 'Yogi Karunananda' from India. There was text saying that he was coming to Iceland to teach yoga and meditation and people could meet him at the university. I felt very good, but I did not feel prepared to practice meditation. I phoned and his assistant answered the phone. I asked if I could meet him and was told that I could on the following morning at 10:00 am.

The next day I went there and on the door there was a sign which said, 'knock and enter'. I did not see it and just walked back and forth in front of the door. I wanted to leave, but while I was waiting I was thinking what question I should ask him to find out if he was a real yogi. I wanted to test him; if he was a capitalist yogi I would go away immediately. I came to a conclusion to ask several questions. But I opened the door and he was sitting there. I walked in slowly. I had this strange experience that I never had before. My feelings were that I was stagnant before I came in,

but when I entered I felt a very comfortable vibration. It was like something entering my body from all sides. I thought, "This yogi has some power." I felt very good in my body and also my mind. This was the first time I experienced such a strong spiritual vibration. This vibration wiped out all of the questions in my mind. I received the answer in an unexpected way. This fulfilled my desire to know if there was spirituality in this world. The answer was yes, for sure. It was an overwhelming feeling.

Dadaji started to talk; there was someone else there too. The yogi gave me a piece of bread, I was not hungry but I ate some, then he taught me a meditation technique. He seemed to understand me very deeply. He told me about things which I thought no one else knew about. He told me that I had been a little bit sick and that I should change my food habits and that I should do yoga postures and it would be cured. He wanted to meet me again. He was telling me about the guru, and then I became confused. I thought that he was the guru. I felt a tremendous power from him. How could there be someone still stronger? I didn't care about it. I had no desire for this other guru.

I left the room and promised to meet him later. This was my first experience of spirituality. Later I decided to visit my mother in another part of Iceland. Dada Karunananda wanted me to come with him abroad and stay in his office in Germany. I realized that there was a split in my personality. One part of me wanted to go to Germany and another part refused. I did not go. I decided to wait till later. He said okay.

I went to east Iceland, and I did not meet any one doing yoga there. I was alone with this experience which was changing my life. I started to work in a village. I was working from 8:00 in the morning to 10:00 at night, with a short break at lunch. I woke at 6:00 and did meditation, and also did it at night. In two weeks I was cured of my previous illnesses and never got them again. I always felt good after meditation but when I was working I felt alone. I told my mother I was a vegetarian, but she did not know how to cook it, so I began cooking for myself. I was strict with the practices, but it created a gap between me and my friends.

My interests were changing and meditation was becoming difficult; I wrote to Dada Karunananda, and he wrote back. I looked up to him as my new guru, first it was Yogananda, but he

had faded a bit, but the mystery now was who was this Baba? I had no experience of that super guru, until one day I had been thinking of doing something more radical for this path I was now embarking on. I wanted to become strong so I could express it. Then Dada Karunananda mentioned about a training in Timmern, Germany. So I went to Reykjavik to meet some Margiis to find out more about the training. Arun, from Norway explained about it. I was inspired, but not sure, and was thinking what to do.

One evening I was alone. I was listening to the radio and reading a book at the same time. I felt quite peaceful, then I felt some vibration coming, some peaceful feeling and then I felt I should meditate. I just sat down and then I experienced something similar to the first day when I met Dada Karunananda. That force was moving into my body and mind. I was overwhelmed and started to cry. I had not even started to meditate. I had a blissful experience; I lost all my senses and felt a subtle divine force. The thought came into my mind, "This is Baba." There was no disturbance. It lasted for one minute, no longer. It came and was taken away, but I was crying, "Baba, Baba, Baba." After this I filled out the form and applied to go to training in Timmern, Germany. I felt that Baba was helping me and a new chapter started in my spiritual life.

## Overwhelmed with Love

Avtk. Ananda Harimaya Ac.

A group of 28 Margiis arrived together in Bombay on the 5th of August 1977, and it seemed like every Indian citizen was a Margii, every single person in the streets had a special vibration because I saw BABA in everyone. Each minute I felt closer to Him, but I could not imagine what it would be like meeting Him. Margiis in Bombay had been very hospitable; after two days we proceeded to Patna. We arrived there in the morning.

We went to the Old Secretariat, applied for permission to see BABA and then we went to the Jail, to hear some news from BABA although we knew we were not going to be allowed in that afternoon. We got near the office window and asked for the superintendent. He was not there. Another jailer asked us - two dadas, two didis and two other Margiis - where we were from. Afterwards, we told him that we wanted to see Baba. He said we should come the next day with the permission. Then one dada told him to convey a message to Baba that we were to see Him the next day. The jailor smiled and said: "If I tell Him that you were here and He knows that I didn't allow you to come in, He will get angry with me." Then he did namaskar and said "Baba Nam Kevalam, Baba Nam Kevalam."

We went back the next day with the permission, sure that we were going to see Baba, but we were told to come the next morning. I felt at that moment that His love was touching my heart with a fatherly warmth. We all shouted Param Pita Baba Ki, Jai! and went in a rickshaw downtown. I felt so happy that we still had to wait a day more to see Baba. It is the most important day in one's life, and each minute I had to wait for it, the more conscious I grew about it. Next day we all went to see Baba. We were seven people. We waited for two hours outside the jail. Two dadas went in first, then a didi and then I. The jailors asked for our passports. The police official couldn't read Spanish nor French and thought that the passport had already expired. We were delayed. Finally, he believed my assurance that the passport was valid and let us in.

We passed a second door, then a third one. We entered the little

yard before entering His room. I felt like running in. I took off my shoes, left a bottle of sweets which I had been given for Baba, and was the first to get to His bed. He had His eyes closed, and His eyeglasses were on His chest. The jailors told Him, or clapped their hands, to let Him know that we were there. He quickly put on His glasses and opened His eyes very big and smiled at me so dearly. He moved near me so that I could put on the garlands. I couldn't believe that I was living. I had His head almost in my hands, but I didn't dare to touch Him; just to see Him was so dear. I said His name, and He looked at me into my eyes. For a long time, I had had the strong desire to see Baba in the eyes closely, and then at that moment my dream came true. I felt He knew about it, that is why He was gracing me.

For a minute I felt no weight in my body. Suddenly I opened my eyes and He was making me a sign with His hand that I should go down and do pranam. Then it was the other Didi's turn to greet Him. I got up and then He called us both near His cot. We were there like His little pets.

Then He asked me to say something. I was told Baba likes to hear about the field and the work done. I only wanted to feel His love. So I looked at Him and said, "I love you." Again He opened His eyes very wide and did Namaskar. Then He said I had a new posting. I answered to Him like a child, and I felt ashamed; but His eyes were smiling and full of love.

He turned to me and this time I told Him about the Margiis from Italy; I said they have so much devotion and that they are waiting for Him. He then pointed to His cup on the table, beside His cot, and said to tell them that He was consuming only two cups of curd-water every day and that if they followed His example there would be no food problems in the world! He smiled.

He asked about His daughters in Italy and Europe. Didi said, "All sisters are very strong, Baba."

Baba said that women should be economically self-sufficient, not dependent on men. He said that liberation was coming soon for them.

Most of the time we looked each other into the eyes. I cannot



describe the feelings. It was like seeing the Infinite, it was like seeing into myself. Then I asked Him if I could touch His feet. He didn't answer, so I didn't dare to do it.

He asked us to sing kiirtan, and all the time we were singing, He was answering with a very deep Namaskar. His eyes were closed, and His expression was sweetness.

Then it was time to go. The jailors had been telling us to go for several minutes. Then I remembered I had to give Him a bottle of sugar sweets. I couldn't find it to my embarrassment. One of the jailors told me where it was. Again I got near Him; He bid Namaskar. When I was at the door, I stopped, I felt a pain in my heart, I didn't want to leave. We had been with Him only five or seven minutes. I looked at Him and said, "Baba, we love you." He nodded, smiled and answered with a loving namaskar. Again I said, "Baba, we love you."

I felt myself overwhelmed with love. When I came out, I didn't remember anything. It was too much to understand what had happened. Only after hours all became clear, and for days I saw His loving face and expression in meditation, and during sleep I could feel His eyes inside me. He spoke with so much love and sweetness. Only after seeing Him I felt that all my desires were fulfilled, and I wanted to see Him again and again.

## "You Should Always Be Positive"

Ainjali Devii / Germany

When I first joined Ananda Marga, I heard that Baba wanted all Margiis to wear the Pratik (the emblem of Ananda Marga) on a chain around their necks. My husband and I went to attend the dharmacakra in Berlin. One Dada had brought little round silver pratiks from India and gave us each one as a present. We put them around our necks immediately. I felt then that Baba was now always with me and that He would protect me in all ways. On that night we went back to our house by car. We came to a set of traffic lights, at a small crossing. It was green but my husband stopped our car. I said to him, "Why did you stop here, the lights are green?" "Oh," he said and drove on. We turned around a corner and came to a very big intersection, the lights were green for us, and just then a huge truck drove through the intersection in front of us at a high speed. The truck had gone through a red light. Immediately we both realised that the small stop at the green light earlier had saved our lives, and we knew in our hearts that it was Baba and the new pratiks which had protected us.

Later on, when Baba was in Timmern, we had some opportunities to go on field walk with Him. I had been on one field walk already and the rule was that one should only go on one field walk. However, I was standing very close to Baba's car. Apparently one person scheduled to go on the field walk did not show up and the Didi in the car wanted to find a replacement. Baba came and we all sang and felt much bliss. When the time came to close the door of the car, Didi just quickly grabbed my arm and pulled me in the car, and so I had the grace to go on a second field walk. During this walk I got the chance to walk just beside Him. I felt like I was walking on clouds in heaven, and was full of overwhelming joy. Suddenly He stopped and turned round to me and said in a serious but very loving voice, with His finger up, "You should always be positive." Then we went on.

This happened 20 years ago, but this sentence has been so helpful and true in my life and I have realised this is exactly what I need to learn.

# Everyone Was Smiling

Akashi / Sweden

The first time I saw Baba, He was in jail in Patna. I was very eager to see Him. When I arrived, it was not at all like a Swedish jail. Baba's cell was like a small house in the countryside, and I had the feeling that I was back in my childhood. He appeared to me like an old man in my childhood. I was there with one didi and a guard. Baba was lying on the bed and the didi went to massage Baba's feet and I talked to Baba. He seemed so normal and ordinary. He told me to start a school and I gave him some gifts which my daughter had made.

Afterwards there was a reaction in my mind because He was so different than what I had expected. I decided to go alone to Calcutta. I went to the railway station and started to do meditation. Something changed in my mind and I went very deep and was filled with bliss. As soon as I finished, one man came up to me and carefully guided me right onto the train. I felt everyone was smiling at me. I had a very pleasant trip and spent a blissful week there.

I wanted to see Baba again, without any expectations. When I went back to the Patna jagrti, I met an American sister who could not see Baba because she was blacklisted. She was about my size so I gave her my passport and she went as me. This meant I could not go again, but by then I had the realization that Baba is inside of me and guiding me all the time. I realized that I should not have any kind of expectations, just be open minded. He is always there to guide us.

## "Wait Three Months"

Vasudeva / Norway

In the late 1970's I went to Patna with other Margiis from Norway to see Baba who was still in the Bankipur jail. We went to Patna and applied for permission to see Him. I wanted to have a photo of the prison, so I started to take a picture of a sanyassi who was standing near the prison wall. Then guards came out and wanted to confiscate the film because all photography was forbidden near the prison compound. I was afraid that I wouldn't get permission to see Baba because of this incident, but luckily it was not a problem.

I went to see Baba. I was crying and massaging His back. He asked me my name and a few other questions which I knew He would ask. It lasted only a short time but seemed like hours.

After that visit, I went travelling and then came back for another visit. It was strange. I went to buy garlands, and then came to apply to see Baba, but the man who had confiscated the photos was there and didn't want to let me in. I then knocked on the door and entered the prison and got to the office and the man became very angry. I was going to leave then but a lawyer helped me and took me to the director of the prison who was friendly and actually started to tell mystical stories about Baba. I also met a Red Cross doctor, who was not a Margii. This doctor said that "Baba must be God because no one can fast so long and still be alive." After this meeting with the prison authorities we saw Baba for the second time.

I heard Baba shouting before we reached. He was shouting at the guards. Abaniish and I were taken aback and thought that maybe Baba will be angry at us too! But Baba was nice to us and then explained, "You see I get many visitors and my floor gets dirty, and I told the guards that they must wash the floor with disinfectant."

Baba asked us where we had visited. We said Jamalpur (His place of birth). He asked if I had met Dasarathji and others (close friends and first disciples). "You see I have not seen them for so long."

I saw that His eyes were filled with tears. I saw that this was not a cold yogi; I too started to cry and then asked Him a question. Baba said, "Yes my boy, you may ask me endless questions." I explained about big personal problems which were facing me and asked "What shall I do?"

"Oh, you have to wait three months, October, November and December, and you will get the answer," He replied.

Three months later, I was doing meditation and was filled with bliss. The bell rang and in walked Hladinii. We were soon married, and the problems which I had brought before Baba were resolved. I am very grateful to Baba for this

## Visiting Baba in Bankipur Jail

Gurucaran / France

My wife Shiila, our daughter Ambika, and I arrived in Patna on the morning of October 16, 1977, from Kathmandu. The hotel where we had planned to stay was fully booked, and instead, we were directed to a hotel which happened to be just beside Bankipur jail.

It was wonderful to be back in Patna after five months and we were excited to see our beloved Baba again. At the Patna office, we found Dada Ramanandaji obviously enjoying his most enviable position as Baba's personal assistant. Dada visited Baba every morning, bringing Him His daily ration of yoghurt.

We immediately started making the necessary arrangements to visit Baba in jail. We were full of joy at the idea of being able to hear His sweet voice and speak to Him. The first time we had His darshan in May, He had been unable to speak because of extreme weakness, and He had used an alphabet board to communicate.

In order to get permission to see Him, we had to get through the human wall of the Indian administrative bureaucracy; we were, however, absolutely determined not to leave till we had His darshan. The last time we were in Patna, we had spent a whole week knocking the doors of Bihar Home Secretary, the District Magistrate and even the Governor, till we finally succeeded in securing permission from the jail superintendent to see Baba. At one point we had been driven out of the Governor's Secretariat by soldiers in full battle gear with helmets, shields and clubs. But now things were different.

On the morning of October 21st, with our hands full of fresh flowers, we presented ourselves at the gate of Bankipur Central Jail where we found Didi Vanii and Dada Arun. After two hours of questioning by a jail official, we went through the little door leading to the courtyard of Baba's cell; our hearts were beating very fast. We hurriedly took off our shoes at the door of His cell, and after a few seconds we found ourselves prostrated on the floor in front of His cot. There He was doing namaskar to us with such a sweet and loving smile on His face. A beautiful

vibration filled the whole place and Baba seemed to have more strength than last May. He was fasting, but His "food" was all His sons and daughters who were visiting Him in jail and He derived much pleasure and very much energy from it. He was not eating and His weight was only around 44 kilos. He called us near Him and immediately offered us coconut and sesame sweets. He looked so happy while distributing those sweets. He then called Arun near Him and while Arun was talking to Him, I immediately reached for His feet and massaged them. They were soft and tender just like lotus petals. Afterwards, He called me near Him and told me to speak.

I told Him about my plan to work for PROUT in France. "That's a very good idea," He exclaimed. He went on explaining how to organize work in France and which area had great potential. When I complained to Him that I have no intellectual knowledge for that work, He answered, "There is no big need of intellectual knowledge. All you have to do is to know Him and love Him and all knowledge will come. All that is needed is genuine love for humanity. Bookish knowledge is useless."

When I asked Him if He would come to France and hold DMC there, He answered, "Why not? Why not? It's not at all impossible." I then came closer and requested some advice about my sadhana, which He gave. I then whispered to Him, "Baba, there is one wish I would like you to grant me." He told me come closer and listened attentively. I continued, "Baba, I would like to have your darshan regularly throughout my life." He smiled and lovingly closed His eyes and placed His hands on my head for a long time. A wonderful feeling pervaded my whole being. I was filled with joy as I knew my wish had been granted.

Baba then spoke to Shiila, who conveyed to Him the messages of some sisters. He then turned to our three-year-old daughter Ambika, and asked what she had to say. Ambika was quiet, she had a few days ago the golden opportunity to visit Baba alone through the kindness of the assistant jailer who had taken her to Him. Finally, it was time to go; we did sastaunga pranama again and went out. While we were waiting in the courtyard for Didi Vanii to come out, Ambika suddenly decided to go back inside Baba's cell. When Baba saw her, He pretended to be angry. Then, while talking to Didi Vanii, He said, "I know, I know," and began opening one of His candy jars. "This time, I must satisfy her!"

And Ambika rushed out to us with her hands full of candies.

After quite a long time Didi Vanii came out with the two jail officials shouting at the top of their voices, their faces red with anger. She had by far exceeded the time allotted to visitors, and had refused to listen to the repeated calls of the jail officials. Baba, instead of calming them and telling her to go, just continued talking and even made fun of them: "You see, this lady is working among the Indian minorities and hers is far more important than all jail work!"

Still full of bliss and with the sound of His sweet voice still ringing in our ears and covering the angry voices of jail officials, we went out through the big iron gate of the Bankipur jail. There was only one idea in our minds: We must have His darshan again as soon as possible.

Our second meeting with Baba took place just one week later on October 28, 1977. In the meanwhile, we had gone to Calcutta to visit our brothers in the crowded Central office, and to Anandanagar where we spent two very blissful days in that sadhaka's paradise.

That day only our small family was to visit Him at that particular time. He called us near to Him and when I offered Him a garland of flowers, He placed His hands above His eyes to cover the glare of light and see who had come. (Baba had not recovered His eyesight since He was poisoned in 1972.) He then uttered my Sanskrit name twice. (He never asked for my name before and I had never told Him.) I then asked Him how He was. To which the answer was, "I am still the same, like when you saw me last time. The universe is ever changing, everything is changing but I'm still the same." I spoke to Him about the difficulty of balancing family life and His work.

He said, "Your duty towards the small family and your duty towards the big family are the same; what you do for the small family, you should also do for the big family." Shiila had apprehensions about going to Europe. Baba reassured her and told her there was nothing to be afraid of: "Your only difficulty there is that nobody will be able to understand your Tagalog," (Shiila is from Philippines). Baba then spoke at length about the history and culture of Europe. He spoke also about the diversity of cultures and stressed, "But my culture is only one." Shiila asked



Baba to give her more strength. Baba told her: all you must have is a strong desire and everything will be fulfilled. Ambika was sitting near Baba's cot singing Baba Nam Kevalam. The intelligence officer suddenly signalled that time was up. Baba repeated, "Time is up". Baba did not trouble the officials this day. We asked for His blessing and bowed our heads in front of Him.

He did a long namaskar and whispered, "Kalyanamastu!" (May you all be blessed.)

# The Master of Expression

Lalita / Sweden

For me Baba was the master of expression. My first meeting with Baba happened in Patna, 1977. I had heard from a friend of mine that finally it was possible to meet Baba. That was in Patna jail. And so I worked to get money very fast and flew to India. And as a Westerner, I wanted to get a very clear picture of my guru. What was a guru anyway? What does it mean when you have a guru? How does it feel? Up until then I had only experienced my guru in meditation and in kiirtan, and now I had an opportunity to meet Him. Would that be different? And how would it be? But anyway, I decided I was not going to be tricked. I was going to have a very clear and sane mind when I saw my guru.

Before going in to see Baba, I was together with a lot of Margiis outside the jail singing and dancing and doing meditation; there was a very beautiful atmosphere. Still, I was trying to keep very clear in my mind, so that I could observe Him personally and write down everything about Baba when I saw Him.

I went in together with two other Margiis who were from Norway. The first thing I saw was Baba lying on His cot. He looked extremely beautiful to me. He looked very smooth and shining and looked so pure and clean. I still remembered, 'Okay, I'm going to be very clear now,' but suddenly before my eyes, Baba started changing. His body started transforming. At least that's what I saw. His age changed. Suddenly he was moving from what He was to a baby. Then He was moving up the ladder of age and became an old man. At the same time He was just lying there on the cot. And somehow I realized that there's no way I'm going to be able to clearly observe and understand what Baba is. He's just a mystery. If I want to try to understand I have to understand Baba from inside, and that was a very deep and strong experience for me.

My second experience happened during Baba's visit to Sweden in 1979. I went for field walk with Baba. Baba went on field walks every day. He went to nearby places, just walking along, talking about different things. This time I experienced Baba's sweetness and loving care for the whole world. We were walking on a path

and suddenly Baba stopped and He wanted to sit down. Somebody had brought along a chair, and so He sat down in His chair and then He bent down and looked on the ground and he saw a little dandelion. He started talking about this little dandelion with such love and affection and in a way that really expanded my mind and gave me a clear example of what Neo-Humanism really is about.

I live in Europe but most of my personal experience with Baba took place in India. It was there that I had personal contact with Him and saw Him much. I was a burnt-out western youth before becoming a Margi.

In 1977 in Oslo I discovered the list of a friend in who was away on holiday. Another musician friend had warned me against attending a lecture by Ananda Marga, so I had made up my mind not to go there, but something was still in me, something quite out of my control.

Earlier I had seen an Ananda Marga poster in the city and my curiosity had been greatly aroused as to the beauty and greatness of the name Ananda Marga. Reading it I had thought, "It is so wonderful, much beyond me, so great, not for poor me," but that particular day it became necessary to go to a lecture on my work in the city. I had to go, but I had wanted to get out in the early evening, an hour before the lecture started. I was holding on to a chair, my hands clasped under my head in thick arms so that I should not have to move, yes, the greatest gift I got to go to attend that lecture that I thought I was going a little insane. Half an hour later I was so forgetful that I was moved out very much physically designed for an incredible arm moved out in the street and moved to the lecture that where I reached just in time to be greeted by Margis.

# A Sight For Gods, Surely

Prabhakar / Norway (part 1)

As the years go by I reflect increasingly on Lord's both personal and impersonal aspects, and I am increasingly mystified as to which is which and what is what. When I sit down to collect a few memories of Him, I remember the story of the squirrel who joined in constructing the link from India to Lanka; the bridge that would carry Shri Ram and his contingency to redeem Sita. The large and mighty monkeys of Shri Ram's formidable army would smile at the squirrel and the tiny grains of sand he contributed. Shri Ram however assured them that anyone who works for the Lord to his or her capacity is equally great in the eyes of the Lord. This story, which Baba Himself quoted now and then, gives me strength to respond to the great invitation to share something of my own humble experience with Baba.

I live in Europe but most of my personal experience with Baba took place in India. It was there that I had personal contact with Him and saw Him much. I was a burnt-out western youth before becoming a Margii.

In 1977 in Oslo I decorated the flat of a friend in who was away on holiday. Another musician friend had warned me against attending a lecture by Ananda Marga, so I had made up my mind not to go there. But something was astir in me, something quite out of my control.

Earlier I had seen an Ananda Marga poster in the city and my curiosity had been greatly aroused as to the beauty and greatness of the name Ananda Marga. Reading it, I had thought: "It is so wonderful, much beyond me, so great, not for poor me." But that particular day it became increasingly difficult for me to focus on my work inside that flat as my mind just wanted to get out. In the early evening, an hour before the announced lecture, I was holding on to a chair, my hands clasped firmly around its thick arms so that I should not leave. So strong was the physical pull I felt to go to attend that lecture that I thought I was going a little insane. Half an hour later I was no longer able to resist it; I was very much physically dragged by an invisible arm, moved out in the street and hurried to the lecture hall where I reached just in time to be greeted by Margiis.

I was initiated that same night, four days later I moved into the local jagrti where 5 inspired Margiis lived together, and within days I was taught the 16 points and all discipline. I was given a job in a Margii health food store, participated in all programs, meeting with acaryas, doing pracar, etc., and in the autumn I was sent to other European countries to work as LFT. My life was changed tremendously and very fast by the directly applied will of Baba. To my mind my resurrection in that period of my life is a proof of Lord Krishna's words in Bhagavad Giita: "Time to time I manifest Myself to lift up Dharma when it has reached its lowest." Even today, decades later, that same will is easing, pushing and shoving me forward so that I am able to live my life in a somehow disciplined way and perform my basic duties as a sadhaka by His grace only. Whether this functioning in my life is an expression of His personal or impersonal aspect I can't say, but what I experienced in India two years later was definitely intensely personal.

## "A Little Sadvipra"

Shankar / Berlin

I first saw Baba in 1977 which was one-half year after my first son was born. I went to India with my wife. It seemed risky to leave our baby behind us, but anyway, we did it.

We went to Patna where Baba was imprisoned and then had to go through many procedures to get permission to see Him. This process took some days. We spent the days of waiting in Ananda Nagar (Ananda Marga's rural development centre located 300 km west of Calcutta), but while we were in Ananda Nagar, I got very sick. Thus, I couldn't keep my appointment with Baba, and I was very sad.

We applied again and this time everything worked out properly. There were very few people visiting Baba at this time; my wife, I and the guard were the only ones in the cell besides Baba. The room was a little bit dark and Baba was lying on a very primitive bed. He had some things under the bed and He was lying there. So we came and said, "Namaskar." Then, we just talked. It was nice; it was not an organizational talk about Ananda Marga, it was just a private, very relaxed talk which took around 20 minutes. I can't remember all the details, but some things remain with me.

My wife asked Him, "Baba, how is it possible that you can stay in prison for years without food; how do You survive?"

Baba replied, "Do you understand something of physics, of the law that states that energy can never be wasted? It can only be transformed?" And so as normal people take their energy from the food, He explained that He took it from the air. He said that He was recovering from the poisoning attempt on His life, but He said, His eyesight can't recover, because He would need to see the colour green, and in the prison there is nothing green. His eyesight was still very weak. We brought photos of our son, and we showed Baba the photos, and Baba, because His eyesight was very weak, had trouble grabbing them.

I thought, "This is Baba, this is God, How can He be imperfect?" Anyway, we gave it to him. He said, "A little sadvipra." Again I

thought, "Is it possible that Baba is just saying he's a little sadvipra? Without meaning it really?" Our son, who was then at home, a five- or six-month-old baby, is now nineteen. Last year he started to become a Margii. He's doing regular, meditation and asanas. He's really serious. I hope he will be a sadvipra.

Baba looked at these photos with His eyes, through His glasses, and when I had the chance, I looked into Baba's eyes, and I never looked into eyes like these. They were very small, but looking into them was like getting lost in the ocean, in infinity; you just fall in it. It was incredible, it was unbelievable.

Baba told my wife that her health was not perfect and that she should eat organic food, not normal food. He said it should be biological, unpoisoned, and naturally grown.

Then Baba asked me to say something, to make a request. As I had previously done extreme fasting, I said, "What can I do for my health?" Baba said, "Sit straight." He closed His eyes, concentrated, and then He said, "You're healthy, but your organs are weak," and, "Don't worry."

Then Baba gave me asanas. I was very proud, I was feeling really good: "Baba gave me asanas, personally Himself!" And so He mentioned, there were three asanas but my memory is very bad, and I couldn't even repeat the words. And Baba repeated them but still I couldn't remember. Afterwards one acarya got the names of the asanas for me from Baba.

## A Gift From Him

Shiila / France

On the early morning today, 15 May 1977, we went to the jagriti hoping that our names would be put on the list of people scheduled to visit Baba. Initially our names were not there but were finally included. The sisters present at the jagriti, knowing that it was my first time to see Baba, helped me put on my first sari. They seemed to share the joy I felt meeting my Guru the very first time.

By noon we were at the Bankipur Jail, waiting. Then the dasas came with the list of 6 names which they submitted to the jailor. But then, that day the authority only was allowing 4 people to get in. It took an hour or so for them to come to an agreement on who would finally see Baba that day. There were two batches, the first batch composed of 3 avadhutas. We belonged to the second batch: Dada Abhik Kumar (now Abhidevananda), my husband Gurucaran, our three year old daughter Ambika, and myself.

We were led to His cell. Dada Abhik went first, then Gurucaran, finally my daughter and myself. We did pranam to Baba (He was lying on His bed with His head a little high on pillows.) Dada Abhik came close to Him and spoke of the Marga achievements in his sector. Baba was pleased with his report. While Dadaji was talking to Baba, he introduced us to Him. Upon seeing Ambika, He reached for something under His bed. He opened a Horlicks bottle and got some sweets and gave it to her. He then gave sweets to the 3 of us. Then Baba called Gurucaran to come near Him. He used His alphabetic board to communicate. While Gurucaran was talking to Baba, Dada Abhiik was at the feet of Baba, just holding them. Then Baba asked me to speak. All I could ask for was for Him to give me love and devotion to Him. He answered by giving me namaskar. Our three year old daughter, Ambika, was very close to Baba, held His hands and did namaskar. She then asked Him, "Coming out soon?" which she repeated several times. For an answer she got several nods and smiles with clasped hands from Baba.

May 16, 1977

We sought special permission which was rejected. Gurucaran



did not stop till he got what he wanted. He called the superintendent. Permission was granted for another visit to Baba in jail, scheduled for 23rd May.

May 23, 1977

This time we were given two minutes, the time for us to do our pranam.

We entered Baba's quarter. Baba was resting on His bed. He was in a different mood. We did our sastaunga pranam. Then Gurucaran came near Baba resting his hands on Baba's head while I stayed near His feet not daring to touch them. Then, Gurucaran started whispering to Baba while Baba attentively listened to Him. When Gurucaran mentioned about the Philippines, He started to change mood. He made gestures of approval and gave a smile.

Gurucaran asked for His blessings and He gave it to us by resting His hand right on our foreheads. Seeing Ambika, He reached again for the bottle under His bed. He gave some sugar crystals to us and for the Margiis outside of the jail.

We did our sastaunga pranam. Time was up and we really had to go.

On our Way to France

October 19, 1977

As we were told the previous day that we could give flowers to Baba, we went to jail early in the morning. But when we went to the Bankipur Jail Office, they said that Baba only accepted flowers if delivered personally. As the superintendent was out for two days, we begged the jailor to let our three year old daughter see Baba. He agreed and brought Ambika to Baba.

She stayed there for at least five minutes and came back with hands full of sweets.

October 21st, 1977

On this day we saw Baba again.

Baba told me to come even nearer to His bed (He positioned Himself as if Father is ready to hear stories from His child). He

told me to tell everything that is in my mind. I kept silent for awhile as I was really very nervous and ashamed. Then, He told me once again to speak up. I said that I was going to Europe and did not know what to do there and that I wanted personal direction from Him. Then, I shifted to the message which some sisters wanted me to convey to Him. Then, again I asked to be given a duty. He asked me for my favourite work (all the time He was talking to me, He was smiling and accommodating which made me feel so good). I expressed to Him that the only thing which hinders me in doing work is the fear within me. He said that whatever undertaking I will have, I will always have His support.

I asked for a new name. He became silent and then from His left lateral position, He pointed His fingers down the bed, then to His temple, back to the bed, then to His temple. The third time, from His temple, He raised His hands pronouncing the name Shiila and its meaning "woman of good culture" (I had a Sanskrit name before which is a male's name.)

I was very happy to receive this gift from Him.

October 28, 1977

On our fourth meeting with Baba, He was telling me that I would not have any problem in Europe as it is very cosmopolitan. At that time, I did not quite understand the meaning of cosmopolitan. He took the time to elaborate what cosmopolitan meant by giving London as an example.

I told Him that I wanted to realize Him more. He said to practice Dhyana and to ask for it from an acarya.

I said that I don't have strength and I need to be strong. He said that any desire gets fulfilled if there is sincerity.

# "These Passports Are Whipping Humanity"

Vishva Shanti / Denmark (part 1)

My first experience directly with Baba was in 1977, when Baba was in prison in Patna. I had a chance at that time to have a personal visit with Him in the prison. I came in with a group of three other people and we were in this very, very dilapidated cell with a dirt floor and very simple wooden cot, on which Baba was sleeping. I remember Him talking at length to the other people there, so I had a chance to massage Baba's feet because it seemed that everyone else was very interested in talking with Baba. But I had not a lot to say to Him. I was listening more than anything else.

I remember one thing that struck me very clearly. There was a small jailer that was always with Him in the cell. As we were leaving, Baba asked if we had any questions, and the jailer said, "Yes, Baba, I have a question. Why do we have these passports anyway?" He asked because it was very difficult for him to match the passports with the people. Baba turned very sharply to him and said, "Yes, these passports are whipping humanity." He went on to explain how passports were not needed in the past for going to Kathmandu and from India. At that time I was very much interested in studying politics and interested in political movements, having been before very involved in them. That struck me as a very appropriate statement, because it was my idea as well, that each time we cross borders we seem to get flogged by the border guards in a psychic lashing. So that was one of the things that Baba said that has always stayed with me. And that was 1977 in July.

## "This Boy Has Caught Me"

Caetanya / Germany

I was initiated in 1972 by Dada Karunananda during a time when Ananda Marga was growing very much in Germany.

At first I didn't have much of a relationship with Baba and there was only one picture of Him available. After a time another acarya appeared and asked me, "Why don't you paint a portrait of Baba based on the photo?" (I am an artist by profession.) It took me one month and while working on it, it provoked many feelings inside of me. I brought the painting to the retreat and the other dadas and didis didn't like the painting. They said it didn't look like Him. Later I saw newer photos of Baba and He looked much different, and I was irritated. I regretted that I was not a Margii when Baba looked like He did during the time when the first picture was taken (the one I based my portrait on). I felt I was late. So time passed.

After seven years Baba came out of jail in 1978. I went to India with my wife and we went to Baba's house. We tried to go to the address, but the taxi driver couldn't find it. We were completely lost. I decided to go back, but at that exact moment a man came out of the dark and said, "What are you looking for?"

My mouth was opened wide, there was Baba as He appeared in the portrait I had drawn and He spoke in the typical voice I had heard from the recordings of Baba. I couldn't tell, I couldn't say anything, and I was looking at His face carefully to see if there were any distinguishing features so I could be sure. I looked on His upper lip and there was this mark which Baba indeed has. I said, "We want to go to Jodhpur Park 511."

But the man (Baba) answered in nice Oxford English, "What is the name of the place?"

I said, "Ananda Marga." He said, "Ananda Marga," and smiled and gave the direction to the taxi driver. The taxi driver and my wife were impressed, but I was sure that the guru was fulfilling what I had really wished. When we reached Jodhpur Park I asked where Baba was and was told that He was already in Ananda Nagar.

On another occasion I had a deep wish. After seeing the first Super 8 film of Baba, I had the desire to make a film of Baba. But I thought about a professional film team, and realized that I am not trained for that and didn't think it would happen. When Baba came to Fiesch I packed 20 super 8 films. Dada Karunananda came to me and said there is a camera here and you can make a film (I never told anyone that I had the films or wanted to make a film of Baba). Without any proper knowledge of filming we started to make a film.

It was the camera of Shiila, from France, and she also came to the field walks, and actually she was the first sister to come on a field walk. Baba commented, "What I have given to one, all should have." And from that day on (outside India) sisters came on the field walks.

I took much footage in Fiesch and in several locations in Germany. In Germany near the former border of West and East Germany, I got the idea to show Baba the fence with its watch towers. In that area the street signs are not perfect and I found the way but then got lost and noticed I was wrong. Then I tried to guess how to find the place and I was lost and felt really stupid. After some time, we just stopped, and Baba asked if I knew the way. There was another brother with me, who finally remembered the way and guided us to the right place. I felt horrible, I was in the back of the convoy, and then had to run to catch up with Baba when the cars stopped. I tried to get calm and Baba looked into the camera and said, "This boy has caught me." It was nice of Baba, He knew my situation. I felt that Baba was saying that I had caught my guru in my heart by my effort.

## Visiting Baba in Jail

Ainjali Devi / Iceland

When I arrived in India I went straight to Patna to get permission to see Baba. I had to wait almost one week, but in the meantime I listened to many marvellous stories from those who had seen Him. I was very excited, but I could not imagine what it would be like, since everyone had their own personal experience with Baba. Then on the 24th January I bought garlands and went to the jail.

There I saw many Margiis wandering around outside the gate. After a while we were led into a waiting room where we were asked a lot of, what seemed to be, nonsensical questions. Then a brother from Australia and I were told we could come. I could hardly believe what was happening when I entered the cell and saw Baba lying down on a bed. We gave Him our garlands and did pranam and He gave us each a handful of prasad. He told us His health was good except for His eyesight, which was poor due to the poisoning. Baba asked us to say something because, "I have nothing to say from myself," He said.

We talked about our respective countries and what was going on in the organizational work in our regions. When I told him that there were mostly brothers working in Copenhagen, He replied very slowly, emphasizing each word, "But the sisters must not lag behind." Then I talked about Iceland and he said that there were some very nice people in Iceland and that "a couple of brothers from there have already come." I could remember the name of one of them, to which Baba laughed a little and turned to the Australian brother and said, "Such a little, little daughter, and she knows so much." At that moment I felt like I had died for a few seconds or minutes at hearing Baba call me his daughter like that. I did not know whether he had been slightly reprimanding me or not, but it did not matter one bit because of the tremendous feeling of love that He gave me with His acceptance of me as His daughter. I was totally overwhelmed by it. Some time later I asked, "Baba will you come to Iceland?" He was silent for some time, then He answered: "Why not, they are all my own," and He smiled a slow, intense smile. Later again I said to Him, "Baba I want to do more work for you." To this He replied, "Do more and more work, it is work that proves the

existence of man."

Towards the end of our visit Baba then said twice turning to both of us in a very clear manner, "No problem is insurmountable." Before leaving, He blessed us by putting His hand on our Sahasrara cakra and said. "We will meet again."

### Second visit in the Jail

In between my first and second visit to the jail I travelled to Jamalpur, Ananda Nagar and Calcutta. I felt much better prepared to meet my guru this time. Auntie (Didi Ananda Bharatii) told me that this time Baba was sure to ask me what duties I had. I was hoping this would not come true, because for some time I had only been occupied with earning money for this trip to India.

Sure enough, it was the very first thing Baba asked when I came in to see him. This time I got to see him with a sister from Germany. When I heard Him ask the question, I experienced some mental confusion. After talking first to the German sister He turned to me and said: "And you my little girl?" I surprised myself by answering very decisively: "Baba I want to work in one of your schools."

Then Baba gave a long talk on education. Here is some of what He said: "Due to good education a demon can be made into a saint, and if a saint gets bad education, he may be turned into a demon. Three parts must be very good, most important is the school, second in importance are the parents, and third is the environment. Even if the parents and the environment are bad, if the school is very good, the child will have a chance. The schools are the fundament. Where do we start when we want to build a house, at the bottom or at the top? If the fundament is weak, the whole house will crash down. You are the fundament there, you have to be strong. The teachers are the gurus of society." Then Baba said, and it seemed like He raised himself up as He spoke, "Although you are a very little girl, you will have to shoulder a big responsibility." At hearing this I felt very happy as I had for some time had a strong desire to do some work for Him and His divine mission on this earth, and now Baba was promising to fulfil that desire. After that He started explaining

something about bhakti (devotion), but strangely, I did not hear one word of it. My mind was in another space and I was addressing Baba mentally asking Him to give me the strength to be able to do whatever duties He would put on my shoulders. Without His grace I knew I could do nothing. I was feeling very close to Him and felt Him responding directly inside my head somewhere. But at the same time He was talking to the German sister, and suddenly I heard Him say to her, "Do you understand now?" Then he turned to me and asked, "Do you also understand?" But I couldn't find words to answer and I knew that words were not necessary anyway. When I left jail this second time, I felt I was leaving my own true self in there, and I had to cry a lot when I left Him lying there in the prison cell.



# All I Saw Was Light

Prabhakar / Norway (Part 2)

I arrived in Calcutta in March 1979. Soon I was given the job as clerk in the Jodhpur Park Central Office, assisting the office secretary with typing and other office routines. It was no ordinary job; it was an unusually great blessing. Every morning Baba would arrive in the office from His residence in Lake Gardens. Usually only a couple of central workers and myself were there to greet Him when He came upstairs and through the hall into His office. The distance from the door leading in from the stairs to His office was less than ten meters I think, and it was there that I saw Him for the first time. He came gracefully in from the outside stairs, walking in a very determined manner, smiling wonderfully to us - and even to Himself it seemed. I was completely overwhelmed with the feeling that He is my Baba who had involved Himself with my life for quite some time already. His appearance seemed to me as really something otherworldly and superabundant; so forceful and wonderful. As soon as He disappeared behind that office door, I sank onto the floor in meditation. It had been my first experience of Baba's divine personality and it was a little much for me. This routine would repeat itself day after day as long as I stayed in that place. First, He would enter, greeting us with an energetic "Good Morning!" and sometimes something more personal to someone in particular. At Bengal New Year's day He even greeted me personally in English with, "And a happy New Year to you, too!" and I was only super happy to greet Him back with "Happy New Year" there in early April. Everything was different and very beautifully so.

Usually Baba remained in His office for a few hours taking reports and conducting personal contacts with Margiis. When He came out again the large room outside would be packed with Margiis anxiously waiting for Him to sit down for darshan. The atmosphere would then be charged with spiritual excitement and acute devotion. The hushed silence, no one in the audience standing when Baba came into the room, such divine command. He then sat quietly on the dais and kiirtan would usually start. Some times there would be song, a baul singer or some other type of bhajan, but kiirtan was always the sine qua non before

His speech. He sitting there, magnificent, listening to the kiirtan and the dancing moving slowly before Him. This was not long after His release from jail. All throughout the tremendous ordeals of the early 1970s Baba had been up against all odds and had come out triumphantly against those who would hijack His organization and destroy it. Now He sat there, resplendent in His own divine victory, enjoying our devotion to the majestic calling of Baba Nam Kevalam. It was a sight for gods, surely.

After kiirtan He would speak, often at length, in Bengali, a language I didn't follow. Instead I used to indulge myself in His form: His various smiles and other facial expressions, the way He used to express His own jokes (very contagious, and a few times He would check with me by way of giving me a meaningful look in the midst of a colossal wave of laughter throughout the room, whether His manipulation of the jokes were up to His usual - and it was!), His natural grace allowing a couple of workers to fan Him in the increasingly heated afternoons, His awesome expression of wisdom when He quoted from ancient scriptures (it was a thrill when I could recognize some of those shlokas from Bhagavad Gita and other sources), His promptness when He would ask someone a simple question, His various grades of seriousness, loftiness, His more or less tremendous furiousness when He would scold someone, etc., etc.

Often I would actually get a little lost looking at Him. It was as if the contours of His physical body would disintegrate into pure divine presence filling up the entire room and indeed the whole of existence. I must have looked silly sometimes. One day a central worker placed himself directly to my left looking sternly at me throughout Baba's darshan. Somewhere in the middle of Baba's lecture, I must have become aware of his angry presence and it made me somehow perplexed. I looked at Baba, who went on talking as usual, and I again looked at this Dada who seemed to scrutinize me with intense annoyance. In this way my attention went from Baba to Dada a couple of times with increasing consternation until I decided that Baba must surely and most purposefully have instructed this person to stand there and try to disturb my blissful vision of Him as much as possible as a way of testing me. I then decided to ignore that person completely and again only allowed my mind to sink into Baba. Afterwards I never even bothered to ask Dada why he had looked so rudely at me.

Not long after I was asked to dance in front of Baba. The routine was that before He would speak someone would dance Kaoshikii and others would dance Tandava. It was mostly done in pairs, two for the first dance and another two for the other. They asked me to do the Kaoshikii but I wouldn't, I wanted to dance Tandava only. They tried to reason with me as they already had someone ready for the Tandava and no one for Kaoshikii but I insisted. So the next day after Kaoshikii it was announced in front of Baba that one Bengali brother and I would dance Tandava. The commands for commencing were given and we went ahead. It proved to be very difficult and tough going. Baba's vibration was immense and it became nearly impossible to look at Him. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the Bengali brother's head shaking wildly like a crazy bird or something. Out of other corner of my other eye, I saw the Margiis there sitting looking at us with expressions of mild non-understanding. I understood that His liila was on us the dancers - it was so hard to keep concentration on Baba who seemed to be looking very, very strongly at us as if He was a hurricane or something.

But I persisted and somehow kept my gaze firmly on Him even though it could only be likened to trying to look through a furious hail storm while the dance continued intensely. It was tremendous. When the command to halt was sounded it all became normal again with Baba congratulating us profusely on our achievement. Actually, He was so generous in His praise that the Margiis smiled admiringly at us for a little while. I was amazed at this game of His. Two days after I sat I in the first row right at His feet, when He bowed down to me and whispered: "That day I meant you, not that other boy." The very same Dada who had stood looking rudely at me during Baba's darshan earlier was there fanning Baba, and he could also hear His words to me and that worker grinned so much at my enormous smile to Baba over those sweet, sweet words from Him. Later in the evening I heard that the other dancing brother had run away from his duty and left Ananda Marga. It all was an explosion of His energy and consciousness.

The time for my personal contact came. I went inside that door and entered into a surprisingly small room, very sparsely furnished with a cot, two large electrical fans standing on the floor and a calendar of an Ananda Marga school on the wall. Baba was reclining on the cot fully stretched; in the style of

Vishnu, I later thought. He smiled at me, in complete calm. The fans were placed directly on Him at full force so that the little room was well ventilated. Actually, it seemed like a storm raged inside there. The room was brimming with mystical atmosphere. My immediate thought was: Baba is really the Great One, lying somewhere in complete peace, untouched by the harsh storm of the world. He just continued to smile at me when I rose from my sastaunga pranam to sit in front of Him. To this day I can't imagine why I didn't offer to massage His holy feet lying outstretched in front of me. His greatness just amazed me out of my wits. Then He started very slowly to ask me formal questions, and when He indicated that He couldn't hear properly, He suddenly rose up in sitting position to hear again - very much here and now, like a tiger, so fast and powerful! Then He intimated a few personal things, looked towards the crown of my head and fell into silence for a while, said something about my past and future, and placed His hand just at the top of my head and I felt this trickle of energy descending into me. Then He concluded the contact by going into silence and indicating with a head movement that I could leave. I protested but He was steadfast and I gave in and rose to leave retreating with my back to the door. When I exited the worker on duty at the door outside wondered what had happened as the whole affair went so fast. I couldn't respond at all as all I saw was light and in every person outside there I saw light, and I sank on to the floor, and all I think I heard was this Dada saying "Do meditation!" and I remember little more. Later Baba came out but I was not able to follow much of that either that afternoon.

The next day when He came out of His office for darshan I sat a little to the window side seeing how most people in that room really thronged around Him, and I was amazed how He controlled each and every movement inside that packed room. In spite of so many people blocking His path He moved with the greatest of ease smiling exuberantly at all. I felt very much as if this moving river of people parted me from Him. Then His voice from the day before became clear and loud in my mind: "In this life there will be a physical wall between us but psychically we will be very close." Later I would experience that physical wall many times, and in many astonishing ways realize what it means to be psychically close to Him.

# Chapter Two

## 1979 in Fiesch: Devotional Europe

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*"As I entered the big hall, I saw a sight I can never forget. A multitude of people from different countries were dancing around in bliss. Like the flow of a river in flood, the dance attracted me and the vibration was indescribable. I danced in the midst of hundreds of people intoxicated with ecstatic love...."*

*"This was the first time that I realised the divine power of kiirtan. I asked myself, who was this powerful Master that, even without being physically present, could create such an incredible heavenly turmoil in the minds of hundreds of people?"*

Ananta

While Baba was in jail, only a few fortunate souls were able to see Him physically. That quickly changed as soon as He was released. Only nine months later Baba embarked on a world tour and His first stop was Switzerland. These experiences took place in the historic one week gathering of Margiis with Baba, in Fiesch, Switzerland. The week culminated in a Dharma Maha Cakra, a most significant darshan. Many of the stories here describe the spiritual transformation that comes when a spiritual aspirant meets his or her Master for the first time.

*"While doing as per His desire, one should always remember that Supreme Entity is not the boss; that Supreme Entity is the loving Father. The relationship is not official; the relationship is purely personal... Love is the first word, love is the starting point, and love is the last point."*

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

9 May 1979 evening, Fiesch, Switzerland, A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 12

## In The Car with Baba in Switzerland

(as related by Bodiishvara to Vishva Shanti)

Departing from the Geneva Airport, Baba expressed His pleasure about the large, warm reception by European Margiis and Proutists. As Baba, His personal assistant Ac. Ramananda Avt. and their young travelling companion Mayatiita began the long car ride up the valley to Fiesch, Baba asked how long the journey was. He had been awake for thirty-three hours and had not done sadhana for nine hours. Baba commented about His health and recovery from the years of fasting and imprisonment. He said His knees had become very strong again, but His ankles were still weak. For four years and eight months, He was lying down. He never stood on His feet. He went on to say they would become strong in some time.

After asking how long the trip would take and mentioning again the need for doing His sadhana, Baba suggested that they stop at the next hotel to do sadhana. He said again that he had not done His sadhana for nine hours. He must do His sadhana.

An apprehensive Brahmadeva stopped the car in the small quiet village of Aigle. After inquiring at the railway station about hotels, they proceeded to the only one nearby, a smoky cafe with a drunken hotel keeper. Bodiishvara entered to try to get a room. Once inside he was very surprised to see Baba following right after him into the hotel and directly to the first floor.

At Ac. Ramananda's suggestion, they got back into the car. It wasn't a suitable place for meditation. Bodiishvara realised from Baba's action the importance of regular sadhana under any circumstances. Baba then did His meditation in the car until interrupted by a big bump in the road just before the village of Brig.

After His meditation, Baba's mood became happy and alert. After asking the two Swiss brothers about this valley and finding they had little knowledge of the local area, Baba began to tell them about the agriculture and farming. He explained in very much detail the irrigation systems used, the farming techniques and the particulars of local animal care. He explained the reasons for the differences between the cows here and those of India with the familiar hump on the back.

Having seen many vineyards from the air, Baba asked Bodiishvara if the winemakers made wine with the seeds or without. Bodiishvara replied that he didn't know as he was not an expert on wine. Baba then said that he should know everything and went on to explain about grape growing and wine making in Switzerland.

Approaching Fiesch, Baba said that Switzerland is the most beautiful country in the world and that it is the best place to do sadhana. He said maximum master units should be established in the area so that Margiis from around the world can visit the place and do sadhana for two or three weeks.

### BHUKTI PRADHAN CONFERENCE - 12th of May, 1979

In the Bhukti Pradhana and Upabhukti Pramukha conference, held for the first time in Europe, Baba explained the meaning of the term Bhukti. 'Bhukti' means an area that can feed its population. In Sanskrit it's called Bhukti whereas in English it can be translated to 'county'. Pradhana means 'headman' and 'upa' means 'near' and Pramukha means 'the head'. So the Bhukti Pradhana's and Upabhukti Pramukha's are the guardians of their respective Bhuktis or Upabhuktis. They must help each other - if there is any economic deficiency in one Bhukti, others must help. In case of natural calamity in one Bhukti, other Bhuktis must help. He said: "Only in this way can you solve all the problems of the whole world; not only of this world but of the whole universe. So I can thank you in anticipation."

# Driving Baba in Fiesch

Brahmadeva / Switzerland

Like most people who have had contact with Baba, I wish to be permanently by His side. His beauty is so overwhelming one can hardly attempt to describe Him. When I found out I was to be Baba's driver in Fiesch I was speechless. I didn't even dare to think of such a blessing. For nine days and 1000 kilometres I was within His arm's reach. Many brothers and sisters have asked me about my feelings and experiences being so near to Baba, so I will try to recall them.

I was overwhelmed from the first time I saw Baba at Geneva airport, and I looked at Him constantly, not wanting to miss His beauty for a second. In the car I was unable to take my eyes off Him. I watched Him in the mirror and turned my head around as often as possible. At other times I was normal and there was nothing in me but driving my Lord, as if He had been sitting there all my life.

I enjoyed every moment of my wonderful duty, and I felt Baba did the same. After we left the airport on our way to Fiesch, going rather slowly on the highway so that the security personnel could catch up with us, Baba suddenly said, "It seems that we are going rather slow."

I asked whether He liked going fast. He just smiled and said, "You know my boy, I like everything."

Each day He came out of His quarters there were many Margiis shouting "Baba!" and doing namaskar. Everyone was longing for Him. When He was in the car Baba looked at them through the window, reciprocated their namaskar and said: "Yes, yes, I am coming, I am coming."

One day Vimal Kumar shouted: "I love you Baba!"

"I also love you," Baba answered, and again gave namaskar. Driving back to the airport, I felt increasing pain within me. I asked Him fervently: "Baba, please come back soon."

"Certainly," He answered, in a most loving voice. "I cannot live



without you, or leave without you, but actually it doesn't make any difference. What to say more?"

My wife Jayaliila was a little bit angry with me, because I had the chance to spend so much time with Baba. She also wanted to come. So I wrote a request to Baba on behalf of three Bhukti Pradhanas (Ananda Marga District Secretaries), that sisters might also be permitted on field walks. On the ride home from field walk I took my heart in my hands and asked Baba what His answer was to our request. He had not been informed and Dada Ramananda turned to Baba and murmured a few words in Hindi to Him.

I said, "Baba your daughters love you so much and they would also like to come on these beautiful field walks with you."

Baba simply answered: "It has not been the system."

"In the past," I dared to say. Silence. I felt somehow bad to press Baba like this, but a few seconds before we arrived at His quarters I asked again, "Baba please forgive me, but what answer can I give the sisters?"

"Ramananda will speak about it!" He replied, and went into His house.

At the end of the next day's walk, before Baba entered His car, Bodhiishvar approached Him, "Baba I am most happy to go on field walk with you. But every time I leave Ainchala is crying, as she would also like to come."

"Oh she may come," Baba simply replied, and in the car He said to Ramananda: "Permission to one means permission to all." I was so happy that I could not hide it.

"That little boy is smiling. Why?"

"Baba, because I also have a wife who is eagerly waiting to go on field walk with you."

The day after our wives were prepared to come, but they got lost on the road and had to return. Maybe their time was not ripe yet. But three days later we were all there, Jayaliila, Ainchala,

and our three children. Baba enjoyed it as we all did, as if the system had never been different.

I had personal contact in Fiesch. Before personal contact Baba would always refer to me as 'that boy' or 'my boy'. After personal contact He frequently used my name, and this made my relationship with Him even deeper. To hear my name spoken by Him was like intuitively perceiving who I really am. On the day before His birthday we went with Him in a cable-car to the snowy summit of a three thousand meter high mountain. On the way up, I was very close to Him in the cabin. He suddenly looked at me with funny eyes asking: "What is his name?" "Brahmadeva, Baba." We were moving in crystal clarity, the snow reflecting the sunlight. "The glittering expression of Parama Purusa."

I looked through the window and thought: "Yes, it is really beautiful," and at the same time realized that He was explaining my name. My thoughts were running close to infinity but Baba suddenly said, "What does it mean? The glittering expression of Parama Purusa."

On another occasion, looking at the snowy mountain tops He said, "What's this? Hmmm? It is beautiful. This shows that Parama Purusa is what...an aesthetic."

On another field walk, with sisters present, Baba was explaining how in the past women had much greater influence than men. They inherited everything, while men didn't inherit a thing. Women were socially much more important once. Then He laughed. He leaned down to us and said, "But don't tell them, otherwise they will be puffed up with vanity." We all laughed. Back at the car, a couple of sisters made a special namaskar to Baba. Upon this He said, "May the women discover the lost glory of their history."

Many of Baba's fascinating comments on these field walks have already been published elsewhere. Baba made it clear that He wants everybody to know what He said. He asked me many times "Have you understood, have you recorded everything?" And while all the Indian Margiis riding in the car often addressed Him in Hindi, He answered all the important things in English. I felt it was especially for me, as I was the only one in the car who

didn't understand Hindi. I often wished to be an expert in languages, prehistory or geology, to understand properly what Baba said. His ocean of knowledge attracted and fascinated me very much.

I was very high most of the time, maybe too high. One evening, returning home from field walk, Baba suddenly said, "That boy Brahmadeva, he is very efficient in driving." I do like driving and thought how nice it is that Baba made such a compliment. It was only a few seconds later that I had to bring the car to a screeching halt, to avoid running into the security car. Everybody including Baba was swept from the seat. I was so ashamed and murmured an excuse, but then I could not help laughing loudly. My vanity was gone, and I was back on earth.

Baba showed much interest in the well-being of His children. I asked Him one day, whether He wanted to see where the Margiis were staying.

"Certainly," He said. "In fact I was only waiting for your proposal to do that." Everyday He enquired whether more Margiis had come and from where they were.

He said, "Our family is growing every day."

Then He gave DMC. Afterwards in the car He wanted to know, "Was it good? Did they like it?"

"Yes Baba, we liked it very much."

In many ways, Baba was like a normal person, and He liked being approached like that. Every night, I ran around the car too quickly wishing Him a good night before He entered His house. Sometimes He looked back at me, and silently touched my hand or face. Baba likes to feel our love for Him.

On the way from Fiesch to Geneva airport it was as if I had Baba for myself alone for three hours. I felt as if only He and I were there. During this journey Baba asked Ramananda, "Ramananda, has Brahmadeva never been to India?"

I quickly said, "Baba I saw you twice in jail...."

Baba put His finger in front of His lips to show me to keep quiet. "I only wanted to see whether Ramananda remembered you." Then again He was watching the scenery, and it seemed to me that He was revisiting something, as if everything was familiar. You might have heard that He had spoken about Lord Shiva visiting the Alps. I asked Him how long Lord Shiva had been travelling. Baba answered, "You know, it was His habit to move along the mountains. He was riding on His yak whose name was Nandi. Even now if you visualise Him, you can see Him sitting on His yak."

Baba spoke a lot about the gypsies who came from India to Yugoslavia, from there to Hungary, and then followed the Danube into the mountain valleys, where they eventually settled. Their language is a mixture of Sanskrit and Latin. We spoke about Switzerland, and I asked Baba if there is also a proper name for Switzerland, as 'land of intellectuals' is for Germany.

First He said "No", but then he added, "It is the land of Aryans. I have not recorded the name in Sanskrit. Aryans originally meant 'noble people', then the meaning became 'Alpine people'."

A few times I did not understand Him well, so I had to ask Him what He had said. So He put His head very close to me between the front seats, so that I could hear Him better. Is this not love? After He had left, one brother asked me what I was going to do with my life after this deep experience. It was then that I realised what had happened. What more is there to come?

# With Baba in Europe

Sundara / Netherlands

Sweet and humble

Once Baba said: "Greatest is he who makes others great." Some people do a lot of good work and most of them don't mind to at least get some credit or appreciation for that. And there is nothing bad in it. Very rarely people stay in the background and even more rarely people try to give others credit for any work that has been done and encourage them to do even more. According to Baba's definition, Parama Purusa - the Supreme Consciousness - is the Greatest of all. He is the ultimate Doer of everything and stays in the background in one hundred percent of all cases.

In different situations where I have been with Baba, I was always struck by one thing. He was always so sweet and humble, at the same time ever ready and open to all in every situation like a loving father to His children. When walking in the woods He would ask us for instance: "Do you know anything about these plants? I know nothing. I know very little; you please tell us something". We, hesitatingly, would share what little we knew and then He started telling and telling ... His humbleness, His openness, sweetness and innocence was extremely impressing and inspiring. With every word, a fountain of love was raining on all and everything around Him. He was a living example of the words that He spoke.

FIESCH, May 1979:

Arrival and first Darshan, May 7.

In Fiesch (a little town in Switzerland) we all were eagerly waiting for Baba to come and a wave of emotion and excitement went through all of us when, in the afternoon of May 7 1979, the message came that He would give Darshan. His first Darshan was short, but a big lecture was not necessary: He appeared, spoke a few words and in this way became a living presence in our hearts. But in the few words He spoke, He very clearly indicated that not only was He in our hearts, but also we were all in His.

At the time I was hearing Baba's words I took them as abstract, over our heads and as just another, and rather formal, call to do kiirtan. Now I realize He was saying many deep and sweet things at the same time.

He was saying that not only could He feel that He was in all our hearts, but at the same time we were all unconditionally in His heart. It was a pure expression of His love for us.

Secondly, He clearly indicated that to know Him even more and to be together in deeper oneness kiirtan was the proper tool to reach Him.

Thirdly, He was reminding us that we are living parts of society and He wanted to inspire us to expand that deep feeling of love of this moment to everybody around us.

#### A 'Smell' Experience,

Twice a day Baba made a field walk in the surroundings of Fiesch. Many times I wanted to join. But always the cars were full. Then one evening a Dada came to me and said: "Sundara, go quickly to the place of departure. The last car hasn't left yet and one place is still open." I started running but when I was about ten meters away from the car, I suddenly passed through an invisible cloud of a very sweet smell. "O, how nice!" I thought. "The flowers in the trees are blooming at this moment in May already". The smell was very strong and very sweet, but difficult to describe: it was like a mixture of jasmine, lilacs and sandalwood. I halted, expecting to see many beautifully blossoming trees. But to my big surprise, not one tree around was actually blooming. I was confused and thought: "How is this possible? Where else could the smell be from?" Then I realised that this must be the place where Baba got inside a car to drive away for field walk. I longed to remain in this cloud of smell and enjoy it more, but no time was left, since the last car was waiting for me. So, I settled down on a seat in the back of the car, looking forward to be in His physical presence again.

25 years later a global retreat was organized in Fiesch. We were sitting in Baba's house exchanging our experiences with Baba. Slowly a very subtle atmosphere was developing. At a certain

moment, I told the above experience and while talking, I smelt the same smell. Not as strong as 25 years before, but definitely a sweet smell. Strange: the windows were closed. Then Dada Dharmavedananda said: "For a few seconds there was a sweet smell in this room. Did you notice?" Many Margiis then confirmed they had sensed the same.

### 'The Future of Humanity'

In one field walk in the mountains, almost immediately Baba started telling about the mountains around us. He told that the Alps were very old, one of the first places on earth where civilization started. Originally the Alps were higher than the Himalayas. It was quite hot on the earth in those days, but on top of the Alps at zero degrees centigrade, life began. Baba said: "Sadashiva used to travel on a yak called Nandi to visit the Alps some 7000 years ago. Sadashiva didn't go to any other continent except Asia and Central Europe and this is why the Alps are a very tantric belt."

He told about the relation between Mars and our planet. "According to my opinion life came from planet Mars. Today Mars is a dying planet."

"Life has come to this earth from other galaxies, but that is another subject I might discuss some other time." He kept His promise: December 31, 1986 He gave His first discourse on Microvita, opening a new road to our understanding of matter and mind.

"The future of humanity is very bright. Humanity has one black spot and that black spot is war. Some people say that war brings progress, because it speeds up the discovery of new inventions. But by working together in a nice way many more inventions will be made and even faster. War is horrible and brings so much suffering. You should see to it that there will be no more wars in the future."

## "So you have come"

Ac. Abhidevananda Avadhuta

I was thrilled and nervous at the same time. Baba had called me for the very first field walk. The problem was I had left my field without permission to see Baba in Berlin Sector. Would Baba bless me or scold me?

Soon after Baba emerged from the car, He turned to me and said in a somewhat grave voice: "So you have come."

My reply, "Yes, Baba, I could not help myself."

He smiled, "I know. I wanted you to come."

### The Rhythm of the Rhine

One day it was arranged for Baba to go on a short excursion on the Rhine River. By His Grace I managed to secure a seat just opposite to Him. Soon after departure, we noticed that Baba was being lightly sprayed as the boat cut through the waves. Some workers jumped up to shield Baba from the water. Baba asked them to sit down. He said: "It is only natural."

In those days, Baba had not yet given Prabhat Samgiita. I had with me a cassette recorder and a tape of devotional-cum-revolutionary music made by a Margii of Suva Sector. With my eyes only on Baba, I started to listen to the music. Baba asked me what I was listening to. I explained, and Baba asked if He could hear. I held the tape recorder to Baba's ear and He listened for a few seconds.

Then He remarked: "She knows the secret of music - sustained chords." Then Baba turned to Ac. Nityasatyanandaji who was sitting nearby and said: "You should compose a song in the rhythm of the Rhine."



Baba's View on War  
notes from a field walk on May 11, 1979  
from Baba in Fiesch

In the practical field I realise the futility of war. War is the black spot of human character. In individual or collective life one can fight sangram, but war is based on hatred and on fissiparous tendencies. Is it not black?

Struggle (sangram) and war (yuddha) are not synonymous. While war springs from hatred, struggle is a part and parcel of life. War blackens everything. It darkens the future. Let the life be bright, both individually and collectively. Let us fight these fissiparous tendencies which want to make our life dark.

Do human beings want light or darkness? They want light. Light is beautiful because it is luminous. When there was no creation, there was only one colour - black. Want of life is black. After creation we see this beautiful play of colours. Why shall we be lost in darkness? All human beings want light.

Our forefathers committed a mistake by encouraging war. We should rectify what mistakes they committed. We should atone for their mistakes.

One unit human being is more luminous and more bright and more throbbing than universal darkness. So humans should always be optimistic. The cimmerian darkness cannot retard our progress.

Black cannot cover the light of our hearts. The spirit of your heart must move on and on against obstacles; rather, you must fight against the pebble of obstacles, just as you kick away the pebbles with your feet when you walk on the path and they come in your way.

Humans are stronger than their obstacles.

## Watching His Eyes

Narrated by Mrnalinii / Italy

Anirvan and other brothers had gone to Fiesch in order to meet Baba for the first time. When Baba alighted from the car, Anirvan was astonished to see a short man, old and fragile, but for whom he felt affection and a sense of protection. His first emotion was that of wanting to embrace Baba and to support Him, since He was leaning on His stick to the extent that Anirvan could not see His face. He was prevented by the guards from embracing Baba.

Therefore, the following morning, after the first encounter with that "small man", Anirvan went to Baba's house to see Him again and with specific desire to watch His eyes.

Anirvan was concentrating his mind on the height of his Guru (Baba) and was trying to calculate the exact height at which he should gaze in order to catch a clear glimpse of Baba's eyes once Baba would arrive. Finally, Baba entered. Great was his surprise in realizing that after all his calculation, his gaze was not on Baba's eyes but at the height of Baba's navel. He saw a high man, wearing a white punjabi that gave Anirvan a sense that Baba commanded respect and physical strength. Such was his wonder that he asked a nearby brother about his impressions. The brother felt the same. Both had seen two faces of the Guru: loving and to be loved like a Father, but also strong and commanding like a guide or leader who is to be followed.

## "Do As I Do"

Ac. Pramananda Avt.

I had been Margii and LFT for five and a half years before I met Baba. I had already decided to become a WT when I travelled to Fiesch where I finally met Baba. My need was to experience Baba as a human being and He fulfilled that desire.

When I arrived in Fiesch I was on security duty which gave me a chance to be near Him often. Whenever entering or leaving the DMC hall He stopped at one particular door. I had the overall responsibility for the security of the hall, so I was able to station myself in that particular place each day. On Baba's birthday, He came down and the Margiis were shouting Param Pita Baba ki, and I felt it was very mechanical. I realised that it was Baba's birthday, and I said, "Happy Birthday Baba." He turned around and beamed, and in my mind I heard Him say, "How nice, someone remembered my birthday."

A few days later I was ready for Personal Contact. I went to Baba's house and met Dada Ramananda, and we went to Baba's room and saw Baba there in a tee shirt, but actually I had arrived too early, and finally Dada Ramananda realized this and took me away. Then, after a short wait, I entered Baba's room and Baba said, "Sit properly."

"So you have been given this blood and these bones, what are you going to do with them?"

"Baba, I hope to become a WT."

"Hope? You don't hope, you just do. So many people are hoping for this, and wishing for that...you should do something practical."

Then He came very close to me and said, "You should do as I do," and He touched my forehead with a blessing, and I felt a tingling. In that moment I felt so shy and inhibited, and thought I should embrace Baba but I was shy.

Baba looked at me and I asked, "Can I hug you?" And then He looked at me and said, "Don't you know how much I love you?"

And then He blessed me.

One foot was near to me, and I touched it.

He asked me who was my Acarya and where I was initiated. I said, "Carbondale, Illinois," which was the place in the United States where Ananda Marga first began.

On the last day of the programme in Fiesch, none of the guards wanted to be on duty and miss the DMC, but I stayed outside on guard duty alone. Then I heard a car coming to Baba's house, and I thought, it must be Baba. Baba came out and walked by, and He turned and stopped and put His hand on my cheek and said, "You're a good boy," and the house door opened and Baba started to tell jokes. "These mixed marriages are very interesting." He said, "In French the word pain means bread, but in English it has a different meaning," and then He laughed at His own joke.

## "Be like Shiva and Parvati"

Meeta / London (part 1)

For a long time Baba was just a photograph for me. Time passed and Baba came out of jail. We looked forward to seeing Him and understanding Him. I saw that many people had a big reaction when they saw His films and pictures. I had a strong expectation that I should be the devotee-type and that I would feel something.

Baba was coming to Fiesch in Switzerland. I arrived at the airport and we were prepared to do kaoshiki and tandava. When Baba arrived I didn't get very close. My big problem was that I wasn't feeling anything. This stayed with me during Baba's stay in Fiesch. I was in the Girls Volunteers (GV) and did security duty. I had a dream in Fiesch; Baba gave me His mudra in the dream.

It was a week full of activity and Baba, but I wasn't feeling anything for Baba. There was darshan everyday. I was Bhukti Pradhan (BP) in London and when it became clear that Baba wasn't going to get a visa for England, I had to write a note to Baba's Personal Assistant to help the Margiis of London get personal contact in Switzerland. However, the afternoon that happened, I missed it, and the other Margii sisters got group contact.

I missed another chance to be near Baba when He was going to bless marriages. Something happened that time too and there were delays and it didn't happen. I was weeping, but finally the blessings were rescheduled and it was very nice. He took my hands and my husband Govinda's hands and it felt like I was putting my hands into infinity, and then I heard Baba's voice, "Be like Shiva and Parvati."

Despite all this I was feeling that I didn't love Baba. Fiesch was coming to an end and I hadn't been on any walk with Baba. You had to have personal contact to go on a walk, but later this rule was relaxed. I drove the sisters' vehicle that day, but it was a Renault and I wasn't used to this kind of vehicle. We got to some steep hills and we lost Baba's car and Baba took His walk and we just arrived at the end of it. Frustration was building up. Because this field walk went wrong, we had another chance. This time

there was a better car and we drove close behind. But this time we weren't allowed to get close to Baba on the walk. I went away again disappointed.

It wasn't till right at the end, when He was leaving, that I felt a special attraction for Him. It was time to say goodbye and I was pushed into Baba's house and was very close, and being so close and feeling that He was going - in that moment I felt some attraction. But then Baba had left and He wasn't going to visit our region, so it was as if I hadn't achieved what I wanted to achieve, to love Baba.

I was going back by plane and my husband Govinda by car. As the plane was taking off, I had an immense desire to see Baba again and it was then I realized that I loved Him, in the moment of leaving. And so with that nice feeling of love, I went home and made plans how to see Baba again. We made plans to see Baba in Rotterdam.

This time we arrived in Rotterdam by train. I bought Baba some flowers; I now had this feeling to do something for Him. We arrived at the jagrti and it was completely full. There were very narrow stairways. It was so full that there was not any room to actually lie down and go to sleep. That morning we put our name down on the list for personal contact and I knew then that it would happen. Also at some point I gave Baba the flowers and that made me feel very close as well. My time for personal contact came with a group of sisters and I felt very positive. I went in with the group and Baba asked everybody's name but He didn't ask me my name. So I had to push myself, and ask Baba to tell the meaning of my name. He said that it meant 'little girl' and then he blessed each of us with his hand on our forehead. We felt so taken care of. Everything was just fine, so different from Fiesch.

We went for a walk that night and we prepared to get very close to Baba. I was nervous about the driving and told the driver to keep up, we must not lose Baba. And then in a wooded area the tire was punctured. I got out and had to run down the road. Fortunately He was just down the road, and I got up and just walked near Baba. Govinda was on one side and Baba was on the other. At the end the other sisters appeared, and explained that a mechanic came immediately and helped them fix the car.

It all felt so good, like He was guiding all of us so we could be with Him. It felt like a dream. The next morning Baba was leaving. We got up early to meet Him at the airport. We were sitting around Him at the airport and I brought a Pratik (the Ananda Marga emblem) for Baba's chair. I can't remember what He said at the airport but I felt so close and I was very happy.

## With Baba in Switzerland

Ac. Sarvabodhananda Avt.

I was one of the first group of overseas acaryas who took senior acarya training in Jodhpur Park, Calcutta after Baba came out of jail. After our training we were instructed to go back to our field and to come back after one month for kapalik diiks'a.

When I arrived in my field, we received information that Baba was going to conduct a world tour, first visiting Berlin Sector then New York Sector. So I decided not to go back to India for diiks'a but wait for Baba. At our meeting it was decided that all WTs (whole-time workers) should work hard to prepare for Baba's coming.

While I was in Long Island, New York, a Margii brother arrived from India with the message from Central Office that Baba wanted the Dharma Maha Cakra (DMC) in Fiesch, Switzerland to be held as an international gathering, therefore representatives from different sectors should come. That day Baba arrived in Europe.

Immediately I called my Sectorial Secretary, Ac. Yatiishvarananda Avt. and after a long talk he gave me and another didi permission to represent New York Sector. By Baba's grace that same day Didi and I, and also one Margii sister, who got her passport just before we flew, got our tickets to fly on the following day.

We flew to Amsterdam and took a train to Switzerland. While meditating in the train, a thought came to mind, that my birthday and Baba's birthday will be on the same day. I was asking myself whether Baba would know about it. I thought I was being silly since Baba knows everything. As I was going deeper in my sadhana, a strong desire arose in my heart to offer a present to Baba on His birthday. What would it be? I wanted to sing a song to Baba while massaging His feet! As we came closer to Fiesch, my desire became stronger and clearer: "I want to sing a song for Him and massage His feet."

As we arrived in Fiesch I gave my sastaung pranam to Baba together with Naresh Bector from Canada. Everyday I was looking for the opportunity to fulfil my desire. The day before



the DMC I felt my desire could never be fulfilled by my own effort. So that morning I stayed in my room and did my sadhana, and offered my desire to Baba in my Guru Puja. When I arrived at Baba's cabin, the Dada, who was in charge of making the lists of devotees accompanying Baba on His field walks, was running towards me inquiring where I had been. He was going to include me for the field walk but now the list was complete. When I insisted that he should put my name, he urged me to ask permission from Dada Ramanandaji, who was Baba's Personal Assistant.

When I asked Dada Ramananda he retorted saying that, "We were searching for you but we could not find you and now the list is complete; you cannot go." I pleaded to Dada saying that I had never been on a field walk with Baba and to please allow me to go this time. Finally Dada agreed. He said if you find a place in any car you can go. So that evening as soon as I heard the shout of "Param Pita Baba ki, jai!," I ran to the security car and found a seat.

That evening the field walk was very short. It was very windy. Baba was wearing new shoes and one of them hurt His foot. (Actually, we discovered later that a nail was sticking through the sole of the shoe.) But I was happy that finally I could be on a field walk with Baba.

The next day was the actual DMC day, my birthday and Baba's birthday. I did my sadhana early and went to Baba's cabin. I asked Dada Ramanandaji to allow me to go on the field walk with Baba that morning. Dada said, "No. You went already last night." I insisted that last night had been very short and so I must go also this time. Dada said OK, providing that I find a seat in any car. When I heard the sound of "Jai," I ran searching for a seat but this time I could not find one. I was standing in front of the security jeep very disappointedly. Dada Abhidevananda was sitting in the front seat. The security Dada in charge pulled him out and let me take his place! I felt very sorry for him, but I had to go.

That morning the field walk was on the top of the Alps. We were about 15 Acaryas and Margiis. We rode in a cable car to the top of the mountain. As we were going up we were looking down at the scenery. Baba was quietly sitting in the middle of the cable

car. Then Bodhishvar, the local Bhukti Pradhan, requested Baba to stand up and see the view. Baba replied that, "Whatever my local guide says, I will do." So He stood up and watched the scenery. As we were arriving at the station Baba said, "Now my boys and girls, have you understood why Shiva had selected the Himalayas as His abode?" We all said yes. The atmosphere at this height was so elevating and pure. Then Baba continued saying that, "Mountains make people pure and simple, oceans make people intellectual."

As we came out of the cable car some of us tried to walk ahead trying to flatten the snow. That morning too, Baba wore new shoes. The shoes were a little bit too big, so every time He stepped, the heels of His feet came out and snow entered His shoes. Baba was not wearing any socks. Finally we found a beautiful spot facing the most incredible mountains. I took off my jacket and placed it on the ground under Baba's feet. The two didis started drying Baba's feet with their hands. Baba kept saying that "actually their hands are colder than my feet." But the didis continued to massage Baba's feet. Baba asked me a question and said something pointing to the vast horizon but I can not remember it now.

After a while, Bodhishvar came and told Baba that the management of the place wanted to take us to the highest peak of the mountain. Baba nodded. As we were waiting for the cable car we saw two men outside the car hanging in space, repairing it. That ride was shorter than the first. As we came out of the cable car Baba's P.A. directed all of us to sit on the fence. He said that we cannot climb to the top because it was very dangerous. Baba was just sitting quietly by. Then after a few minutes Dr. Patak and another Margii from India who were part of Baba's entourage came down from the top very excited, telling Baba how beautiful it is on the top. Then Bodhishvar told Baba that is very beautiful up there and we should all go up. Then Baba replied, "Whatever my local guide says I will do." So we all got excited and Dada Ramananda did not protest. We formed a semi-circle behind Baba holding hands, ready to catch Him in case He slipped.

We reached the top of the Alps, and it was one of the most beautiful, pure and elevating environments imaginable. The ground was covered with snow, and a bright blue sky touched

the horizon. The morning sun rays were very pleasant, and of course everything was so much sweeter because we were with Baba. The security guard placed the chair on the ground, and Baba sat majestically.

Baba closed His eyes for a moment and as He opened His eyes He recited a poem of Rabindranath Tagore and explained it in a most mystical way. Then Baba pointed to the ground, to the snow, saying that life on earth began at zero degrees, and that life on earth came from Mars, but now Mars is a dead planet, including its moons. Then Baba asked some Margiis how many moons does Mars have and what are their names.

As we came back down to the bench, we waited for the cable car to come. We were watching the scenery and then saw some jet planes fly out from under the ground at the foot of the mountains! Then Dada Karunanandaji asked Bodhishvar to explain to Baba what was happening down there. Then Bodhishvar in a joking way replied, "Well, if I will tell, then I will become a traitor to my country, because I am a member of the Swiss Army." Upon hearing this, Baba became sad and serious. Baba said "I also was in the army for two years. War is the blackest spot in human character. It is the greatest mistake that our forefathers have committed. As a sadhaka you have to fight all those forces that create war." We all fell silent.

The cable car came. As we started to move I saw two didis sitting along on each side of Baba massaging His feet. Baba again commented that their hands were actually colder than His feet, but the didis continued to massage. Suddenly I remembered my desire to sing a song for Baba and massage His feet. I felt so jealous of the didis. I tried to muster courage, took a deep breath and looked to Baba. Baba smiled and I believe He understood something. As soon as we got out of the cable car to change to the other car, I ran as fast as I could. Dada Karunanandaji understood what I was doing so he followed me. As soon as the security guard placed the chair I moved to the left side of the chair and Karunanandaji was on the other side. As Baba sat on the chair we were already in the proper position. Ramanandaji asked, "Is everyone in?" Someone answered yes. Then Karunanandaji asked, "bhajan?" (spiritual song). For a split second I tried to listen if someone else will sing, but I heard no one. Immediately I started singing and gently massaging Baba's

left foot and Karunanandaji was on the other foot.

As our devotion filled the cable car Baba was in a blissful state. I was singing, "Baba I adore you, I lay my life before you." A few times Baba opened His eyes and looked at me smiling and lightly nodding His head. Then, mentally, I thanked Baba and told Him, Happy Birthday. As the ride was long we converted the bhajan into Baba Nam Kevalam kiirtan. Everyone was ecstatic, the entire atmosphere was charged with so much devotion. We reached the base station, Dada Ramananda shouted, "Everyone out." Nobody moved. For a while everyone wanted to remain inside the cable car. Then Ramanandaji started pushing everyone out. As we walked toward the car, I felt as if I was walking on the air, completely satisfied. I thought to myself that if Baba asked me to go back immediately to my sector I will gladly do it. I felt I got everything I wanted. He fulfilled my inner desire as I surrendered it to Him.

After DMC, I toured with Baba in Germany and Holland. In Timmern, Baba continued to shower His grace on me. On May 20, Baba initiated me into kapalika sadhana. After my initiation Baba asked me to dance tandava. As I was dancing I felt I was dancing effortlessly. Then Baba made me sit on His lap and blessed me. Then Baba gave DMS. When we were in Mainz, the organizers took all of us on a boat ride along the Rhine River. Baba sat in the front part of the boat looking forward. He was sitting on an elevated chair, below was a spot just big enough for a small person. I sat there and massaged Baba's feet while everyone was standing on both sides of the boat. As the boat moved against the current of the river, some water started coming in through the open windows. Several dasas rushed to close it but Baba stopped them saying, "It is all natural."

On the last day of Baba's stay in Holland I left for my sector. When I arrived in New York, I got the message that Baba was inquiring about me and that I had been posted to Berlin sector.

## Elevating My Mind

Avtka. Ananda Amegha Ac. (part 1)

When Baba came to Europe, I was quite a new Margii. I had been initiated a year before in my hometown in Ulm, Germany, but was living in Sevilla, Spain. One day I received a postcard from the friend who had brought me to Ananda Marga, inviting me to come to Fiesch, where Baba would visit. My sister, who had been initiated the same day and was living with me in Spain, decided to go with me.

The first morning after we arrived, I got up at 4 a.m. and took a freezing cold shower. In the DMC hall I saw Baba for the first time. He was surrounded by a glow of light and looked very charming. Even though I had no idea who He was, I could feel His vibrant energy. His smile was extremely sweet and He gave Namaskar to everybody when He entered the hall.

Another time, when I saw Baba sitting on the dais ready to give His discourse, I started crying and crying without any reason. Afterwards I felt relieved of all pain and suffering. Baba ever so gently elevated my mind and brought me closer to Him.

After returning from Fiesch, I got in touch with the Spanish Margiis. I started to attend Dharmacakra regularly and participated in a service project by teaching English to children. I also taught them yoga, meditation and the moral principles of Ananda Marga. It was a very fulfilling experience and I felt strongly that if these children continued on the spiritual path, each of them would become a valuable human being and make a great contribution to society. By that time, I was already convinced that Ananda Marga is a unique spiritual path and I tried to inspire as many people as possible to join.

# The Benevolent Grace of the Master

Ananta / Italy

Once, in response to a disciple asking who He really was, Baba wrote on a small paper: "I was a mystery, I am a mystery and I will always be a mystery." I experienced this mysterious nature of Baba very strongly in the summer of 1976, shortly after my initiation, when I attended my first Ananda Marga international retreat in the small village of Triuggio in northern Italy. When I arrived, I was attracted by the sound of very strong singing coming from the Dharma Cakra hall.

As I entered the big hall, I saw a sight I can never forget. A multitude of people from different countries were dancing around in bliss. Like the flow of a river in flood, the dance attracted me and the vibration was indescribable. I danced in the midst of hundreds of people intoxicated with ecstatic love. Many of them were jumping and shouting Baba's name, while the faces of others were covered with tears of joy.

This was the first time that I realised the divine power of kiirtan. I asked myself, who was this powerful Master that, even without being physically present, could create such an incredible heavenly turmoil in the minds of hundred of people?

Two years later the Sectorial Secretary, Dada Karunananda, and my acarya, Dada Janaka, came to Florence where I was living.

When they arrived, they asked to speak with Karuna Devi and me. Like many students in Italy, we had been living together in a small flat for about three years, but we weren't married. The dada's explained that it was important to be married when living as a couple, and, because Baba was supposed to come to Europe soon, they proposed to perform the Ananda Marga marriage ceremony that very evening!

This was a really big clash for me, since I had never spoken about this with Karuna Devi before. Anyway we both agreed, although we didn't have any proper clothes, food or flowers. Because it was Sunday evening, all the shops were closed. Some of the Margii brothers helped me collect flowers directly from the parks and gardens near the house - we felt sure that this special situation

justified our actions. Meanwhile the sisters prepared a sweet with a little bran, sugar and raisins. Just one hour after we agreed, our spiritual marriage was performed. The simple wedding was beautiful and the garlands were superb, but internally I felt a little sad because we did not have the opportunity to make better arrangements for our marriage.

Then, early on the morning of May 6, 1979, Karuna Devi and I started hitchhiking to Switzerland to see our Guru. During the entire trip we felt our Guru gracefully helping us. We never waited long for rides, and, though the distance was not short, we arrived earlier than the others who left Italy by train.

In Fiesch, the air was clean and pure and the beautiful panorama of the Swiss Alps was covered with a deep blue sky. Baba was supposed to arrive that evening. In the afternoon we started to wait for Him outside His house. The small place was full of many dadas and didis preparing everything inside. In front of the door stood some brothers with smart-looking uniforms as security guards (VSS). We sang bhajans and kiirtans, but as the hours of waiting passed, Baba still didn't arrive. During the night some Margiis went off to sleep, and all of us were wondering what had happened.

A little after midnight we started to hear a distant commotion coming from amidst the silent mountains. There was a roaring of engines and screeching of tyres that got louder and louder, as if a midnight car rally was taking place in the quietest place in the world.

Finally several cars drove up at high speed and braked hard in front of Baba's house. Dozens of dadas and didis in their bright orange uniforms exploded out of the vehicles and prepared the way for another car with little triangular orange flags on the front. More cars pulled up, and then, from all this energetic turmoil, a little man with glasses dressed in white emerged. He gave a deep namaskar to everyone and entered the house.

For many of us, it was our first sight of Baba. My immediate impression was very intense: I felt that I was standing in front of the most powerful Cosmic King of the physical, mental and spiritual realms. During the following days, this feeling was followed by ever deeper sensations of love. He proved, with His

simple way of living and teaching, how close He was to us. Secretly He took care of our personal lives. Finally He became my real Baba, my "dearest one."

For my intellectual mind, His way of speaking and teaching was supreme. During His darshans in Fiesch and later in 1989 when I went to see Him in India, I had the strong sensation that not only does He know everything, but that He can control all the spheres of Creation.

I remember the deep feeling and vibration as hundreds of us, many with tears in our eyes, sang, "You're higher than the mountain peaks, and You're deeper than the deepest sea..." This bhajan transformed into a powerful kiirtan before His evening darshan on May 7. When Baba finally arrived it was like a dream. He said, "O Narada, I do not stay at Vaekuntha (paradise), neither in the heart of yogis, but I reside where my devotees sing." This was exactly what I deeply felt.

During another darshan, Baba demonstrated different kinds of mudras, powerful yoga gestures that create different spiritual vibrations. He explained some of their meanings. Each mudra had a very strong effect on my mind. I particularly remember the "Serpentine Power Mudra." When He spoke, it was impossible for me to maintain a normal state of mind because of the strong effect that His voice and actions had on me.

Before one darshan, Baba graced Karuna Devi and me by personally blessing our marriage. We laid a garland of flowers around His neck and He gave us namaskar. Then, as we knelt before Him, He held our hands saying, "Be like Shiva and Parvati," and recited some mantras. Afterwards we both felt that His blessing was greater than any mundane marriage arrangements. By His grace we are still together twenty-six years later.

You might have seen a lovely group photo taken at that historical DMC in Fiesch. It is full of the shining faces of Margiis, dadas and didis. If you look closely, you can see a curious-looking person with glasses, a pair of short blue trousers and a funny green hat - that was Parimal. He was once a doctor in Florence who did social service. Before he was initiated he became very sick and, after a difficult brain surgery, he had some minor mental problems.



Parimal was one of the first Margiis in Italy and he helped the Mission a lot. He was at the same time very strange, very devoted and very generous. Sometimes he used to sing and dance kiirtan alone, and sometimes he would embrace someone and say, "I love you." Because he was not rich and received only a monthly pension for his infirmity, we sometimes had to try hard to control his generosity when he wanted to donate large amounts of money to the Mission saying, "This is for Baba!" Of course it was often a problem for the Margiis to manage his uninhibited behaviour.

When the Florence Margiis started arranging the trip to Fiesch he began to repeat, "I have to go there to speak with Baba." We were worried, and some dadas were, too. We tried to convince him to give up the idea, but his determination was so strong that in the end he won and came to Fiesch by train with other Margiis.

Once after evening darshan a voice from the audience asked to speak - it was Parimal. It was a very uncomfortable moment, because no one talked directly with Baba during His programs. Two or three dadas ran like rockets to where he was in an effort to stop him. But unexpectedly Baba began to laugh and asked, "What do you want to say, my boy?"

Immediately the situation changed, and several dadas started to ask him to explain what he wanted to Baba. Parimal said, "I prepared a story for Baba. The title is 'Baba and the Farmer.' But I need someone to play the role of a baby and someone to play the role of a farmer!" One serious dada with a big black beard promptly offered to be the baby. Of course nobody understood the story, and soon the situation became hilarious. Baba was laughing and the Margiis started to laugh more and more. It was really very funny, and for more than five minutes Baba and all of us were laughing with tears in our eyes!

For many days after that Parimal had a very blissful expression. Baba had given him the chance to make his Master happy, and this was his deepest aspiration. A few years later, when I was no longer living in Florence, I heard that Parimal departed from this earth. Through this experience, I understood a little how deep and benevolent Baba's love is.

No person who tries to follow the spiritual path is free from mistakes. This is certainly true in my case, and I will be forever

grateful to my beloved Guru who gave me the opportunity to know Him anyway. Big mistakes can lead someone away from the goal but, at the same time it is said that, as obstacles, they are the best companions. So what to do?

The secret is fight, and this is the essence of Tantra. The process to overcome mistakes is very important for human progress. Errors are fundamental in the acquisition of knowledge. It often happens that because of one's past mistakes, a person feels deeply discouraged or even forsakes the spiritual path. Tantra's powerful truth is to instead convert one's errors from negative elements to positive lessons on the path to wisdom.

This struggle towards the Goal is impossible without one essential ingredient: the grace of the Supreme. Even devotion for Him is not possible without that. But what is the inner meaning of grace?

Baba said during His evening Darshan on May 19: "Suppose a man committed so many sins in so many lives. Now he will have to undergo the reactions of those actions, of those bad actions. Then for millions of years he will have to pass through so many troubles. So many pains. So many mental tortures. A father cannot like it, a father cannot think that His children will have to go through so much trouble because of their past bad actions. So, what does He want? He wants that His sons should give Him the sins committed by them. But the sons will say, the daughters will say, "No Father, we will give you flowers, we will give you sweets, we will give you so many things, but we can't give you our sins. We can't." Then what will this loving Father do? He will secretly take away the sins. He is the Great Thief."

On the last day, before His departure from Fiesch, I had the special opportunity with a group of Margiis to meet Baba outside His house. He was seated on a white blanket in a chair and we sat on the grass around Him. Baba told us various things in His charming and loving way. It was so wonderful to be close to Him, to hear His voice and to see His beauty, and yet at the same time we were very sad. It was really painful to think that in a few hours He, with all His grace and that subtle atmosphere, would leave. At the end of His talk, with an expression that I will never forget, Baba made a promise: "Like the stars in the Universe, I will forever be with you." Then we started singing kiirtan with big tears in our eyes.

## Do You Know The 16 Points?

Vidyananda / Netherlands (part 1)

In 1979 Baba came to Europe. He visited many places, the first place being Switzerland where He gave many darshans and one Dharma Maha Cakra. At the time, I was a young boy of maybe 19 years, and I got the opportunity to have PC with Baba. It was very interesting what happened there. I entered the room and I did sastaung pranam. Baba called. I went in front of Him, but I made a small mistake. Instead of sitting in lotus posture, I went in front of Him sitting on my knees.

Maybe I should first tell something about my state of mind in those days. I was as self-important as a 19 year old boy can be, thinking, "Oh, I'm great, and I'm an LFT, and I'm oh such a good boy, so Baba will be just wonderful for me and..." So I was in this state of mind. What happened actually was that, because I was sitting on my knees, Baba immediately said in a little bit harsh voice, "Sit properly."

And I thought, "Oh, I've sunk on my knees," and I didn't even seriously reflect on my posture. I just switched and sat down in half-lotus. He asked my name, and other different small things. He asked where I came from and what I did. I told Him that I came from Holland and that I was working as an LFT. He said, "Oh, very nice."

Then He asked me, "Do you know the 16 points, my little boy?" And I thought, "I've been filling out the chart every day, so of course I know the 16 points." I was thinking like this.

So then He said, "Can you please tell all the 16 points to me?"

I thought OK, the 16 points, but I was really completely blank. I couldn't even remember the first one.

So He was insisting and asking again, "Do you know the 16 points?"

I said, "Yes, Baba, I know the 16 points, but uh..." Like this I replied to Him.

"So then tell. Tell them."

Again I was just silent.

And then again He said, "Do you know the 16 points or don't you know the 16 points?"

I said, "Yes, I know, but somehow I cannot remember them."

"Oh. Hmmp." He was a little bit - how to say - annoyed. He carried on, however, asking me, "Do you know what is bhuta shuddhi?"

Nobody had ever told me before what bhuta shuddhi was, never. It was the first time in my life I heard this expression. So I was completely thinking, what is this, I don't know what it is. "No, Baba, I don't know what it is."

"You don't know what bhuta shuddhi is," and He became really angry. He shouted, "Hey! Ramananda! You come." And then He made a big scene in front of me. Not in English, I could not understand a word. It took some time. Ramananda was a little bit shaky, because he was also to blame if I was not supposed to be there. One sentence I picked up, "This brother is not supposed to be here. He doesn't even have first lesson." I was completely shocked.

Then Dada Ramananda came to me. "You know, don't you have first lesson?"

"Sure."

Again he talked to Baba. They sorted it out. He went out of the room.

Baba was more annoyed than before. He was really not in a happy mood. He was saying, "I think you deserve punishment." Then I had to take off my T-shirt and put my arms up. He took out His stick. He swung out and just touched very softly. Then He said, "No, such a small boy, I cannot." Then He stopped (with the stick).

My mind was completely gone. I was just thinking, what's

happening here? I could not follow anything after that. I didn't remember what He asked me. I just remember that He told that I have to be a good person, He took some oaths on how to behave, and gave a blessing, putting His thumb on my third eye. After that I could leave.

This whole thing changed my mind completely, but the story continues.

# Watching His Every Gesture and Movement

Shiila / France Part 2

(May 8, 1979 as a photographer of Baba in Fiesch.)

As far as I could remember, I was seated among the many Margiis waiting for Baba at the DC Hall in Fiesch. We were singing bhajans while waiting for Baba to come after His morning field walk. Suddenly, Gurucaran came rushing towards me to tell me that I had to come fast as there was a need for another photographer for Baba's field walk. Without hesitation, I got up and ran with Gurucaran towards Baba's house with my camera.

When Gurucaran and I arrived, there was hardly anyone around except for a few Dadas and VSS guards. This was His second field walk in Fiesch. Baba's orange car was parked just right in front of His door. While waiting, I was lost in my thoughts. Up till then, I had not chosen my trade, or duty within Ananda Marga. Choosing one's trade was important before anyone could get Personal Contact from Baba. It is true that Baba told me while He was in jail that I should do PROUT among the ladies; I have always had an inclination for GV.

Suddenly, there was commotion. Baba was coming. I got ready to take Baba's picture. I was standing on a chair next to the car of Baba, facing the door. I took the first picture of Baba and got down from the chair and watched Him as He approached the door of the car nearest to where I was. He sat down comfortably on the back seat and from there He returned my namaskar and told me, "So, GV is doing good work!" I could only answer, "Yes, Baba!", and understood by then that my trade had just been chosen by Him.

On the fieldwalk

I did not exactly know where we went. I was just happy to be there following Him. I did not exactly know how many brothers were present but I felt somehow awkward to be the lone woman.

I was about to take His picture when Dada Ramananda signalled me to wait, then Dada Ramananda turned to Baba and whispered

something in His ears. Baba gave a sign of approval with a slight movement of His head, after which, Dada told me to carry on.

I had the impression that He walked so fast and that everybody had to run to keep up with His pace. I was too drunk with joy. I did not know how many pictures I took. The only thing I know was that I was there looking at Him, watching His every gesture and movement. I did not remember any of His explanations as I was keeping some distance from the brothers. Then, it was time to go back for the darshan at the DC Hall.

# "I Love Each And Every Entity"

Govinda / England

I saw Baba for the first time in Fiesch walking on the road. There was nothing peculiar about him in the physical sense.

However, there was a vibration as if there was some form dancing around Him or in Him, that made His every movement aesthetically pleasing, and there was a special quality of intimacy where I felt He knew me and I knew Him and He was there only for me and was conscious of my being amongst all these other people.

Also in Fiesch there were special incidents which were important to me. I was the security guard in the hall posted at the door where Baba was to give His DMC address. Preparations were made in this hall, which was completely new, modern and nicely designed. Baba was to arrive in the evening. It had become dark and it was a very clear night and the stars were extremely clear and active, as if waiting for Him. It seemed like a long time before Baba's car came and as I waited I felt that all these entities -- the rocks and trees and plants -- have all waited for Him thousands, maybe millions of years and there was a sense of history which I will never forget.

When Baba arrived, one image still remains in my mind. As the security guard you give a salutation not a namaskar. But Baba gave namaskar to us upon entering and it was very special to be doing service for Him. Before everyone else saw Him, I felt privileged to greet Him, to open the door and to see Him passing into the room, which erupted with the cry, "Param Pita Baba Ki, Jai."

On one field walk in Fiesch, Baba walked on a path in a valley opposite to the resort complex where we were staying. At the end of the path Baba was given a seat and everyone gathered around. His eyes gazed at one particular mountain and He spoke about the history of the Himalayas and the Alps. He said that human life started in the Alps and this particular mountain He was looking at reminded Him of Mt. Kailash in the Himalayas. He said that Shiva lived on Kailash and that Shiva travelled all over, and He mentioned some of the countries which Shiva



visited. He said that Shiva had a yak named Nandi. Then He said that if you dig in this earth you will find prehistoric animals, and made a comment about the minerals here.

I was not present on another occasion, but a Swiss Bhukti Pradhan who was present told me that he wanted to show Baba a panorama which they had passed on the cable car. However, Baba was in light clothing and light slippers and they were walking through the snow and there was concern that Baba would get too cold on the walk. When the BP said, "If we go over the pass I would like to show you the view and you can see all over Switzerland," Baba said, "I have seen it."

I also saw Baba in Holland and one darshan in Rotterdam also comes to mind. This darshan was on the subject of "Friends." Baba spoke about friendship. Baba said that the only friend is Parama Purusa. Our relationship with friends, relatives and spouses will end one day, but Parama Purusa's friendship will not end. On reflection that might seem like a lonely situation, but for me it was very inspiring, because it confirmed the superficiality of worldly friendships in comparison to the relationship one has with God.

In Holland I went on field walk with Baba. We went to a park in Rotterdam and in that field walk I was fortunate to go in the car with Baba.

Dada Ramananda said to Baba, "This is Govinda." Baba said, "Is this the Govinda from Italy who drove us yesterday?" Dada Ramananda said, "No this is the Govinda from London." Baba said, "Oh, that Govinda."

On the field walk in Holland we went to a park which is in the city and after some time of walking Baba began asking the names of the trees but no one could name the trees. Baba then said the name of the trees: "This is an ash, this is an elm." I had some responsibility at that time in Ananda Marga's PCAP (Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Plants) Department, and was aware that Holland was a place where flowers were grown for commercial purposes and was bothered by this and wondered how Baba felt about this. So, I got the chance to ask, or rather I found myself walking next to Baba. At one point we were side by side (I suppose it's hard to resist asking a question when one has such

an opportunity) and I asked Him about the exploitation of plants in Holland and how should we feel about that. Baba stopped and turned and looked in my eyes and it seemed like a long time, but was probably only seconds. He said, "You know, I love each and every entity." It was an answer that made me realize that His effulgence and Love is for all, and His benevolence for human beings is even greater than we can imagine.

# I Went Back To Work for Him

Gayatri / Iceland

My first experience with Baba was in Fiesch, Switzerland. I was so lucky to be there and to attend the Dharma Maha Cakra (DMC). At that time I was married and wanted to have personal contact (PC), however, at first Baba was only giving it to those single women who had decided to go to training to become nuns. So I was thinking, "Baba, can I ever get personal contact?"

One day, I was waiting for Baba, at the door of His house. All the Margiis were doing kiirtan and finally Baba came out. He did namaskar and I felt He was saying to me: "You will get exactly what you want, you will get PC." This namaskar and blessing gave me bliss and it was all that I needed for a long time. At the DMC one of the Didis asked me if I would like to sit beside her and I sat with the Didis in the second row. I was so close to Baba, and when He gave the mudra, it filled my heart with a most beautiful light. It was an experience that I will never forget.

Later Baba came to Iceland and He fulfilled my desire for personal contact. He gave me a beautiful blessing and asked me about the meaning of my name and asked me if I was willing to work for His mission and He told me to fight for all exploited and oppressed women.

Some years later, I was expecting a baby and my health was not so good. I got toxemia and had to go to the hospital. I heard the doctors say that I was the most seriously ill person in the hospital. At that moment I just surrendered to Baba, I had complete faith that He would help me through this.

While I was in the hospital I had a dream, and it was not really a dream, it was a real experience. Baba came to me and I was at a DMC and He was giving a mudra, and after the mudra I walked up to Baba and did Guru Puja. He touched my back and I know He saved my life with His touch. The next day I had an operation and during it I felt that I had left my body and was passing through a dark tunnel. I had my baby in my arms and I felt that I was going further and further and I knew that I was leaving this earth. I saw light, and just wanted light. When I came to the end of this tunnel Baba was there. He asked me if I had done

what I wanted to do for His mission. I felt that I hadn't done so, so I had to go back. I gave Him my child and I went back to work for Him.

So by His grace I am still here because I wanted to work for Him.

One day I was waiting for Baba at the door of his house. All the Martins were doing things and finally Baba came out. He did namaskar and I felt he was saying to me, "You will get exactly what you want, you will get PC." This namaskar and blessing gave me bliss and it was all that I needed for a long time. At the DMC one of the Babas asked me if I would like to sit beside her and I sat with the Babas in the second row. I was so close to Baba and when He gave the munda, it filled my heart with a most beautiful light. It was an experience that I will never forget.

Later Baba came to Ireland and He fulfilled my desire for personal contact. He gave me a beautiful blessing and showed me about the meaning of my name and asked me if I was willing to work for His mission and He told me to fight for all exploited and oppressed women.

Some years later I was expecting a baby and my health was not so good. I got tormented and had to go to the hospital. I heard the doctors say that I was the most seriously ill person in the hospital. At that moment I got surrendered to Baba. I had complete faith that He would help me through this.

While I was in the hospital I had a dream and it was not really a dream, it was a real experience. Baba came to me and I was at DMC and He was giving a munda and after the munda I walked up to Baba and did Gauri Nam. He blessed my neck and I know He saved my life with His touch. The next day I had an operation and during it I felt that I had left my body and was passing through a dark tunnel and my baby in my arms and I felt that I was going further and further and I knew that I was leaving this earth. I saw light and just wanted light. When I came to the end of this tunnel Baba was there. He asked me if I had done

# I Thank Him for His Grace

Ranjani / Italy

In 1979, when Baba came to Switzerland, I was attending an Ananda Marga course in Parma. I had just participated in my first spiritual retreat where I had received initiation. Baba was still an image - a photograph - to me. Then in Switzerland I saw Him together with many other Margiis coming from all over Italy. I remember the very large group from Sicily, and from all over the world. It changed my life.

I remember Baba's lovely and sharing glance at the airport just before His departure. He was sitting in lotus position on an easy chair and Kunti, Savitri, little Sulekha, Satyavan, I and a few others were sitting on the floor around Him. He talked to us, looked at us, and did namaskar to us. From my position I could see His teeth which were as small as a child's. It was said that they were re-growing after the suffering of His imprisonment.

It was like being under the protective wings of a kind father. Since then I do have a debt of gratitude, as if He gave me a special message, as if in that moment I was called to enjoy cosmic love. It's stupefying in my memory, the extreme serenity that pervaded us; in that unique moment nobody needed to photograph Him, to ask Him any question. Each of us was full of joy. That retreat was totally complete and the closeness with the Guru was so inspiring that even today I can only thank Him for His grace.

I think I can only thank him for his grace  
as and I think I can only thank him for his grace  
so I had to say I can only thank him for his grace

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# Chapter Three

## 1979 After Fiesch: Europe Meets Baba

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*The official actually laughed when I told him what Baba had said. He laughed hard and loud.*

*"What a funny and interesting reply," he said. "What a funny and interesting man."*

*"He is beyond interesting," I said.*

*"What do you mean?" he asked.*

Ramesh

After Switzerland, Baba visited several other European countries including Germany, Netherlands, Spain, France, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Greece. The spiritual dramas and bliss were no less dramatic than in Fiesch. The challenges of traveling with Baba or preparing for Him were many times unique and unexpected.

*"Now what is His Grace? The moving entity becomes one with the Nucleus, how? It depends on His Grace. It doesn't depend on human logic, or human intellect; it depends on His Grace. What is His Grace? Mr. A may say, 'Why am I not enjoying His Grace?' Mr. B may say, 'I am enjoying His Grace.' But what's the fact? The Grace is everywhere, but you know, just like rainfall -- when it rains what happens? If you have an umbrella above your head you won't be drenched. And if you remove the umbrella you will be drenched. So in the case of Divine Grace, it is like rainfall, but there is an umbrella of vanity upon your head, that's why you are not drenched. Remove the umbrella of vanity and you will be drenched; then you will enjoy His Grace."*

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

9 May 1979 morning, Fiesch, Switzerland, A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 12

## "Such a Small Boy"

Shankar / Germany (part 2)

I saw Baba again in 1979. Up to that time I had never attended a DMC. I saw Baba in prison, I gave Him garlands, we received His blessing, but I never managed to attend a DMC. When He came to Europe for DMC, to Fiesch, the same day our second son was born, and I could not go to Switzerland. I was very sad. But at last He came to the Timmern LFT training centre (near Braunschweig in Germany). I was Bhukti Pradhan (Ananda Marga's District Secretary) at that time. And I had to give Baba garlands. The dadas pushed me, they asked, "Do you want DMC? Ask Baba to have DMC."

So I said, "Why not?" And then as I gave the garland to Baba I asked, "Can we have DMC?"

Then Baba said, "No. It needs special conditions. It is not possible to do it just like that. It's not possible." But I had it on my tongue; I just couldn't form the words to say, "I was taught in Ananda Marga that everything is possible." But I couldn't say it. It was stuck. So I just didn't know what to do, and I am an insisting type, so I said, "Baba, but it must be possible. Why not?" And "We should have DMC. Somehow it must be possible. It is possible." And Baba said, "No, no." But because I insisted, He said, "Okay, we will do something else. We will have collective Guru Puja." So we had, collective Guru Puja and it was very blissful.

And when I went back, to the back of the hall, they told me that Baba had said, "Such a small boy, such a small boy."

And then on the same occasion, I had PC, personal contact. Personal contact is a very great thing. After long waiting, I got to see Baba. Whenever you meet Baba, you're completely overwhelmed, you're so impressed, you can't believe it. And when Baba is speaking, you can be lucky to understand anything, because it is so overwhelming. I remember one important thing which Baba said to me; "Human life is an ideological flow. Forget the past. Start every moment new. Don't keep the past as a burden. Serve the suffering humanity." This I kept repeating many, many years. Still I know it. This is my treasure.



# Field Walks in Rotterdam

Anneshvarii / Netherlands

During the period when Baba was in Rotterdam, He took a daily walk. On some of these walks I was allowed to drive my car ahead of Baba's. After Baba's car, more cars followed.

I had also driven ahead when we picked up Baba from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport and also when we went to the Kralingen Wood in Queen Beatrix Park.

One day we were ready to go to the Likkebaard Wood when somebody from Baba's staff told me I was not allowed to drive ahead because I was a woman, therefore we went after Baba's car, while the brothers drove in the front position.

This time one sister asked me why I was not driving ahead. I replied that a brother had said that I was not allowed to drive ahead because I was a woman. We had hardly discussed this when Madhavi said, "Look, Baba's car is on the side of the road". We had already passed by and returned quickly. Madhavi asked what was wrong and it appeared that the flag on the front of Baba's car had to be fixed. After that we went on and we drove ahead as the brothers' car was no longer there.

We went to the Likkebaard Wood but it had started to rain, and we went on to another destination. It was near the street where I live. I stopped in front of my house and I went to Baba and asked if He would like a glass of juice. He said no and then as it had stopped raining we went back to the Likkebaard Wood for the walk. Back in Rotterdam we met the brothers from the car which started in the front position. When they found out that Baba's car no longer followed them they decided to go back to Rotterdam.

On another field walk our destination was the Kralingen Wood. Unfortunately my car got a flat tyre. The car was loaded with sisters and it was getting dark already and we were stuck on the highway. The other cars drove further on with Baba. I had just put up the warning triangle behind the car when a young couple came walking by. The young man asked what was wrong "Ah," he said, "a flat tyre, I will change your wheel." He did this very

fast and did not want to accept any money and we moved on quickly. We reached the wood and by chance drove into one of the entrances and stopped the car. We walked out and saw a path, but it was now completely dark.

Then one sister said, "Look, I think Baba is walking there." And, it turned out that the path we were on was parallel with the path which Baba and the others were on. We easily joined them. The way everything turned out was really special because the Kralingen Wood is quite big with so many pathways and yet by His grace we had found Baba in the dark.

## A Dream

Avtka. Ananda Sadhana Ac.

In Tantra exists the concept of Taraka Brahma, which stands for a bridge that connects Saguna Brahma (Supreme Consciousness manifested in this physical world) with Nirguna Brahma (Supreme Consciousness beyond any manifestation or bondage). In order to reach final liberation one needs to cross that bridge. On this planet earth Taraka Brahma has come in physical form three times: first as Shiva, 7000 years ago, then as Krsna 3500 years ago and last as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti.

Soon after I was initiated in the Netherlands in 1977, I had a dream: I was walking through the city looking for a bridge that had been newly built. The name of the bridge was Shrii Shrii Anandamurti.

At that time I didn't understand the meaning very well. But later, when I learned about this Tantric concept, I understood I had been with Baba before in other lifetimes where I had had the realization of Him as Taraka Brahma.

### My Field Walk With Baba

I was an LFT when Baba made his historical visit to Holland. I was allowed to go on one of His field walks in a park in Rotterdam. I tried to walk close to Baba so I could see Him and hear what He was saying. While walking, Baba was talking about different things, and I was wondering how I could draw His attention to me. Suddenly a VSS guard, whom I did not know, came up to me and said softly, "Baba likes it when one gives Him flowers." I immediately walked into the grass and picked the first flower I saw. Then I wondered how to give it to Him because I felt I couldn't just interrupt Him. At that very moment, He stopped and I was able to give Him the flower. He asked my name. "Vashikarii, Baba." Then He asked the name of the flower. I said, "In Dutch we call it Koekoeks bloem." Baba told us the Latin name. He resumed walking, but after a few steps stopped again, turned around and tenderly asked, "What was the name again of the girl who gave me the flower?" I felt I had been given double the attention I had asked for.

Later Baba sat on a bench in the park and we sat around Him. He talked about the different types of complexes and repeatedly turned to one girl saying we shouldn't have any complex. So, I gathered all my courage and at one moment I said, "But we have so many, Baba, how to get rid of them?" He turned to me and said, "Shall I tell you the secret? Kiirtan!" I was amazed at Baba and how He had created such a simple solution to something that looks so complicated.

# "Be Cent-Per-Cent Human"

Jagadiish / Netherlands

During Baba's stay in Rotterdam, Holland, I was given the opportunity to have Personal Contact with Baba.

The Regional Secretary arranged it for me. First one Dada taught me to do sastaung pranam (prostration before the Guru). So when I entered the room I did that and Baba told me to sit down. Then he ordered the Dada present to leave the room. He told me to come closer, which I did, and we were facing each other.

I greeted Baba saying, "Namaskar". But Baba corrected me by saying "You don't say namaskar to Brahma (Sadguru) but "Namaste". I apologized and then said, "Namaste." Baba asked me if I attended the Dharma Maha Cakra in Fiesch, Switzerland. I said: "Yes, Baba." Then Baba asked, "Could you follow the whole discourse?" I replied "Not all, Baba." I instantly remembered that I could not understand Baba's English all the time, it was as if He spoke another language, a language which I do not speak. Then I felt a very gentle and mild vibration emanating from Him, and it felt as if I was with an old intimate friend.

Then I asked Baba if I could go on with my music and Baba said: "It's OK with me, but do it for humanity." I gave Him my word and He told me I should forget all my past mistakes and be "cent-per-cent" human. Then He pressed my trikuti (ajina cakra, the point between the eyes) strongly with His thumb and I felt as if I was going through a deep tunnel and I felt my trikuti vibrate blissfully. Then Baba spoke out a powerful blessing "Shubha namastu" (blessing for one's spiritual advancement). I left Baba's room in an altered state of lightness and bliss. One Dada approached me and advised me to look in the mirror that was hanging on the wall. I did so and I could see my face was shining.

## BABA IN ROTTERDAM

Sundara / Netherlands (part 2)

### Baba's leaking bathroom

Baba came to Rotterdam on 23 May. One evening Baba didn't give Darshan; we had no idea why, but He did give field walk. After field walk nobody went straight to bed or his/her own home, many small and big things had to be arranged and frankly speaking, most people just found it very difficult to go home. Govinda and Meeta from London and Bodishwar from Switzerland had come and so many other old and new Margiis. My house was about 100 kms away, in Amsterdam and yet I just couldn't leave. To share feelings with likeminded people was in the front of everybody's minds, so we stayed together and talked.

Then suddenly Dada Karunananda called Vidyananda and me to come to Baba's room. Something seemed to be wrong. It was already around midnight. I was a bit worried and nervous, but also excited to enter into Baba's room. We did sastaung pranam for Baba, who was talking to an avadhuta at that time. I tried to look at His face to find out what His reaction to the disturbance would be. He didn't look angry, to my feeling He even looked mischievous, but was this only my imagination? We went inside the bathroom and it appeared that some floor tiles had become loose and a supply water pipe was leaking. Nothing could be done about the loose floor tiles; the supply water pipe could be soldered again.

Vidyananda and I thought it would be necessary to ask the help of a professional plumber early next morning, but there was definitely one thing we should do immediately: contact the owner of the bar downstairs. On the ground floor, right under Baba's room and the darshan space was a small bar, a kind of meeting place for people from the neighbourhood. When the building was bought, the existence of the bar was known of course, but the owner had a contract with the previous owner of the building. Some financial problems already existed, but not yet enough to end his contract. We didn't like the idea that Baba would give darshan above a functioning bar, but legally there was nothing to do. Vidyananda and I went down to check whether there would be any danger for the people inside the

bar, because of the electric lights in the ceiling and other things. Yes, the owner had complained about the leakage of water, but we saw that water was leaking only on the wall and there was no immediate danger for the ceiling lamps and even the sound installation if one water pipe would be disconnected. Vidyananda phoned the plumber who had helped him and, even at that hour of the day, was very friendly and willing to help us next morning.

Next morning we found out what had happened during the night. After Baba had taken a shower, an angry bar owner contacted Vidyananda again. The shower had caused a heavy leakage of wastewater, right on top of the counter inside the bar! Of course this was a disaster for the bar owner and he had no alternative but to close down the bar at least during the weekend. Out of the blue, our problem had been solved completely and quickly in a most unusual and relatively easy way! Baba's darshans would not be disturbed by any music from the bar and no alcohol would be drunk in the same building while Baba would speak. We felt relieved and knew that only now circumstances were proper, though still minimum, to receive Baba. After Baba had left Rotterdam, the bar owner never returned and the room could serve other purposes.

### Hearing My Name

Saturday evening, 25 May, Baba gave His final Darshan. I was sitting in the middle of the room and I was listening to what He was saying, but at some point, my mind wandered off. Then, all of a sudden I heard Him speak my name:

"So man is a social being and his Parama Purusa also is a social being. He cannot live alone, He wants to play with His children, that's why He created many and now He is not alone; there is Sundara, there is Bodhishvara and there is Kusumita and there is Miira and so many. And He is within the mind of each and every creation, and nobody, no mind and no soul is alone in this world. Because He wants that there should be many, otherwise He would have become what? Insane, mad, because of this monotony of singularity."

It was so beautiful to hear Him speak my name and at this very moment, after so many years, my feeling of gratefulness about

His expression of affection has not lessened. Since my childhood I very often have the feeling of being alone and the recollection of Baba's expression of my name very quickly turns me inside, making me whole again.

Baba ended Darshan with this wish for all on the path of life:

LET ALL BE HAPPY.

LET ALL BE FREE FROM ALL PHYSICAL AND PSYCHIC AILMENTS.

LET ALL SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE OF EVERYTHING.

AND LET NOBODY UNDERGO ANY SUFFERING.

Darshan was over, but not completely. He allowed us to do Guru Puja in front of Him. It was the first time in my life to experience such a Guru Puja and it was close to experiencing His Varabhya Mudra in Fiesch. We were so fortunate.



# Travels With Baba

Ac. Jyotirupananda Avt.

In 1979 I came to Europe to see Baba for the first time. At that time I was an LFT, living in Seattle, in the northwest USA.

I had the good fortune to go on the whole tour of Europe with Baba. I missed Berlin and Sweden, because of travel and time constraints, but went everywhere else with Him.

Here are a couple of stories from my experiences there.

## Talking With Baba, Sort Of

For the days that we were in Fiesch, I had no opportunity to talk with Baba, nor to get Personal Contact. There were only perhaps 2 acaryas from my sector and an overwhelming number of Margiis and WT acaryas from Berlin Sector. One did not just come to Baba, or to Dada Ramanandaji his Personal Assistant (PA) and ask for personal contact, or to go on a field walk, etc. This was handled by the acaryas arranging such things for the Margiis through Baba's PA. So I contented myself by seeing him at His daily darshans and whenever else it was possible for a glimpse here and there.

His next stop was in a village in Germany, called Eckenroth.

Here there were very few of us, compared to Fiesch. Here I also started to take VSS duties, which were a rewarding way to be relatively close to Baba.

And in this role, Baba talked to me for the first time. He was staying in a room on the second floor of the villa we were inhabiting. One day I was on guard duty at the bottom of the stairs.

Baba was coming back from somewhere, and was about to go up the stairs. He turned to me and asked me a simple, friendly question. I was so amazed that Baba was talking to me that no matter how much I tried to formulate an answer to His simple question, I couldn't say anything. In this case, He did not make the dumb speak.

He turned to someone and made a light remark about how quiet I was. Then He proceeded upstairs to His room.

"Yes, Baba"

Rotterdam was a place of enlightening experiences for me. This was partly caused by the clash I had there, which was partly caused by the very crowded jagrti we stayed at. Our sleeping and general living conditions made us all very packed together.

And after a couple days of this I found myself in a completely negative state of mind. I didn't express this to anyone, but it permeated my whole day.

That evening I was one of Baba's VSS guards on His field walk. We went to a large park on the outskirts of Rotterdam. There was, as usual, a group of people walking close to Him and listening to what He was saying. I, as with the other 3 VSS guards, was quite a distance from Baba. I was at the back right of Baba; the other three guards were right front, left front and left back, all of us more or less equidistant from Him (several meters away from Baba).

The walk lasted perhaps 45 minutes and the whole time, every thought that came to my mind was filled with negativity. Did I like Rotterdam? No. Was I happy to be staying at the jagrti? No. Did I look forward to a pleasant stay the rest of my trip in Europe? No.

And on and on like that, whatever the thought might have been in my mind. Just one of those days!

At the end of the field walk, we all formed a line, so that Baba would pass us before entering His car. As Baba approached me, He asked me, quietly, a simple question, something like: "Do you like the park, this evening?"

I naturally said: "Yes, Baba."

Then, just as He was passing in front of me, He said, as if talking aloud to Himself: "Ah, now the boy says yes." And He continued to His car.

Immediately after that there was a frantic scramble, as we all rushed to get to our cars and drive with Baba's car back to the city and to the jagrti. So it took me a few moments to process what had happened.

It was obvious that Baba can know what is in our minds at any time. And it was also obvious that He will respond if need be. (In this case I was in His physical presence, which may have made His response more immediate and easier for me to grasp.)

As well, it didn't take me much time to understand that He knows ALL our thoughts. In a way this was not a pleasant thing for me to realise, but I also realised that His responses are always benevolent and instructive to us, so we can know how to correct any mistakes in our thinking or action, without feeling guilty or self-conscious.

## "Where Is The Boy Who Set Up This Thing?"

Vidyananda / Netherlands (part 2)

After being in Fiesch with Baba, I had to go back to Holland, because I was LFT and Baba was also supposed to come to Holland, maybe two weeks after His stay in Switzerland. In the meantime Baba travelled through different places in Germany and Sweden.

During that time, I was in Holland. We had a jagrti in Rotterdam, where Baba was to stay when He would come to Holland. Another brother from England and I had to prepare Baba's bathroom, and there is also a very interesting story connected with that task.

I was very much convinced of my own skills concerning building work. But in fact, I didn't know so much, I was just a young boy. The job was not so easy as it seemed to be and we ending up making a lot of mistakes.

One of the major mistakes I made was the connection of a drain between a new system and the old system. The old system was a lead pipe, which you will only find in very old houses in Holland. Onto this lead pipe I had to attach a plastic pipe, using copper for the connection. I could not do it properly. I had to heat the copper to be able to connect it to the lead, but in heating the copper to a workable temperature, I kept melting the lead. It's almost impossible to make that connection correctly. Anyhow, I was intent on making it work and kept trying, but the lead continued to melt, and I was making a bigger and bigger hole in the pipe. I was wearing myself out, just pulling and pushing, and in the end became stressed, and decided to just throw it all to the wind and let it remain as it was.

This had some disastrous consequences, this whole thing. While I was working on the drainage pipes, the English brother was working out how to connect the water to Baba's room. We worked hard, but time was running out. Baba was to come shortly, in two days, and we still had put in the tiles in Baba's bathroom. We put them in, but they were not completely dry by the time Baba arrived, and that also had consequences.

You have to understand that it was a very old house. Being old, it was also a bit smelly. We were trying our best to make it look acceptable, but we were also running on a very meagre budget. And the pressing time factor also influenced our decisions. Now, there were steep narrow winding stairs, with an iron hand railing against the wall, going up to Baba's room. We had painted this iron bar the day before Baba was to arrive. Unfortunately, in the Dutch May weather, it didn't dry so quickly and it was still sticky. We thought that we couldn't leave it like that and let Baba have His hands stick on it. So we wrapped it with crepe paper, which we thought looked nice.

Baba arrived. He was, at that time, still a little bit weak, I think, from His stay in jail, from the time before. When we opened the door He said, "Why did you bring me here?" Because He saw those stairs and He wondered if He could manage to climb them. We were still in the middle of last minute touches. A Dada, who had been there with us, was still vacuum cleaning the room while Baba was already halfway up the stairs.

Anyway, Baba stayed, and then, of course, Baba needed to take His shower. Now, another thing was that our jagrti was just above a bar. When we purchased the building we were not able to get this bar-owner out. So when Baba took a bath, due to the drain not being properly connected, the water somehow leaked down into the bar and that affected the music installation, the hi-fi set of the bar. The bar-owner became extremely furious and was knocking at our door screaming, "Hey people, you're destroying my music," etc. Well, the main water control for the whole house was just under his floor, so when the water kept leaking into the bar, then he closed the main faucet, so there was no water in the whole building.

You cannot have that happen when Baba is there; we had to make sure that Baba had water. So, the English brother and I temporarily restored the water by connecting fire hoses, which ran from the basement up the three-story building to the apartment where Baba was staying.

I was very scared, because everybody was looking for me. Dada Karunananda, the Sectorial Secretary, was searching and asking: "Where is the boy who set up this thing?" But I was hiding some place. I was really not feeling very happy. They actually had to

bring in a plumber, to somehow fix it. But even they couldn't fix it, because they thought it was the water, while I knew it was the drain.

Anyway, despite all the disastrous things that went wrong, Baba liked to be in Holland very much. He even extended His visit for one day, which was quite extraordinary. It was very pleasing, being so near to Him. It was a very small house, and we were many people crammed into it.

## Baba's Visit to France

Ac. Vedaprajinananda Avt.

In 1979 we were graced when Baba visited various countries around the world. At the time we did not realize what a rare experience this was to be. We assumed there would be many more world tours, but this did not happen.

I was the Regional Secretary of France (Paris Region) at that time and had the honour of hosting Him to our region. However, there is some background to this event.

Eight years earlier I was an LFT in Los Angeles, California and when we established our first jagrti - a ramshackle wooden bungalow overlooking the Pacific Ocean - I cultivated the wish for Baba to visit our Jagrti. This wish was fulfilled in June 1979, but not in Los Angeles.

Baba arrived in Europe on May 6th, in Switzerland where He was greeted by several hundred devotees, who had been dancing kiirtan for hours awaiting His plane at the normally conservative Geneva airport. After giving DMC in Switzerland, Baba embarked on a whirlwind tour of several countries, the last of which was France, where we had anxiously prepared for His visit.

Our regional Headquarters was in Lyon, France's second largest city, which is located in the south-east part of the country. The jagrti was a large flat in the Quartier Arab - a section of Lyon mainly populated by immigrants from North Africa. The narrow streets of this neighbourhood were lined with shops selling Middle Eastern food stuffs and one could imagine one was walking in Algeria or Tunisia rather than France.

The flat had a hall capable of seating up to a hundred people and it was here where Baba would give darshan. There were also six other rooms, which would become the site for many memorable moments.

Prior to Baba's arrival we made plans on how to receive Him, His entourage of Central workers, Sectorial acaryas (workers) and 100 or more Margiis. The Margiis were to be lodged in nearby hostels, while the acaryas would stay in the Jagrti. The darshan

and meals were to be held in the large hall. A room was fixed up in the rear of the Jagrti where Baba would give personal contact and also hold worker meetings. In an adjacent room, which housed a small A-4 printing press, we placed a portable chemical toilet which was to be used by Baba.

Our plan was to have Baba stay in the Jagrti only during the day and evenings. At night we thought it would be better for Him to stay in a nearby hotel. We did not have a proper bathroom adjoining Baba's room, so some workers suggested that a hotel would provide more comfort for Baba.

However, when Baba arrived, He turned these plans upside down. After an eventful visit to Valencia, Spain, Baba arrived at Lyon airport on Friday, June 1st 1979. A large banner proclaiming in French "Welcome to our Guru Shrii Shrii Anandamurti" and Margiis singing kiirtan signalled His arrival. Kaoshikii and tandava (with a live snake) were also performed at the airport. Baba was then taken to a hotel not far from the Jagrti. Shortly after arriving at the hotel, Baba called a brief meeting of the workers. I was not present at that meeting, but the gist of it was that it would not be proper for Him to stay at the hotel. He explained that His presence there would disturb the other guests, so He gave an ultimatum: make the jagrti ready for receiving Him, or otherwise He would cancel the Lyon program and continue on to Italy.

The workers at the hotel quickly called us at the Jagrti and told us the news. We scratched our heads and thought how we could set up bath facilities for Baba? Looking in the court yard of the tenement building one brother found an old iron tub, the kind people normally use for washing laundry. Quickly we improvised by putting this laundry tub in the printing press room, and attaching hoses to a tap which was in that room. We then called the hotel informing the workers that Baba could now proceed to the Jagrti.

Just prior to His arrival at the Jagrti, I peeked into the room where He would be staying during the weekend. Everything was in place: His bed, a pratik (the Ananda Marga emblem) on the wall, His writing table, and as I put my head into His room I felt a tingling-like electricity- vibrating through the room. I then went to the front portion of the Jagrti, where Margiis began to arrive



in the main hall. They were seated in long rows in the middle of which there was a long table cloth. We were serving dinner to these Margiis when all of a sudden Baba arrived. He came into the entrance which led directly into the main hall. The surprised diners looked up to see their Guru striding in nonchalantly. Baba looked at us and said, "Continue doing your duty."

He was then led into His room and took up residence in our humble Jagrti.

Once Baba was comfortably installed we expected that He would be ready to give a discourse. About one hundred devotees from France and other parts of Europe were waiting for Him in the darshan hall. But behind the scenes there was another problem. Baba called a meeting of the acaryas. We crowded into His small room and then Baba said, "I am not very happy with the work in Paris Region." He said this with a very sad face, almost like that of a little boy. The result was that there was no darshan that first evening. Dharmacakra was held instead.

The only way that we would be able to save the situation was to give a good report of the work that we had done in France, as well as credible assurance that we would do even better in the future. As I was the Regional Secretary the burden fell on me to provide the information that could change His mind.

So I prepared the report. One of the crucial items of the report was the list of district secretaries (Bhukti Pradhans). At that time our region was divided into 32 districts. In reality we had hardly more than 40 Margiis as we had only recently started working in France. Dada Karunananda, our Sectorial Secretary, gave me some advice. "Give a complete list of all the Bhukti Pradhans, 100% completed."

I had to use my imagination a bit and followed his suggestion, showing that there was a BP functioning in every district.

I submitted the inflated report to the Central ERAWS Secretary. He took everything and then looked at me and in all earnestness said, "Can you give me anything more?"

In any case, it worked. The next day Baba began giving a series of discourses which were very deep intellectually but as usual

culminated with the advice that devotion to Parama Purusa was the final point of human life. (These discourses can be found in the Ananda Vacanamrtam books).

Along with the discourses, daily workers meetings took place. The WTs crowded into Baba's bedroom and He took our reports of work done in social and spiritual matters. While Baba was sometimes very severe in His role as president of the organization, during His time in France He was in a light and loving mood.

One day, during the workers meeting He asked Dada Dharmavedananda, "How many offices of your department have you opened in Paris Region?"

Dada replied, "Three, Baba."

And then Baba said, "What, only three? Didn't you take the help of all those Bhukti Pradhans?" Then Baba looked directly at me and with a twinkle in the eye He continued, "I guess some of those BP's aren't very active, are they?"

Later in a more serious mood Baba added, "Paris and Gibraltar regions are good fields but our action here was belated," and He encouraged us to work harder to bring spirituality to all the people within our regions.

### Field Walk Along the Rhône River

In addition to workers meetings and Darshan programmes, His daily field walks were also wonderful events. I was fortunate enough to go on one of the field walks. It was on a cloudy evening, and the area chosen for the walk was the bank of the Rhône River, which was only a few blocks from the Jagrti.

Walking with Baba were a few WTs, Baba's nephew, His personal physician Dr. Pathak of Patna, security personnel and about 15 Margiis. We walked briskly along the river and then Baba asked, "What is the name of this river?" Baba's nephew, Paltou, who was then an adolescent, answered, "The Rhine."

I corrected Paltou and said, "It's the Rhône."

Baba smiled and said, "Yes, it's the Rhône."

Then Baba asked me, "Is the Rhône navigable for its entire distance?" I mumbled some answer but I really didn't know.

Baba continued the conversation and then asked us if we knew the Latin word for "water," and then He asked for the French and Spanish equivalents. Finally He turned to me and said, "Did you know that 1500 years ago French and Italian were the same language?"

We continued on a bit and then we stopped. A folding chair was set up, Baba sat down, and the whole entourage gathered around Baba. It started to drizzle a bit and someone unfolded an umbrella for Baba. Baba was shielded from the rain but we were not.

Baba said "Perhaps we should go," (due to the rain), but everyone said. "It's OK," and we stayed on.

Baba gazed across the river and it looked like He was peering into eternity. Then He looked at us and began to speak.

I can't remember all that He said, but a few things stick in my mind. He pointed to the place on His face where the nose ends and the eyebrows begin (in yoga this area is called trikuti) and said, "There is a branch of astrology where if one studies the structure of this part of the face, then one can know everything about that person."

Then He added, "This is such a difficult science that even if I wanted to teach it, I wouldn't be able to find students capable of learning it."

The atmosphere was incredibly charged with love radiating from the Margiis to Baba and from Baba to us. Some Margiis were crying and at one point Baba looked at Devashiish seated just in front of Him. Baba gave him a tremendous smile of love. When Baba smiled directly at a person it was like no other smile that can be imagined-intense, playful and filled with love-stretching from ear to ear.

Then Baba said something of a very serious nature. He said that we have to look after the interests of the "less vocal" members of

the human society, those people who are facing difficulties but are not even capable of expressing their problems.

Finally the field walk time expired and we reluctantly got into the cars and travelled the short distance to the Jagrti, where Baba would give the evening discourse.

### Personal Contact, Kaoshikii, Tandava

During Baba's visit to France, we came closer to Him spiritually, and due to the fact that He was lodged within our small jagrti, we spent much time in close physical proximity.

It is said that a spiritual aspirant experiences three births in his or her lifetime. The first birth is physical, when one is born as a baby. The second birth comes when one receives initiation into spiritual practice. And the third birth is when one meets his or her guru face to face. Personal contact with Baba consists of private meetings of the spiritual aspirants with Baba. During these meetings Baba would give inspiration and blessings which were extremely valuable in helping the person overcome all obstacles in the way of spiritual progress.

At Lyon, France, Baba was busy throughout the day and night. He conducted organizational meetings for whole-time workers, gave discourses and went on field walks. Part of each day was set aside for personal contacts. Several young men received personal contact, but one in particular remains in my memory. Normally, after the PC, the aspirants came out of the room with big smiles on their faces and they went somewhere to sit down and do meditation. However, one young man came out looking bewildered and even a bit sad. As he was my initiate, I was particularly concerned. So I went over to him and asked him what happened.

He said, "Baba told me to become a monk." He was troubled by this as he had no such plans or intentions in mind.

I said, "That doesn't sound right. Baba doesn't usually say this kind of thing to a person during PC. What did Baba actually say?"

The young man explained that Baba had told him to be an "ascete"; this is the French word for a hermit (ascetic in English). I said, "No, Baba didn't say that. He told you to be an 'asset' to human society." When he heard this explanation he came out of his gloom and brightened up like the other people who received P.C. that day.

As many people have explained, Baba has a vast knowledge of many languages. During the personal contact in France, Baba spoke in English (and hence the confusion of the previously mentioned initiate). However, one of the young men initiated that day told me that Baba made him take an oath in French; Baba said the French sentence, "Je veux être un bon garçon," (I want to be a good boy), and had the brother repeat it. I asked him, "How was Baba's accent?"

He replied, "Perfect."

One of the charming features of Baba's visits to France and elsewhere was the performance by Margiis of kaoshikii and tandava. It was performed at the airport and before each darshan. Our Jagrti was not on the ground floor, and the neighbours below were sensitive to loud noise made by dancing in our meditation hall. So, during the performance of kaoshikii and tandava, there were only two or three dancers.

Before one of the afternoon discourses there was a very unusual performance of kaoshikii. Dada Rudreshvarananda (who hails from France) was leading the dance by calling the mantra and two recently initiated boys were trying to perform the dance, which is quite complicated for beginners. So, that day one boy was bending forward while the other was bending sideways, and to make matters worse, Dada made a mistake in calling the rhythm of the dance. Still, when it was over Baba said, "Very good," and gave a big smile.

Everyone laughed.

Then Baba explained, "The foot movements were not correct, the body movements were not correct, and even the calling was not correct, but still I say, 'Very good.' Why? Because I like to give encouragement."

Regarding tandava, I have previously explained that the dance was performed using a live snake (symbolising the force of ignorance and death). We had a small garden snake which accompanied Baba through several cities of the tour, including Stockholm, Rotterdam and Valencia.

During the performance one afternoon, Baba remarked that when one performs tandava, "the snake must be venomous." He repeated, "The snake must be venomous." (This snake was not venomous, fortunately, for I heard that somewhere on the tour he bit one dancer who didn't hold him correctly. However, the snake, not the dancer, passed away during the stay in Lyon.)

### An Historic Moment

Within the confines of the Lyon Jagrti, we passed many remarkable moments with our spiritual master.

One event that took place at that time (1979) seemed like just another light moment, consistent with Baba's jovial mood during the visit. However, seen from the perspective of today, it was perhaps quite historic.

One afternoon Baba gathered together the whole-timers and told us that we would now have to start work in the communist countries. Up to that time our work had been concentrated in Western Europe. Our mission had started in Germany, went to Scandinavia and down to Italy and later (as I related previously) it expanded to France and the Iberian peninsula (Spain and Portugal). Now Baba was asking us to cross the "Iron Curtain" and go into Eastern Europe.

Baba started to give us some instructions regarding this new development. He said, "How will you work when you go to these countries? You will have to do everything subterranean." He put great emphasis on the word "subterranean" and as He said it, He made a motion with His hand. Baba was standing, but He bent over low and held His hand a few inches from the floor and moved it forward in a line parallel with the floor and said again: "You will have to do everything subterranean."

Then Baba said, "But there is one thing which cannot be done

subterranean. Do you know what that is?"

Everyone was silent. Then Baba solemnly broke the silence and said the words, pronouncing each syllable carefully. He said, "Baba Nam Kevalam."

After that we did indeed venture into these countries to spread the seeds of Dharma. Despite any forebodings we may have had, our workers met with great success. As everyone now knows, by 1989 (ten years later) there was a change of consciousness in Eastern Europe which made it impossible for communist rule to continue. Who can say, but perhaps our workers, taking their cue from Baba that day in Lyon, played a vital role in the transformation of Eastern Europe.

### Baba's departure from France

All good things in this world have to come to an end one day, and Baba's historic visit to France was no exception. After spending a weekend with us, Baba's departure loomed ahead. But it was not without some interesting surprises.

Before I get to the ending, I have to make one observation. Baba really was at home within the confines of our small jagrti. The same jagrti which we thought was not even fit to house Baba turned out to be much to His liking. After the last evening discourse Baba was in such a relaxed mood that He just wandered out of His room (in the rear of the flat) and moved about in the forward rooms. Dressed only in a tee-shirt and lungi, Baba freely conversed with Margiis, who entreated Him to please make another visit to the region sometime soon.

The next morning Baba and His accompanying team got ready to go to the Lyon airport. They were to make a short flight to Milano, Italy, where the Margiis of Roma Region were getting ready to receive Him with all the love in their hearts.

I cannot remember the events of that morning, except for one. Sometime after Baba had departed I was in our kitchen with some LFTs; we were exhausted after playing host to Baba, visiting workers and 100 Margiis. The place was in something of a shambles. Then, all of a sudden, we got a phone call. Someone at

the airport was calling to us excitedly. They said, "Baba is back." We were quickly jolted out of our relaxation.

Despite having valid visas, Baba's party was denied entry into Italy and had to return to the Lyon airport. Apparently some instructions from a very high level were given to block his entry. We jumped into a car and drove swiftly to the airport. A special expressway goes from Lyon to the airport, which is 20 miles outside of the city. When we were halfway to the airport we saw the car with Baba and his PA (Personal assistant), Dada Ramananda, on the other side of the highway leading toward the city. We continued towards the airport anyway to pick up the other members of Baba's team. After getting them, we went back to the jagrti.

Everything had been put back into shape, and Baba relaxed in His room talking to workers. The French authorities, acting in concert with Italy, granted Baba 30 additional days' entry into France, but Baba decided to only rest shortly in Lyon and then fly back to India via Paris. We enjoyed His presence for that one day more.

The next morning we took Him back to the airport, and as Baba walked down a ramp leading to the check-in counter followed by someone carrying a single piece of baggage marked "P.R. Sarkar," I marvelled how one small, simply dressed man could have such a great impact on the world.

## Epilogue

There are two more incidents of that day which I fondly recall. After Baba left, a few remaining Margiis went into His room and some did meditation there. That is understandable, but what really surprised me was when I walked into the room adjacent to Baba's (the one where we had put a portable toilet and a washtub bath) and found one Margii in blissful meditation next to Baba's bathtub!

I then went into another room which in normal times was my office. During the stay of Baba it functioned as the quarters for Baba's P.A., Dada Ramananda. A few workers were there then. Dada Dharmavedananda was exhausted and sleeping. During



the entire tour of about one month he accompanied Baba everywhere, organising the security arrangements and the field walks. He was sleeping but his mind was still engaged in the events of the previous days. He started speaking in his sleep and called out, "Where can we take Baba tonight for the field walk?" I decided to answer him and said, "We can take Him along the Rhône River," thinking that would be the end of it.

But Dada Dharmavedanandaji replied, still sleeping, "No, we can't take Him there. He was there yesterday!"

## "Do, Don't Try"

Lokeshvar / Spain

I got Personal Contact when Baba was in Valenica, Spain.

After asking a few personal questions, He asked me if I will work for His mission. I answered, "Yes, Baba, I will try."

Then He immediately corrected me, "Not try. Do, do!" I do not remember the next words He used, but somehow He made me understand that it is not proper to develop the psychology of trying, but rather one should develop the habit of doing. We should be determined to do something in our life.

Shortly afterwards I remember that He gave a darshan in which He nicely illustrated this idea.

# An Earthquake

Nandita / Italy

A strange experience with Baba took place in the Jagrti in Messina in 1979. I had been initiated only a short time before. Jitendra, my husband, was also with me. We were doing Dharmacakra and the vibration was very strong. The atmosphere was very beautiful!

During meditation, I half opened my eyes and looked at the photo of Baba. Suddenly I saw that He had materialized. He looked at each of us one by one. I exclaimed, "Baba!" and went into samadhi. He disappeared.

I felt great bliss. I don't know how to explain the sensation I experienced. Afterwards I was reassured and very happy and fulfilled that I could see Baba and speak to Him.

At the end of Dharmacakra, we all went outside. We immediately saw that everyone in the street was frightened; there had been an earthquake! None of us in the Jagrti had felt anything.

I thought, "This is why Baba came, to make sure that his devotees were alright."

# He Is Really My Father

Kailash / Germany

My first strong experience with Baba happened when I was living in an Ananda Marga centre. I was not yet sure about my path. I was not sure about Baba, about my relation to Him. I was also enquiring about other Gurus, as I was also attracted by other paths. Then I read a book by Rajneesh (Osho), which described 600 meditation techniques. These techniques looked easier than the difficult Ananda Marga practice. In the Ananda Marga meditation system I found that it was not so easy to realize something quickly and my practice became less and less regular.

I was still in the jagrti, and one night, in a dream, Baba came to me. And actually we were sitting in the same room. Baba was sleeping in the same room, in the opposite bed. And I did namaskar to Him. And He did not do anything. Rather He got up from His bed and He left the room. And the next morning, when I was thinking about this dream, I was first of all very happy that Baba came. But on the other side I was feeling very sad that He did not give any attention to me. So I felt, He did the same to me as I did to Him. I did not give Him attention. So He was showing me like a mirror, what I did to Him. That was one of the first things where I realized, He's the Guru, He's the one to guide me, He's giving me some guidance. Since then I've always had the feeling that He is really my father.

My relationship with Baba became stronger during Baba's visit to Switzerland. I especially remember the DMC day, because I felt a 'oneness' with everything. I felt also very close to Baba, and even I felt one with Baba all the time. There was one situation where one man, who was actually mentally ill, wanted to say something. He got up, in the hall before Baba's talk, and wanted to say something, but everybody wanted to put him down. I had the feeling, "Why don't you let this man also to express something." Finally, Baba also said, "Let the man speak."

There were other incidents which made me feel connected to Baba. For instance, I brought a cake for Baba, and of course put all my love in it and presented it to Baba, via the assistants at Baba's house. It was accepted, as I later heard. But afterwards I also heard that Baba had distributed the cake as prasada amongst

all the different people around. So I was a little bit hurt, because I had prepared this cake for Baba. However later on, during Baba's discourse there was a remarkable passage. Baba said, "Somebody brought cake for me, but he thought, 'Let me give this cake to Baba.' [And] he had a very great ego about it. [And] he should not have this ego."

Finally, another incident happened one night as I was sitting with my wife in the evening, taking dinner. I read somewhere that some people like to keep a plate and spoon, etc. for Baba on their dinner tables, thinking that Baba should come to them. They were acting as if Baba were actually coming. Then I had the same idea, and we made a place setting for Baba on our dinner table. We strongly imagined that Baba would come to take dinner with us. Then very shortly afterwards, one or two months later, one Margii called me in Berlin. He knew that I had a flat in Mainz and that presently I was visiting my parents in Berlin. He asked me if I would agree to have Baba come and sleep in our Mainz flat overnight, as they don't have any other place. So of course I agreed and it really happened. Baba arrived in the airport. We gave the garland to Baba and brought Him to our house, to our flat. Baba stayed in that flat for one night and one day. About thirty Margiis got PC there. I was of course very happy, and I remember this still very much.

Nowadays, after Baba has gone physically, sometimes if I do something wrong I notice His guidance coming through other people or through special circumstances. For example during a retreat I was meditating, separately, not in the dharmacakra hall but in an open field. I felt a bit 'dry' also. Then one sister came and she said, "Dharmacakra is for social binding and balances the emotions. It is very good to be part of the Dharmacakra, isn't it?" And I took that as a hint and I attended the dharmacakra and I felt very well afterwards.

## Darshan and Field Walk at Copenhagen Airport

By Ramesh / Norway

We finished the remodeling of the LFT rooms at the PU office in Rungsted near Copenhagen in less than a week. We had washed the floors, painted the ceilings, walls and windows. The two rooms were as white and spotless as an Indian silk shirt. Only a week earlier the rooms had been littered with sleeping bags, notebooks and drying towels. Now it was a small, sentient apartment with an attached bathroom. Everything was ready for Baba to arrive.

Baba did not have a visa for Denmark, but our belief that He would visit us at the jagriti was strong. Indeed, we believed we could already sense His Divine vibration in the room. With that conviction and devotion in our hearts, a group of about 30 LFTs, half a dozen WTs and general Margiis drove to the airport in Copenhagen to meet Baba and His entourage of Dadas and Didis.

At the airport, we were greeted by nearly one hundred Margiis and WTs from different countries, including trainees from the WT Training Center in Sweden. Like a group of Airport-Hare-Krishna-devotees, we all crowded around the International Exit Area, drumming and singing kiirtan in eager anticipation of His arrival. Once in a while the electronic doors would open and travelers, who had been cleared through customs, would arrive to greet family and friends. Baba and His saffron-clad entourage, however, were not among them.

After about an hour of intense kiirtan and waiting, brother Pranava from Germany got impatient. As soon as the electronic doors opened, he bowed down and snuck in between the crowd of passengers pouring out. Luckily, the customs officers did not detect him. Soon we could see him happily walking toward the area where Baba eventually would come down to show His passport. That area, however, was not visible through the glass wall. If Baba would not be allowed into Denmark, we would therefore not be able to see Him at all. Such a predicament was unbearable. I had to see Him.

A few minutes after Pranava's pursuit through customs, I repeated my Guru mantra and disappeared through the crowd of surprised passengers. Luckily no one alerted the customs officials, who were busy checking several suitcases. Inside, I saw Pranava hiding behind a concrete pillar in the middle of the building. I walked over the large open floor, as casually as possible, to join him. Less than 10 minutes later sister Kusumita joined us behind the pillar.

Suddenly we spotted several Dadas coming down the elevator. Soon we also saw Baba and Dada Ramanandaji. Seeing Baba so close, and all by ourselves, we got very excited. We stepped out from our hiding place and ran up to the glass wall near the visa counter. Our faces were glued to the glass when Baba showed the officer His passport. Did He see us? If He did, He did not let us know. Not yet. But a few minutes later, when He sat down on a bench waiting for some of the Dadas to complete their negotiations with two passport officials, He looked toward us. We stood there with our hands folded in Namaskar. And then, to our big surprise, He returned our Namaskar with a big smile. Then, like a caring father, He let the other Dadas, a few Didis, His personal doctor and His young nephew know He had seen His children. They all turned in our direction with big smiles and loving Namaskars. It was all so intimate, personal and sweet.

During the whole week I had spent with Baba in Fiesch, I tried to receive personal attention from Him when out in public. I wanted a sign from Him, an indication that He noticed me, that He loved me. But He would always walk past me, giving His attention to someone else. But finally, I had been able to get His attention, even receive a personal Namaskar directly from Him. I was euphoric. I was content.

My elation did not last long. The immigration officials declined Baba a temporary visa for Denmark. We were shocked and heartbroken when we saw Him and His entourage being escorted away. Where did they take Him? Would we ever see Him again before His plane took off for Iceland the next day?

This arrangement was unacceptable. After a short meeting with some WTs in the lobby where the Margiis were still singing kiirtan as vigorously as ever, it was decided that I would try to negotiate with the airport authorities since I was one of the few who could

understand Danish.

Plan A was to convince the authorities to grant Baba a 24 hour temporary visa so that He could comfortably stay with us at the jagrti. Plan B was to have Darshan with Him at the airport. The tall, bespectacled officer with whom I would spend the next two hours negotiating, said that plan A was totally out of the question.

"Why?" I asked.

"Simply because this man, P. R. Sarkar, has no visa for Denmark," he said.

"Well, that may be so, but He is no ordinary man. He is our Guru. It is important that we see our Master. It is part of our spiritual tradition," I said.

The official thought for a moment, then said:

"I have an idea. Since you are so eager to see your Master, I will allow him to greet you all through the glass wall."

"No, I don't think so. That's not appropriate," I said.

"Well, I am afraid that is all I can do for you. That is better than to not see Him at all."

The official was right. I had just seen Baba through a glass wall myself. So I knew personally that it was better to see Baba through a glass wall than not to see Him at all. Still, I left the room utterly disappointed.

"I do not want to look like a fish in a glass bowl," was Baba's reply when he received the official's proposal.

The official actually laughed when I told him what Baba had said. He laughed hard and loud.

"What a funny and interesting reply," he said. "What a funny and interesting man."

"He is beyond interesting," I said.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

I spent the next half hour telling the official about Baba, about His life, His spiritual teachings, His occult powers, and His comprehensive and revolutionary social vision. I also explained that Baba had been persecuted in India and that the main reason He had no visa for Denmark was because the Indian government had allowed Him to visit only nine countries. For good measure, I threw in a couple of miraculous Baba stories at the end. To my



great surprise the official was visibly moved and impressed.

"I am not a religious man," he said. "I know nothing about Yoga and about Gurus. So I know you are not just telling me these stories to impress me. You truly respect and love this man because he has taught you something important and because he has something positive to contribute to humanity. I believe your Guru must be a special man who has been unjustly treated by the Indian government, so I will make an exception. I will allow you all to meet with him for one hour this evening in a conference room here at the airport."

Our Darshan with Baba inside that airport room was truly special. Even though Baba was not allowed to visit the jagriti, we all felt we had won a great victory. Once again Baba had showered His Grace upon us by allowing us to experience yet another suspenseful and humorous drama. Once again, Baba had the last laugh.

I do not remember anything of what Baba said during that Darshan. Not a single word. I was too transfixed by His powerful aura, by His sweet love, by His jokes. But I did notice His bright and shiny face and His healthy demeanor. I remember seeing His thick glasses up close for the first time. I remember wondering what His eyes really saw through them. I remember His balding head, and His short-cropped hair. I also remember He wore a white silk shirt, black shoes, a white dhoti, and a perpetually sweet smile. He was a simple yet extraordinary man surrounded by all His children in simple yet extraordinary circumstances. That's my Baba. That's the way He was. The Guru of big surprises and sweet, small Graces.

The next morning, Kusumita, Pranava and I were allowed to bring a specially prepared breakfast for Baba to the airport. We were escorted inside by two airport policemen. They told us they had strict orders to escort us out again as soon as the food had been delivered. We, of course, were secretly hoping that once again Baba would have other plans.

When we walked out the elevator, we saw Dada Ramanandaji and Baba's personal Doctor standing at the other end of a long, narrow corridor. Soon thereafter Baba Himself came out to join them. When He saw us, He greeted us with a warm Namaskar and thanked us profusely for being so thoughtful for bringing

Him food. Baba even greeted the two policemen with a warm Namaskar.

Then, to our big surprise, He said:

"Let us all go for a short field walk."

After that, He turned to the two policemen-who stood tall, stiff and very official-looking beside us-and said:

"You are also welcome to join us."

So off we went with two utterly dumbfounded Danish policemen as bodyguards behind us. They did not even dare to protest when three more Margiis miraculously showed up to join our colorful parade. For it was obvious, even to the policemen, that Baba was truly "the official in charge."

Once inside the large airport elevator, Baba's silly jokes started. "Did you all know that my Doctor collects various cheeses from all the countries we visit? Big and small, square and round cheeses. Some of them smell so bad we have to make sure his suitcase is always closed."

We all laughed. Baba laughed. The Doctor laughed. Then He continued:

"My Doctor takes pictures of me all the time. But his camera is so sophisticated that he does not understand how to use it properly, so most of the pictures are upside down."

We all enjoyed His silly jokes while we continued to walk around the duty free area of the airport. Then suddenly Baba decided to walk inside a restaurant where people were eating meat, drinking beer, even smoking. But He did not seem to mind. He simply walked to the very end of the restaurant where no one was sitting and where there was a bench facing the airport tarmac. Baba sat down on the bench. Once we all had been seated on the floor in front of him, He kindly said to the two policemen:

"Please, you are also welcome to sit down."

Not surprisingly, they decided to remain standing.

While sitting on that bench in that less-than-sentient atmosphere in that airport restaurant, with two rather tall Danish policemen as body guards, Baba's mood changed dramatically. He transformed into the all-powerful Guru I remembered from my personal contact in Fiesch. His voice became deep and serious. He started to talk about how grave the world situation was, and

that the cause of it all were various forms of capitalist exploitation.

Did He pick this meat-eating restaurant because it symbolized the tamasic world we live in? I do not know. But I do remember quite clearly what He said while looking at each one of us and uttering each word very carefully:

"Parama Purusha travels from planet to planet. Now He is on this planet. Although there are very few Margiis on this planet right now, soon there will be many more Margiis. And then we will capture this planet."

Back inside the airport elevator, I stood shoulder to shoulder with Baba. I was so blown away by what He had just said that I did not even notice He stood just next to me. Then, as if a magnet had pulled my face to the right, I turned my head and looked straight into His smiling face. Then, He graciously gifted me, and only me, the sweetest and most loving Namaskar I have ever experienced.

He finally fulfilled my secret wish.

At the end of the long, narrow corridor, Baba turned towards us all and bid us all farewell with a beautiful smile and Namaskar. He then turned and walked inside the room He was staying in but without closing the door completely. So, I walked up to the door, opened it slightly and peeked in. There was Baba, alone, seated on His bed. When He saw me, He smiled and said in a teasing yet affectionate voice:

"So, my boy, do you really think I love you now?"

Spellbound and tongue-tied, I was not able to utter a word. Like a little kid, too overwhelmed by affection, by new insights, by the koan-like words He had just used, I just smiled back. Then I gave Him a quick Namaskar and disappeared.

I can still see Him through that crack in the door. I can still see Him on that bench in the airport restaurant. I can still see His face next to mine in the elevator.

Those visions are all I need in order to know that He is truly mine.

# Drama in Copenhagen

Ac. Tapesvharananda Avt.

In 1979 I was traveling with Baba on His European tour. When we reached the Copenhagen airport, we waited in line for the immigration check. The moment the officer at the immigration counter saw Baba and our passports, he took our passports and left the counter. After a few minutes another officer came and told us to stand in a separate line for check-up. After still more time, this officer came out from behind the counter and talked to a police officer. Then the police officer and the immigration officer both came to our entourage and asked who P.R. Sarkar was. They then told Baba that Baba would have to leave the country of Denmark immediately.

After the Emergency in India Baba had directed several of us to get passports, and that we should also arrange for His passport. Our passports were normal ones. However, Baba's passport was conditional. There was a list of countries stamped inside the passport to which He was allowed to travel. Denmark was not on that list. For this reason, the immigration officer and the police officer were now telling Baba to leave the country. We were altogether eight persons in Baba's entourage. The authorities told us that, except for Baba, we could travel as per our ticket and program, but Baba would have to go back to His country of origin.

Baba then gave us the following instructions: (1) Nobody should talk to Him directly; if anybody wants to speak, they should speak to His PA only. (2) As per international law, any passenger can stay 24 hours in any international airport as a transit passenger. But, these officers were ignoring this law. Instead, they wanted to give trouble to Baba. Baba further stated that all eight of us were traveling together, and if they wanted to send Him back, we would all return with Him, and they would have to arrange for our tickets! As we were not at fault, so it was not our responsibility to arrange this. We did not have any intention to stay in Denmark. We were only in transit.

Really, it was a drama. Baba used to talk to us in a normal way in Bengali. But He refused to talk to any police or immigration persons. He was very normal, calm and cool. Suddenly He asked us: "Do you want to see a drama?"

We could not understand what He meant, what the drama would be. We had been waiting now a long time inside the airport. Outside the airport, two dadas and many Margiis were waiting to receive us. The dadas waiting outside could not understand why we were not coming out, nor were they getting any information about it. Finally, they managed to send two Margiis inside to find out what was happening. Those two persons found us and we told them the situation. They immediately went back outside and organized the Margiis. They prepared a big application or petition/demand, and gave it to the airport authorities. They wrote therein that they were the followers of Shrii P.R Sarkar, the spiritual head of Ananda Marga. They asked why this democratic country was giving trouble to our spiritual head. They said they were the members and followers from several different countries who had assembled here to receive their Master. They demanded to know the reasons for His not being able to leave the airport. Then, outside, they began singing Kiirtan. They seemed to be very upset and agitated. However, they were very disciplined and well organised.

The moment the airport authorities received this letter from the Margiis, they started wondering what should be done. They began worrying that there might be a problem of law and order or some violence. Hence, they changed their strategy completely and came to Baba with a number of big officials. They said to Baba: "You have so many followers who are waiting outside, why are you not thinking to meet them?"

Baba refused to talk to the officials. He indicated for us talk to them. As per His direction we told them that we didn't have any program to go outside the airport, as we were simply waiting to get the next connecting flight. The drama was in top form! A few minutes before, these people wanted Baba to return back to India. But now, the same people were requesting us to meet our people outside, just to maintain law and order and to solve their immediate problem! It was a very humiliating situation for them!

After repeated requests, Baba indicated to us to agree to meet the people outside on certain conditions: 1) The airport officials were to treat us as VIPs, (2) He would meet His followers only in the VIP hall of the airport, (3) There must not be any outsiders (non-Margiis) in the VIP hall at that time, and (4) There should not be any police in uniform in the hall. The airport authorities

agreed to all our points, and they arranged everything immediately. The police officer accompanied us, but he was in civil dress.

First Baba and His entourage (eight dadas and one didi) reached the VIP hall, where we arranged the chair for Him. When everything was ready, we told the airport officials and opened the outside gate of the VIP hall. The Margiis and dadas came very fast into the hall, but with proper discipline. They sat on the ground before Baba, near His feet. Everybody was very happy. The police officer could not imagine how peaceful everybody was. He told us that this man (Baba) has a magnetic personality. The trainer dada of the Sweden training center was there with more than 20 new dadas and didis. They sang a devotional song to Baba. Baba then spoke a few words to His devotees. The new dadas, didis and margiis did Kaoshikii, Tandava and Gurupuja in front of Him. It was a very beautiful scene, all organized by Him.

What He wants nobody can stop it. Only His divine Liila is expressed everywhere.

# He Belongs to This Universe

Vishvashanti / Denmark (part 2)

About one hundred devotees, Margiis and non-Margiis alike, were waiting for Baba at the airport located 30 kilometres outside of Stockholm. After receiving garlands from the Bhukti Pradhanas, Baba passed through the two long lines receiving Him. Forty-one of them were trainees, from the WT training centre in Sweden, who were eager to meet their Baba.

The lakes and forests around the city provided a naturally beautiful setting for Baba's field walks. Baba raised many historical points, enough to stir any historian. He said that the earth of Scandinavia is the oldest on the planet. Scandinavia was at one time near the equator, but the poles have shifted, placing this area now near the Arctic Circle. The very old age of the land accounts for the many lakes, lagoons and marshlands. Scandinavia was once a part of the culture of Atlantis, and 1500 years ago there was one common language for all of Scandinavia. The Icelandic language is derived from Dutch.

Baba spoke very much about botany, which He described as His 'weak' subject. He said that He was weak in that subject, but most everyone here could not remember the details which He discussed. He described at length the nature of the rocks in the area, as well as the chemical composition of the soil which accounts for the differences in crops and the variation in sweetness of fruits between here and a more tropical land.

During Baba's visit to Stockholm there was an automobile accident which injured five Margiis. After the next day's field walk, Baba said that He wanted to see the boys in the hospital. For those of us with Baba on His hospital visit, it was a good lesson. To see Baba in public, speaking with nurses in the hospital, was to see a perfect gentleman, a perfect father, one very concerned about the welfare of His sons and daughters.

On Sunday evening there was a particularly large group of people with Baba to go on field walk. In His direct way, He suddenly stopped and remarked that this was no ordinary group for field walk; we were a platoon, a platoon of lions. This statement came at a time when the proprietors of the darshan hall were trying in

vain to halt the kiirtan and evict the Margiis.

When Baba and His 'platoon of lions' returned, the solidarity of the kiirtan was at a peak and the antagonists gave in to the inevitable.

In His final discourse, Baba spoke about the supreme shelter of love of Parama Purusa. Later, in the car, He asked me if I had understood the discourse that night completely or to some extent. When I said, "to some extent," He said, yes, that He too had understood it to some extent. During Baba's historic visit to Stockholm, He gave two discourses and maximum personal and group contact. My personal experience? Well, for two weeks after the visit I had a severe headache and fever in the sahasrara cakra region.

When Baba left, and the jet roared off in a steep incline out of the airport, I could only think that Baba was off on a rocket to another planet. He is truly no ordinary man. He belongs to this universe.

I'll tell just one little incident that happened during Baba's visit to Scandinavia. As we (myself, the personal assistant and Baba) were coming from the airport, back to the house, there was a swastika flag - the little flag that goes on the corner of the car - but it looked as though it was not well-attached to the car. The P.A. was rather concerned about this, and asked to stop and put it on properly. He said that Baba was very, very particular about systems, and that if it broke and blew off, it would be very painful for Him. So I remembered what he said and then a little bit later we were driving on the motorway. Normally there was a car of the security personnel right behind Baba. As was normally the case, Baba's car was a rather big car, and the security car was often a smaller car, which was packed with people, of course. So Baba's car was able to go faster. I had gone a little bit too fast, leaving a large gap between the two cars. As we were going, I could see another car coming onto the motorway, and I could see that the car was going to come in between Baba's car and the security car. That was against the system, but there was nothing I could do. As I was watching through the mirror, I could see the other car coming, and as soon as this car cut between the security car and Baba's car, I got a surge of pain through my entire body - an aching feeling completely through me - which I felt as a little reminder that the systems must be followed. Of course Baba



has His purpose for us following the system and the systems that He gives. Only He knows fully what the actual purpose is. We can understand a little bit of it perhaps, but there is always a much greater purpose.

Then in October 1979, He was passing through Scandinavia, on His way to Iceland. So many Margiis from around Scandinavia stopped at the airport in Copenhagen. For some reason the visa arrangements weren't made so that He could enter into Denmark, even though He had an overnight stay to wait for His aeroplane the next day. Margiis had gathered at the airport and started doing kiirtan outside of the transit hall. This created a big scene there. The airport authorities wisely decided the best way to deal with it would be just to allow people to come into the transit hall and meet with Baba and then everything would be solved. At that time I saw Baba sitting talking to the immigration official who was sitting right next to Him, taking care of Him and seeing that everything was in order, so that He would be taken to where He was staying that night. He was the ideal of a gentleman, sitting there talking, with perfect charm, with the man, asking about the man's family. Then as He was leaving, He naturally made a long, long tour through the entire transit hall, going the wrong way, so that everyone, all the Margiis would be able to get a very close look at Him. It was almost like a field walk as He very slowly walked from one end to the other and then realized that He had gone the wrong way, and went the other way.

As He passed by me, He gave a very nice namaskar and said, "Ahah, my driver sahib," which of course filled me with incredible happiness, that He remembered I was His chauffeur when He had been here the previous time.

# A Few Stories

Ac. Daneshananda Avt. (part 2)

## In The Car With Baba

I was in India one time in the late 70's, when, after many days of asking, I was finally given the opportunity to go on field walk with Baba. In the evening, I was ready, and got into the car with Baba. There were two other Indian brothers coming also. One sat in the front. In the back, I was squeezed in between Baba and the other Indian brother, who was very fat. I could feel it every time Baba took a breath. I could feel every single small movement Baba made, next to me. (And he could feel it every time I moved!)

Baba was very peaceful and calm, and was at first talking in Hindi to the two other brothers. Then He asked me my name and my posting. After some time, I decided that I had to tell Baba something. I gave Him the news that the Margiis in Denver had started a home for mentally retarded boys. Baba was very happy, and said: "It is very good, it is very good. It should be called the New Life Asylum." Baba continued, saying, "In the United States the people are not suffering so much physically, but they are suffering psychically. There is a large percentage of insanity in the United States. You must serve the people of the United States psychically."

Later on, Baba also said: "You must do maximum praca amongst the youths, from 17 to 23 years old. Only they will understand our ideology. They will establish our mission. Most of our wholtime workers also came from amongst them."

## No Gate Pass!

After the DMC in Jamaica, in 1979, Baba was in a good mood. He asked each of us, how many DMCs we had attended. We each answered.

Then Baba answered with pride: "And I, I have never missed a single DMC. And without gate pass! Except once."

Then He told the story of how once in the sixties He had gone to

a new place for DMC, and one of the new young volunteers did not know who was Baba, so that when He came to enter the pandal (the tent) for DMC, the volunteer stopped Him and demanded a gate pass!!

### Importance Of Sixteen Points

Once Baba was taking report from a worker. The report was not satisfactory. Then Baba started to inquire about that worker's individual conduct. Soon it was exposed that this brother had several serious lapses in his disciplines. Afterwards, Baba said: "When there is lack of progress in organizational work, it is always due to some defects in following the sixteen points." He emphasized this strongly and made us repeat this sentence several times.

### Just A Glimpse Of Baba

I had returned to Calcutta from seeing Baba in Patna. Baba was also going to arrive in a few days by plane. One day I came back to the office after finishing other business downtown, and found that almost everybody was gone. On inquiring, I was told that everybody had left for the airport to receive Baba, who was now arriving from Patna. I felt very sad that I had missed the opportunity to go with the others to welcome Baba.

Together with Dada Rameshvar (now, Dada Rudreshvarananda) we decided to go to Lake Gardens to wait for Him there. We reached Lake Gardens and then sat down for meditation, thinking that Baba would arrive after about one hour. But, after just a couple of minutes of meditation, suddenly Baba's car drove up! We were so confused that we only just managed to run out and see Baba for a few seconds. But Baba smiled so radiantly and did such beautiful namaskar to us, that we were maximally filled with bliss. I had the realization that just seeing Baba for a glimpse - just seeing Him for a couple of seconds - was very precious.

Later we found out that the people who had rushed to the airport had been given the wrong flight arrival information and hence had missed Him on His arrival. Only Dada Rameshvar and I had received Baba on His arrival back to Calcutta.



# Chapter Four

## 1980 - 1983: Dharma Samiks'a & Other Meetings with Baba

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*My first visit to India lasted only two weeks, but the impression is still with me today. Baba's touch caused a profound change in myself and brought me still closer to Him.*

*Didi Ananda Amegha*

In the early part of the 1980s Ananda Marga's headquarters was in Calcutta, India. Margiis from Europe visited India on a regular basis during this period. This flow intensified in 1981 when Baba introduced Dharma Samiks'a. During Dharma Samiks'a Baba corrected the flaws of His disciples and relieved them of the burden of past actions. In a period of only a few months Baba personally reviewed the spiritual progress of thousands of disciples who came to Calcutta in large numbers for this unprecedented event. In fact, Baba remarked that "Dharma Samiks'a is the most epoch-making event of the last fifteen thousand years." (as noted in the book *Ananda Vacanamrtam*, part 23, page 166).

Some of the stories in this chapter describe Dharma Samiks'a and others are centered on other encounters with Baba.

*"Now the Supreme Entity, the Controlling Entity, the final stance of Dharma, lies covert within one's own 'I' feeling. That is, you are to search internally and not externally. Everything is within you, because Parama Purus'a always remains with you, within the very core of your heart. So search within, O spiritual aspirant, not without, but within, within your very existence."*

*Shrii Shrii Anandamurti*

*13 May 1979 morning, Fiesch, Switzerland, A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 12*

## The Same Face

Ac. Unmantrananda Avt.

I was born and brought up in Denmark. In 1980, when I was 19 years old, I was living down the road from what was at that time the LFT training center for Europe. When the training centre moved away, I and a group of friends were the new people to rent the place, a red house in the town of Rungsted Kyst. A couple of months later I was attending Ananda Marga yoga classes in their new location but had not been initiated yet. One night in the garden my body started going stiff as I approached the Ananda Marga house. Eventually I was nailed to the ground looking up in the sky, my spinal cord like a metal pipe. In the sky a face appeared and commanded me by telepathy to "get serious about yoga". I took this incredible experience to heart and visited the local acarya, whom I had befriended before he moved out from the red house. I asked to learn meditation. Within a week incredible meditations revealed the location of the chakras even though I had never read anything about them or been explained their location. A couple of months later I attended my first Dharmacakra. At the time of Guru Puja I suddenly noticed a picture on the table. It was what we call Baba's gentleman's photo, and was the same face I had seen in the sky before my initiation.

In 1981 I received Dharma Shamiksa in Jodhpur Park. Baba did not expose publicly my past mistakes. What touched me in particular was the sadhana immediately after the event. I felt love flowing through my mind and chuckled internally. Whether Baba was the first Guru I ever loved I still do not know but that the love is true I do know. After a couple of days the eczema skin disease I had been suffering from all my life vanished. Now I understood why they call it a psycho-somatic disease.

I went to Wholetimer T training in 1982, the first person from Denmark to do this. While in the Benares Training Center I harbored some doubts about my decision. In one Dharmacakra, immediately after the Samgachadvam mantra Baba appeared in my Sadhana surrounded in resplendent white light. He then proceeded to perform various mudras that appeared to control the universe. Faintly I then heard the sound of 'Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu.' The other trainees had started Guru Puja. I thought the experience had lasted only a couple of minutes but in fact

half an hour had passed. After that I never had any serious doubts. I understood that as a WT, I am merely an actor in His cosmic play.

# The Universe in Your Eyes

Brajesh / England

I was an eighteen year old student at London University, in 1980-81, and had just met a Margii from Cyprus, named Mahesh.

Whilst walking to the nearest tube station (Russell Square) from International Hall, I noticed a small Indian man walking towards me, dressed in a grey dhoti. I felt that he would speak to me and so it came as no surprise when he graciously asked me for some directions.

"Could you please tell me where is Frames?" he said with a sweet smile.

I looked around for a shop with that name, but could see none, nor remember a shop of that name being in the area, so I replied, "No, I don't know where it is, but if you ask someone nearby, they may be able to help you."

"Thank you," he said with an extremely sweet smile. As he said this, he seemed to be inviting me to look at his face, in particular, at his eyes, which were gazing at me behind a pair of thick rimmed glasses. I looked at his eyes without fear, and remember thinking in quite a natural way: "There's the universe in your eyes..." As this thought floated through my mind, his smile grew even sweeter and his eyes seemed to sparkle even brighter. With the image of that sweetness in my mind, he left me and continued along the street. A few moments later, I thought to myself, "I should really go back to that man... he is special... he could show me something." I retraced my steps, but along the near empty street I could not see him anywhere.

A few days later I spoke of this incident to Mahesh, and how it had moved me.

"Did he look like this?" Mahesh said, showing me a photograph of Baba.

"Yes! That's the man I spoke to..." I said.

The story continues seven years later. I was living in Derby



working as an occupational therapist. In the main street of the town I saw a Frames shop.

I then understood that Baba knows everything. I felt that Baba is always taking care of me, taking care of everything, and had, in my first meeting with him in London, known that I would, seven years later, in another town, see a Frames shop.

The feeling I had, when I understood this, is really indescribable.

## The Inner Desire

Mrinalini / Italy

I was in India, in Ananda Nagar, in January of 1981 during a Dharma Maha Chakra. Until that moment, it was the custom that sisters would not do kiirtan with brothers, in front of Baba.

In various moments, I had tried to do that but was prevented to do so and was feeling deep sadness and entirely frustrated.

Once I even cried when brothers started doing Kiirtan in front of Baba, feeling myself "kept" away from Baba's Blissful nectar. But in that occasion, the moment the kiirtan was about to begin, Baba, made a gesture with His hands clearly instructing All to rise and do Kiirtan in His presence.

Great was my emotion and joy. I understood that Baba had "listened" to my inner deeper desire.

Baba sees all

Some time later, in India, I and other Margii brothers and sisters were waiting for Baba. When He walked near us, He looked at us and said: "But you were at Fiesch?" And we answered very happily: "Yes, Yes, Baba."

## "Come Little Boy, Come Little Boy"

Satyavan / Italy

My relationship with Baba has always been very contradictory; strong attraction and repulsion, divine and human, sweeping charm and total indifference.

The deep rooted attraction I feel towards Him is beyond everything. I can love Him and I can't wander from Him, from His mission, from Ananda Marga. I feel as though it is a link born in a previous life that continues in this, and that this samskara will be fulfilled as He wants it to be. I've been chosen for a mission, He takes me by the hand and leads me along the way to bliss, and my duty is to serve the suffering humanity, to contribute to the harmonious development of this universe.

The first time I physically met Baba was in Switzerland, in 1979. Before that I had only heard about Him and His powers. I expected great miracles but I found a simple person giving lectures in English which I couldn't understand (at that time I did not speak English).

It was a disappointment. I wanted to see Him with long hair, tall, thin, like a fashionable guru. It was actually difficult for me to accept Him.

I went to India several times, and in 1981 I arrived late for the dharma samiks'a. I cried; it was a deep sorrow.

Finally after numerous attempts, I obtained Personal Contact. I still remember every slight detail. The stairs, the room, the confusion I heard from outside and the indescribable peace I felt close to Him. He received me as a son. With a gentle voice he said to me, "Come little boy. Come little boy..." I got closer to Him. I was very deeply moved, enraptured.

He asked me my name, age and job and then He began to talk to me. I was so dazed that I did not understand anything. I would have liked to stay there forever, to rest my head on His arms to listen to His heartbeat and nothing else. In the end He asked me if He had to punish me for my mistakes. And, without realizing the reason I said yes. I took off my tee-shirt and with a stick He

lovingly skimmed my chest. Then He placed His hand on my head, repeating a mantra.

I was completely bound up in an indescribable state. My conception of space and time had vanished. It was something that could be compared only to limitless peace and to never-ending love. This was an experience which I will never forget and that will accompany me in every moment of this and other lives (if there will be others).

There are high points in a spiritual life. The first one is when you receive initiation. In that moment the person is "spiritually born" and starts towards self-realisation. The second one is when you meet the master. The master takes us by the hand during our trip to the final goal.

## A Special Guest

Abanish / Norway

I have been a Margii since 1975 and now live in Sweden. I met Baba several times. Once it was quite interesting because Baba came to sleep in my house! When Baba was on tour in Europe on his way to Iceland His entourage missed their connection and instead of just transiting in Norway, Baba and His accompanying team had to stay overnight in Oslo. They actually had no visa for Norway. But somehow they just went through the immigration and they were in the airport. I was at work at the time and then Manohar (another Margii from Oslo) called me. "You have to go and fix the house, we are bringing Baba to the house." So I went home and tried to fix the room for Baba. Manohar, who owned a shop, had an old Volkswagen van and he was also using it for construction work and there was all kinds of materials on the top of it. Still he took Baba and three others from the airport in that van and drove them to our house. We fixed our bedroom for Baba and Baba slept there. He was tired and didn't say anything. In the morning I drove Baba back to the airport and took about one hour. All the time Baba was speaking in Hindi to the Dadas, to Dr. Pathak and to Didi Ananda Karuna.

I had a very nice experience in 1981 when I went for Dharma Samiksa. I was with Vasudeva. and there was a long queue . I was near Baba and he was dealing with Indian brothers and he was really beating them. I thought if he beats Vasudeva like this, then I will freak out! Then Vasudeva came and it was quite short and then I came and it was OK. Baba gave us asanas and it was a good experience.

In 1987 Baba started to give microvita sadhana. I was not planning to go, but Dada Shambhushivananda insisted. I had some problems and couldn't get a visa, but managed to go anyway. I was travelling with a Dada and came to Delhi to change the flight to Kathmandu, but somehow we entered in Delhi and everything was OK.

I went to Ananda Nagar and started to wait for microvita sadhana. It didn't happen there and then we went to Calcutta,

and then finally Baba decided to teach it to three brothers from Berlin sector. I can not tell what happened with Baba but I spent two and one half hours with Him. It was quite an experience but it was also quite heavy. When I was finished I went down and met Dada Shambhushivananda and was a bit confused and started to ask Dada about something about the sadhana (he too was a practitioner of this kind of meditation). Then suddenly I heard the PA and Baba was calling me again and Baba answered just the question I had asked Dada.

## A Very Special Spiritual Blessing

Avtka. Ananda Amegha Ac. (part 2)

In July 1981, a Margii couple from Sevilla, a brother from Huelva, the local acarya and I started to go to the Sectorial summer retreat, which would be held in France. But while driving out of the city, our car broke down and we had to go back. We called the Margiis in France to inform them that we would be late for the retreat. To our surprise they informed us that we shouldn't go to France but instead go to India. Baba had called all the Margiis from around the world to come to Calcutta where He would give Dharma Samiiksa, a special revision of the 16 points and conduct rules that all Margiis were supposed to follow.

It turned out to be a very special spiritual blessing of the Guru.

We got this information on a Friday. None of us had enough money, but each one of us tried the impossible. Somehow, by His Divine Grace, by Monday we all were able to arrange to buy our tickets. My father, who didn't approve of Ananda Marga, came to the airport in Frankfurt with the money for my ticket. I don't know what Baba did to convince him.

During our stopover in the Ananda Marga office in Mainz, we met several Margiis who had just returned from India. All of them were suffering from different diseases, such as stomach problems, diarrhea and hepatitis. Their faces had all kinds of colors - grey, green, black and yellow! Our group decided to eat only fruits while staying in India, so for two weeks we survived on pineapples, bananas and coconuts. None of us got sick, instead we felt purified and subtle.

We arrived in Calcutta at the end of July; many Margiis were cramped in the Jodhpur Park office where Baba was giving Dharma Samiiksa daily.

On the 2nd of August it was announced that this would be the last day of Dharma Samiiksa. Baba had gotten sick from attending to so many people.

He must have been exhausted from taking on so many samskaras. Didi Ananda Karuna arranged for the remaining Margiis to sit

in separate lines, Indian brothers and overseas brothers on one side, Indian sisters and overseas sisters on the other. After that, she entered Baba's room. When she came out she selected one Indian brother, one overseas brother, one Indian sister and one overseas sister - it was me. We were to be the last Margiis to receive Dharma Samiiksa from Baba.

One by one, we were rushed into Baba's room. He didn't ask any questions.

He beat my hands twice; it felt like a gentle touch. After that, He touched the crown of my head while He repeated some blessings. He prescribed some asanas; I did diirgha pranam and was out of the room again. It all happened very fast.

For many days after this, I felt a wonderful lightness, as if a big burden had been taken from me. Even the Margiis who hadn't personally received Dharma Samiiksa felt a change in themselves. The sister who came with me from Sevilla had a dream that same night, where she saw herself like an eagle in flight.

My first visit to India lasted only two weeks, but the impression is still with me today. Baba's touch caused a profound change in myself and brought me still closer to Him.



# His Smile Forever In the Treasure Case of My Mind

Indrajit / Germany (part 1)

I was among the Margiis who came to India in 1981 after Baba had called everybody to meet Him in an event He called Dharma Shamiksa. I was 20 years old, and had been a Margii for about 2 years.

I entered Baba's room together with a group of about eight other Margiis, who were called one after the other before Baba. Baba was sitting on some kind of podium, with one or two acaryas on the side of it. When it was my turn I went up to Baba, someone said my name and my duty in Ananda Marga, I did Sastaunga Pranam, but He told me right away to get up. My state of mind in that moment is best described as 'bewildered' - blank, in the sense that I had no expectations, that I was feeling nervous also, and, to be honest, I did not know at all how to relate to Baba, or how to talk to Him, as a person, I mean.

So He said: "You tell me: what is your biggest mistake?" Well, this was not quite unexpected to me, and I boldly said: "I am not committed enough...", and I did feel quite convinced that this was a very appropriate, and correct, answer: 'committed' meaning that I had too many selfish tendencies that kept me from working fully for His mission. He, however, with a slight movement of His head and face, expressed disapproval, but did not say anything to that directly. So He went on asking me whether I thought I deserved punishment for that, and naturally - this was also not quite unexpected - I said "Yes, Baba." I was told to pull up my shirt and was getting ready for whatever would follow. And in a way, I started to feel like I was losing my self-control.

So with His stick He gave me a few mild beatings on my left and right waist - this was certainly nothing to really hurt me. But it was enough to completely kick me out of my fragile state of self-controlled behaviour that was covering up my deeper feelings ... and when He asked me to come closer to Him I was already a different person, feelings were suddenly boiling in me like I had never felt before. I knelt down before His seat so that I could

look into His eyes directly. He patted my head, my cheeks a little, but I do not remember whether He said anything in that moment. I just looked into those cosmic eyes, and I was washed away by a flood of emotion, of realization; I was looking into the universe, not something outside of me, but MY universe, my own existence through the ages, through millions of years. There was an immensely clear feeling that this life of mine will be a departure from that big journey of creation, that He is here to guide me back to the Absolute Truth, from which I came.

All this was reality in that moment with Baba, and I was overwhelmed by it, and I was crying uncontrolled. My face must have looked somewhat dejected, because suddenly I heard Him say: "Now smile a little..." and that again changed my mood entirely. It was like He had turned a switch in me, and my tears of crying turned into tears of joy in a way that I have never felt before or afterwards. I suddenly felt so extremely free and easy, my mind was dancing in joy - it was raining flowers, life was paradise, and it stayed so for quite a while.

Meanwhile Baba dictated four asanas for me to one of the Dada's next to us. I still marvel at how well He chose those asanas, which are all quite special, and which are still part of my daily practice.

This experience of Dharma Shamiksa has been an unchanging source of inspiration deep inside my mind, an inspiration that has survived both good and bad weathers.

# This Moment of Complete Sweetness

Meeta / England (part 2)

In India I saw Baba again three times. The first time it was at Jodhpur Park in Calcutta. We stayed in a hotel near His house. We sang songs near His window. One night, we were playing and we left. The next night, we heard that Baba had actually invited us up to see His museum and we were stunned that we had missed this opportunity and then Baba spoke to me on the stairs. He was saying that He had invited us but we weren't there. On that visit I felt it was easy to see Him, and with each other visit it became more difficult.

The next visit was dharma samiks'a. There were lots of people that time. We put our name down to see Baba but it was getting near the end. My turn came and I said I would complete some work in a certain amount of time. Baba asked if I would like punishment and I put out my hand, but that morning I had put my hand in a fan, so he hardly hit me. He gave me some asanas and specified one to especially do first. I have seen that over the years it is a very good asana for me especially when I don't have time to do others. The last time I saw Baba I was pregnant and it was hard to get close but it was more devotional

He was a strong figure. Once in a DMC I had a small baby and the baby was crying and I had to surrender and put my trust in Baba and the problem was solved. I felt Baba was guiding everything and I went along with it. The last time I was watching Baba through a hole in a door and there were so many people around, but I felt He was just mine at that moment. Later back in England I remembered this moment of complete sweetness.

# All Seemed To Fit In a Puzzle

Shiila / France (part 3)

July 31, 1981 Dharma Samiksa

Didi Ujvala (now Didi Anandausa) at that time called me from Portugal to inspire me to go to India for Dharma Samiksa.

But at that time, we were just starting to settle down in France. We had some financial difficulties. And I thought that Dharma Samiksa could be had by appointment. I told Didi once that I would write to Didi Ananda Bharati and ask for an appointment.

At the period when Didi called, Gurucaran was in India as a tourist guide.

Though he was aware that Dharma Samiksa was going on, his job as a tourist guide would not allow him to go on his own.

During the second week of July of this year, an ERAWS Seminar was being held in France. During this retreat, it was announced that Baba would soon stop giving Dharma Samiksa. Before the end of this retreat, half of the participants were gone....to India, abandoning the ERAWS camp.

Inside me, there was this unexplainable need to go and see Baba. Each day, this longing for Baba was getting stronger and stronger.

Somehow, I tried to get in contact with Gurucaran by telegrams. In my desperate need to see Baba, I told him to stay in India and wait for me there. In fact, he could not understand why I was sending all these telegrams.

On the 24th of July, Gurucaran was due to come back from India. At this point, I had already decided that I was going to India as soon as he came back. As I could not find anyone to take care of our children, I brought them with me to fetch Gurucaran at the airport with the firm determination to go to India and see Baba. He was surprised to see me at the airport with the children. He was with a Margii brother from the USA (now Dada Jyotirupananda ) who came in the same flight and was in France to attend the first World PROUT Convention that we had

organized in our region.

Somehow, we had to go back home with this longing getting stronger each time. That night, I made a firm decision. I was going to India to see Baba accompanied by Gurucaran or not. The very moment that decision was made, all the weight in my heart and my mind vanished in a split second. I felt so happy and light.

Baba seemed to take charge of everything from the very moment I took that decision. Gurucaran decided to come, plane tickets and connections were arranged, friends to take care of our two beloved children. All seemed to fit in a puzzle. My mind was only flowing in His rhythm.

On the night of the 30th of July, we were in Calcutta.

Early in the morning, we were at the Central Park Office. It was already jam packed with Margiis who had been waiting for their turn for Dharma Samiksa. There was literally no space to even sit for sadhana. The first thing we did was to fill up the form for Dharma Samiksa. They said that it would take at least three days for approval. The only problem was that there was a rumour that Baba would stop DS that very same day. The only thing I knew was that I wanted Baba and time did not exist at all. That morning 5 sisters and 5 brothers were already chosen to meet Baba. While the brothers were getting their DS, the sisters were waiting in the adjacent room next to Baba's. I decided to sit with them just to feel Baba at this wonderful moment, knowing that soon they would be in front of Him.

So, I closed my eyes and imagined I was with these 5 sisters waiting for our turn. Actually, I was even imagining that I was already meditating in front of Him.

Suddenly, I heard one dada rushing to the room and getting to the file of forms as if looking for one urgently. Then, I heard--- Shiila, Shiila, Shiila.

He pulled out the form.

I heard the sisters getting up for their turn. I opened my eyes looking at them with some joy in my heart and thinking how

lucky they are indeed to get the DS.

Suddenly, the Dada who burst inside the room turned to me and said, "What are you doing? Get up!"

The next thing I knew, I was crying loudly and could not contain my surprise and happiness to be among the five sisters.

On the way, I could hear some people say, not now, not now, cry later.

Finally, it was my turn. My name was called by the Didi but she could not give any information whatsoever of my organizational duties.

I found myself in front of Baba still in tears (of joy). He had a stick in His hands and He slightly touched my unfolded hands. I was very oblivious of what He told me except for few words. "Be a good girl".

I knelt and put my head on His left knee. He placed His hand on my head and said, "Kalyanamastu". I felt I was a new person after this and could not describe my joy.

I remember one Dada who came to me and told that Baba asked for my name. All they could say was that I was the wife of Gurucaran. Baba commented also that I was a great devotee.

## Baba Is Always Present With Me

Anirvan / Florence, Italy

In 1974, an acarya came to a conference in the small village of Polistena in Calabria where I was born. The room was small but full. Six months later I was at the train station in the city of Firenze. My hair was longer and my appearance was somewhat different. In front I saw a man dressed in the same orange color. Before I could be sure it was the same monk, he said to me, "I know you from Polistena." I was shocked how he could remember me from the crowd. He continued, "This afternoon I have a conference here, maybe you can come." He handed me a leaflet, which I put in my pocket.

That day I moved around the city by bus, looking for an apartment to rent. I spotted perhaps 20 people wearing the same dress that day. Before the time scheduled for the talk, I went to the square, but I didn't remember the address. I checked my pocket, but the leaflet was gone. Just at that moment someone tapped my shoulder. I turned and saw Dada, who said, "Come with me, brother."

The talk was very inspiring. Afterwards I talked with him late into the night and was initiated. Afterwards I asked him how many acaryas were in Florence. He replied, "I'm the only acarya in Italy at this time." Shocked, I said, "But then you must have moved around the city a lot today." He shook his head and said, "No, I spent the day in the room talking to people."

Later I realized from this mysterious experience that Baba is always present with me. When I think about Him, I feel His presence, sometimes physically, sometimes through an acarya or someone else.

I went to India in 1982. In one meeting in Calcutta, Baba was speaking in Bengali because most of the Margiis present were from that area. I watched His body very intensely - He was so beautiful! At one point during His talk, He moved His finger in a special way, and then He said in Italian, "Io sarò sempre con voi." (It means, "I will always be with you.") I was amazed and very happy to hear that. However, after the talk when I asked

another Italian Margii who was present, he said he didn't hear Baba say any Italian words.

Then I overheard two brothers speaking Spanish. They were very excited and said they had both heard Baba speak a sentence in Spanish. I know a little Spanish, so I asked them what they heard Baba say. They told me He had said, "Yo siempre estaré con ustedes," which means exactly what I heard Him say in Italian. Later I overheard a sister from Scandinavia tell Dada Karunananda that in the meeting she heard Baba say a sentence in her mother tongue that meant, "I will always be with you."

From this mystical experience, I feel that Baba was telling us His most important message: "Don't worry, you're never alone, I will always be with you."



## "Yoga Might Be Good For You"

Ac. Shantashubhananda Avt. (part 1)

Although I was initiated at the age of 22, I soon realized that this Tantric journey actually started much earlier. Two strange experiences started occurring when I was 6 or 7 years old. Sometimes I saw grownups doing things that I considered very silly, immature or confusing. I wondered, "Why are they doing stupid things that even I would not do?" I considered telling them this, but I realized that they would not listen to a child. I couldn't understand why they seemed more immature than me.

Another strange experience was that sometimes when I would sit with people, for example while eating, I would start to feel very distant. Their voices would become softer and I would see us from a different perspective. It felt interesting and pleasant. Gradually this made me feel that I was somehow different, that I did not belong in this world and was in the wrong place.

I was raised in a Catholic family. One night after going to bed, I felt like I wanted to talk to Jesus. I said, "What is happening? How is it that I'm doing my best and I'm a good person, but life is so difficult for me?" From somewhere I felt an answer: "Of course you are good, but you must become much better." It was quite clear.

Around the age of 14, the difference between what I felt inside and what I experienced on the outside started growing stronger. Although I had all the normal things that my friends had, still I felt dissatisfied. Throughout my adolescence I tried to experience everything that people do to get pleasure and happiness, but nothing gave me real satisfaction or meaning. I gradually became more restless and uncomfortable about my whole existence. The peak came when I was 21. That year was extremely difficult and I felt, "This life I'm living is not for me." I avoided meeting people unless I really had to.

The people who were closest to me gave me the same message in different ways. A colleague put his hands in the posture of Dhyana meditation and said, "This is what you need." He didn't say anything more, but that sight completely shocked me - it seemed to cause an explosion inside. Another day my girlfriend

told me, "Yoga might be good for you." Finally my sister said, "There's a yoga course in town, we can go together." I agreed, not because I was much interested in better health - I was searching for alternatives.

One day another friend told me, "Someone is coming to town who teaches meditation. He will teach some kind of sound that you have to repeat." When she said the word "sound" I felt another sudden, strong response, as if I was remembering something.

On the first day of the course, I almost didn't enter because we arrived late. But my sister gently insisted. When I saw the bearded teacher, Amal, and his peaceful eyes, I suddenly felt, "Maybe there is something for me in this life after all."

I realized that Ananda Marga was something that I very much wanted, so I took initiation in March 1983 at age 22. Someone translated for me during initiation because my English was poor. I felt so high while the process was taught to me. It was very clear, but five minutes later I couldn't remember my mantra, my chakra, the process, anything. Confused, I went back to my acarya and asked him to explain it again. He smiled and agreed, and we went through it again.

Over the next eight months I felt myself pulled in different directions. I was strongly attracted to Ananda Marga and felt it was carrying me to a beautiful world. I very much liked my acarya and wanted to be like him, but I was so different I thought that would be impossible. At the same time, I was also very connected with my mother, sister and friends, and sometimes I worried that Ananda Marga would cause me to leave them. But my attraction to Ananda Marga was mutual: the organization invited me to come regularly, and I wanted to go there more and more.

In November I attended my first retreat. It was in a beautiful monastery, but there was no heating, and it was quite cold. My acarya explained that after lunch we should silently go into nature and feel our connection with it - he called this practice of silence "maonabrata". Though I was born in the mountains of northeast Italy and had spent a lot of time in nature, this time I felt that the woods were alive, and I interacted with everything very intensely. It was very deep and beautiful.

At that retreat, my acarya told me he would give me a Sanskrit name. I was not so interested until he said the word "Santos'a." Again I was shocked. I felt as if I was that person, that I was rediscovering my true self, returning to something I had known long ago.

While driving home from the retreat, we stopped at a restaurant; when we came out, our car was gone, stolen. It was a big clash. Later I realized this was only the beginning of the Path of Bliss, a Tantric way to remove all limitations and attachments.

During those first months, my meditation was not regular, but sometimes I had powerful experiences. One day I meditated for only 15 minutes, but suddenly I felt my mind open like the shutter of a camera. It was very beautiful and profound, and I felt it subtly expanded my perspective and consciousness. I was experiencing more and more difference between my beautiful inner life and the outer life I found myself in.

Soon afterwards, I visited the Jagrti and asked the LFT there about meditation and why these things were happening. He answered that meditation is like eating ice cream with your mind. It sounded funny, but later I felt it was true.

## Very, Very Close

Sharada / Switzerland

In 1983, Baba traveled throughout India holding DMC every week in different cities. I was pregnant at that time, but with other overseas Margiis I traveled with Him for two and a half months. It was simply an incredible time.

I tried to be very careful with food to avoid getting sick, especially because I was in my fourth month of pregnancy. But at Howrah Station on the way from Calcutta to Deoghar, I ate a small piece of bread that was sold in an open plastic bag. Soon I got diarrhea and started to vomit. This continued for the whole journey. Of course the toilets on the Indian trains are most uncomfortable.

In Deoghar they put up a tent for all the overseas sisters to stay - we were about 30. I felt heart pain and was very weak because of the vomiting and diarrhea, so I lay down immediately.

After sleeping for a while I woke up - and saw that everybody had left for the night DMC. This was terrible; I felt an almost unbearable pain. I felt that Baba didn't want to have me with Him; otherwise He would have woken me up. The feeling of sadness and disappointment was excruciating. My Baba didn't want me with Him.

To escape this awful feeling, I lay down again and went back to sleep. Then I dreamt that I was with Baba and a few others in His room. I was very, very close to Baba, who appeared as my most loving Father and dearest friend. I started to serve Him and feed Him as I had seen Dada Ramananda, His Personal Assistant, do. Baba graciously allowed me to be very close.

When I awoke, I realized that He wanted me to be with Him. It was the most fantastic dream I ever had in my life. It gave me even more bliss and spiritual understanding than I probably could have gotten from attending the DMC program. During the following days I was in absolute bliss.

# The One Who Took the Promise

Tilakapash / Finland

When I was about 12 years old, my favourite activity during the summer was boating. Although the farm I was born on required lots of work, there was always time for leisure too. My father was rather strict that I had to be back from my boating trips by dinner. The name of the river passing by our home is called Holy River in Finnish. It was holy at least to me. So much that the occasional fish I was able to catch were quickly released back to the river.

On one of those leisurely afternoon boat trips down the river, I noticed that the current at the rapids had become quite strong. 'As long as I am back by dinner it is fine,' I thought; but surprisingly the stream took me down the rapids. But there is no other way. I have to get the boat through the rapids and pretty soon, as dinnertime is approaching, I thought. Alas, again the river took me down. I was getting worried but I thought: 'I am not going to give up, never!' But for such a young boater it does not take long to get tired and soon I was exhausted, still not wanting to even think about giving up. After a few more frustrating rounds I just collapsed lying down and letting the stream take me further down. In that moment, something snapped in me. I had been a fanatic atheist since I was an eight-year-old schoolboy. The way that God was explained in my religious classes had no place in my worldview. But in that moment I turned my eyes upwards or rather inwards for the first time in my life. 'If You are there, let's make a deal,' I implored. 'You help me out of this clumsy situation and I will promise You something, no I will give you something. I will give my life to You.' Those were the thoughts of a 12 year-old child.

Strangely, strength enough was provided so that I could easily negotiate those rapids. And glad was I! 'I made it! I made it.' And I forgot the promise I had given so solemnly just a few moments ago.

It was exactly ten years after that incident when I got initiated. The childhood deal with God was as good as if it had never happened. Just a momentary lapse of sanity and I had returned to my own convenient worldview of atheistic nihilism. I was happy to join Ananda Marga, and from the very beginning I

attended every Dharma Cakra without fail and fasted four times a month. I did not reject the philosophical part of Ananda Marga, but I was not yet ready for it. Some further preparation was needed.

The first Ananda Marga retreat I attended was in Stockholm, Sweden. Kiirtan had not been very attractive to me until then but somehow I found the whole atmosphere pleasing to my senses. I am always eager to experiment with something new; maybe the two dasas who were present created such melodious and vibrant kiirtan tunes that soon I was fired up and dancing like it would be my last day. I felt a powerful energy surge through me and was attracted towards the centre. It was difficult to let go as part of me could just join with the blissful vibration, but another part of me felt a bit foolish.

During the meditation I do not remember doing any shuddhis. Straightaway I was pulled into the world of bliss devoid of my being. With my mental eyes I could see a compelling force in the form of a hand. This hand is approaching me, closer and closer. The intensity of the force is increasing as the hand gets closer. There is a demand from the hand. 'What could it want or need, such a powerful and attractive hand? Maybe I could give it a massage.' I was trying to massage it mentally. No, it did not want massage. The demand increased further as the hand approached closer, now touching almost my heart. Then I realized that only one thing can satisfy this hand and that is my heart. It was the only thing I could not give. I was scared and bewildered. I protested, 'Not yet, I am not ready yet. I am still a student, so young. I still have so many things, colours, forms that I haven't tasted, seen or experienced. But the hand was unrelenting, almost forbearing as it inched closer. I could feel that the petty excuses I had provided could not satisfy the hand. But I kept my heart closed and the hand finally withdrew.

After the meditation, I was dazed, not able to make any sense out of what had just occurred to me. Finally I asked Dada Pramanandajii for a consultation. He just grinned his mysterious smile saying that it was Baba's hand and Baba had come to take me. I was not ready to believe Dada's answer, so then he just told me to continue further and deeper and find out by myself who is the one who took the promise of this hand. 'You could go to India and meet Baba physically. Maybe He could give you some

kind of indication regarding this.'

In December, 1983 I went to India with a sizable group of Nordic Margiis. Around 80 overseas Margiis and hundreds of Indian devotees surrounded Baba's quarters in Ananda Nagar. We had witnessed how Baba's temper had flared as He refused to come down from the second floor until a railing was constructed to the staircase. I could not expect India to be that cold and was just had a T-shirt. By that time I had whole-heartedly accepted the philosophical part of Ananda Marga, but the role of a Guru was still blank. Baba had just started composing Prabhat Sangiita a year earlier. I remember Dada Ramananda commanding us in a fatherly fashion to sing more and more Prabhat Sangiita. It seemed that we spent most of our time just hanging around at Baba's house, myself freezing and trying to keep warm. It was all new and exotic to me.

I was there with a specific mission. 'Baba, was it You who came to me during that kiirtan? Are You my Guru? Give me some signal. Indicate somehow that it was You. I do not expect any miracles but give me something that I can be convinced. Otherwise I will just continue my search.' Such thoughts were in my mind as I was having His daily darshan.

It was one of those days when my mind went on analysing everything I was seeing and feeling. 'How can He ever indicate His identity to me He cannot even see me. He wears such thick eyeglasses. Yesterday a Filipino doctor had enumerated the various diseases of Baba including glaucoma. He always looks downwards and we haven't even met yet. Besides, I am rather short behind the sea of tall Westerners. He cannot see me.' There I was, trying to be on my tiptoes to have a better view of Baba. Occasionally Baba came out of His building and stopped in front of us giving a long namaskar greeting the whole crowd from right to left. As these appearances and greetings happened several times a day, my analytical mind made a protest. 'I have already given my namaskar to Baba for today.' Namaskar for me then was nothing more than a usual greeting like 'good morning', even when given by the Guru. As I had already given namaskar Baba, on His next appearance I decided not to return His namaskar as it did not make any sense to me. 'Similarly I am not going to tell my dad 'good morning' at every occasion I am going to see him during the day,' I thought. There comes Baba again. The pitch of

our singing increases a notch or two as we see Him approaching. He makes His usual stop at the corner of the garden giving His namaskar to everybody. I am just watching Him behind the masses without responding.

He stops right then and there, angrily pointing His stick in my direction. I am getting nervous and everything starts to happen in ultra-slow motion. Dada Ramananda rushes to me, shouting the translated words of Baba that everybody has to respond to His namaskar. I freeze as my mind refuses to function. It takes a long time for me to get it.

Baba had given His signal indicating in His own way that He was the one who took the promise a long time ago and came again to claim what was already His. There was no scope to misplace the dots. When a Tantric Guru comes, we can never be prepared enough. He comes in the right time known only to Him with a powerful force. When it happens again, I know how to respond to His call.



# Chapter Five

## 1984 - 1987: Personal Transformation

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*"And I could feel that moment also, that He somehow was not present. I got the impression that the body is a physical medium, but that actually He is not the physical body. It was as if His energy was only speaking through that physical body."*

*Dada Rudranath*

During the middle part of the 1980s, Baba created more occasions for His devotees to see Him. Those Margiis who wanted to work as local full time volunteers visited India and were given an examination by Baba. Others who held positions in the organization attended meetings conducted by Baba, while even more Margiis flocked to the semi-annual Dharma Maha Cakra, to hear Baba give spiritual discourses and to receive His blessings.

In this period Baba composed thousands of spiritual songs. His Prabhat Samgiita songs, started in 1982, reached a total of 5018 by 1990. During the 1980s He also introduced several significant aspects to the Ananda Marga philosophy, such as the concept of Microvita (minute living beings straddling the border of mind and matter), the philosophy of Neo-Humanism and He gave landmark lectures on the lives of Krishna and Shiva. Throughout this period He gave important discourses on linguistics which have been compiled into several volumes.

The stories in this chapter again tell the story of personal transformation that occurred each time a Margii met Baba, as well as expressing the flavor of this busy period in the history of Ananda Marga.

**"One must not forget this fact--that the Supreme Entity is with you, and loves you like anything. And the only goal of one's propensities must be Him. That is, all the propensities of the human mind should be goaded unto the Supreme Existence. Humanity must not be engaged in actional infighting or intellectual extravaganza. Man's origin, man's starting point, is in Divine love, and his culminating point, his terminating point, lies in Divine existence. It is the Supreme truth of this universe."**

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

8 May 1979, Fiesch, Switzerland, A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 12

# The Eternal Spring

Ananta / Italy

In Ananda Marga I have had 4 fathers: the first father is the Dada who gave me initiation: Dada Shubhatmananda. Then there was another father in the LFT Training Centre: Dada Dharmamitrananda; subsequently there was Dada Gatamohananda, and, reaching maturity with Dada Dhruvananda.

To be an LFT helped me a lot in maturing and in understanding the organization. Dada Dharmamitrananda, when I was hardly a year LFT, (in about 1984) asked me: "Ananta do you want to go in India and carry the quota of plants?"

In fact it was a period that Baba wanted the plants from all the departments of A.M. and I was part of the SDM department, thus carrying these plants to India for SDM. I was caught a bit unprepared and I replied: "Well truly Dada I do not feel like going because I am new in A.M., I am even not able to communicate properly in English." Then Dada answered: "According to you this is a valid reason? This would prevent you to go in India? Then you have not understood the sense of the guru mantra."

"Well I use the guru mantra."

Then he said: "Well you have perhaps not understood the deep sense of the guru mantra. When you repeat guru mantra then all the obstacles between you and the final goal are pulled down, they are powdered down and then the way is open for you to achieve your goal."

"Well I know it, but for me it is still too early; I would want to think about it."

Dada answered, "Well think about it, but remember that you will have to find the money for your ticket."

"Ah. Also the money I have to find!" I answered.

"Ah yes, because we do not have much money," he said.

I returned to my room, and I started to meditate. I was feeling not too good, but also, I felt an inner voice telling me: "Hey, go, why don't you try?" I started to think from whom I could ask money to go to India.

Finally I remembered a friend I had not seen for 15 years. "What should I do?" I thought. Well I can call him, I decided.

He was living in Bologna at the time because of a management course or something similar. I said, "Dear Giampiero, I am going to India." He said, "Well I am happy for you; finally you realize your desires."

"Well, yes. But I have a problem."

"Ah, tell me if I can help."

"Well, I am without money and need at least 500,000 IL."

"Ah gladly, look if you need it, I can send it tomorrow."

"Well if you can..." I said.

"Do not worry; there is no problem. Even if you do not give me the money back, it won't be a problem."

I had created so many doubts in my mind, and the solution was there, waiting for me.

Within a few days, the money arrived and within 2 more days, I was ready to leave for India. I was leaving alone and with a lot of people trying to tell me what to do and what not to do.

I arrived at Bombay and I felt as if a time machine had taken me 50 years back. The atmosphere, the smells, the scents, the sounds, etc.

Dada Dharmamitránanda had told to me to go to the AM Office in Bombay, and to stay there the night and the next day leave with the express train to Calcutta.

All went well until I reached the AM Office and I found no one. The office was closed. I felt desperate and depressed. I finally

knocked at the neighbour's door and found out that they had left a few days before (most probably to go to DMC at Calcutta).

I took my luggage, including 4 boxes of plants and a backpack and I tried to get a taxi, remembering the instructions of dada: always try to bargain the price down, because they will ask you a lot. I found a taxi for a price I thought was good and left. During the journey, the driver was telling me, "I am a very honest person; here I even have a newspaper article telling I gave money back to someone who lost it. So you can trust me!" I was wondering why he told me this. Then he said: "On the way to the railway station I will show you around the city." After the journey, we arrived at Victoria Station. I unloaded my baggage and at the time of the paying the agreed amount of 30 rupees he started to shout, "How is it possible? We agreed on 50 rupees and you are giving me only 30; what an absurdity." He was shouting in such a manner that in few seconds there were a lot of people surrounding us and some luggage porters began to try to get my luggage.

I felt I was like in a movie; on one side was me, suffering the situation and on the other side, the external witness of the situation, my conscience.

I started to feel sick physically until I shouted "Enough!!!"

In that moment, the situation changed dramatically. I put 30 rupees in his hands and left - the taxi driver, astonished, remained there.

Once at the platform, I realized the express train had left and I could only catch a slow train. I boarded it but I felt that was going to be a very difficult journey. In fact, immediately someone came to me and told me I could not go with that train and indicated I should go and speak with a policeman standing at the platform, which I did.

I spoke with him and soon I realized that he did not want me to board the train if I would not give him money.

He told me "If you don't pay you don't leave."

Exhausted, with little money with me and with no rupees at all,

I said, "Look I will give you 5 DM is it ok?"

Obviously, he agreed and after 2 hours, I left Bombay station towards Calcutta.

The train was something incredible; it was like a stable, was extremely slow, and a lot of people were begging. It was like a human cage, there was a lot of bad smell and I decided to fast that day. I took only some bananas and I was worried because I had to go to toilet and leave my luggage behind. There was a silent gentleman sitting near me and realizing my needs he offered to take care of my luggage while I was in the toilet. We proceeded together until Calcutta, he silently and me feeling great pressure. It was a great joy and relief at the Calcutta station when I saw the orange uniform of some Acaryas. One of them was Dada Shubhatmananda and I approached him and said, jumping with joy: "I did it! I am tired and that's all." I was happy.

Once at the Jagrti, I wanted to go and take a shower and Dada told me to go immediately to Baba's house, because Baba was going for field walk and I would have a chance to see Him.

I arrived at Baba's quarter gate and I heard in that precise moment a Prabhat Sangaata starting: "Tomake cai je e kante e Ananta." I felt that was a clear welcoming message, as my name is Ananta. I started crying and releasing a lot of emotions. I sat there for a while. Baba left and I was crying.

There were a lot of LFT's and the acaryas were all trying to instruct us how to behave in front of Baba and what to do in different circumstances. "Do you know Yama and Niyama? Do you wear pratik, do you carry shaoca manjusa?" etc.

Then the day of my PC arrived.

Somehow, I built within me an image of a very severe, strict and austere Baba. Yes, a father but a very strict one and within me I feared that I might lose control, in front of such a great personality.

My inner desire was that Baba would speak about Sardinia. I thought that with all the things Baba had to do, He was surely not going to find time to talk about Sardinia with me... and I left the matter.

The morning in which I got the PC, I went to where the Dada's were staying and I thought that to relax a bit I would do some asanas.

I started doing asanas and immediately I heard from afar, "Ananta! Ananta! Ananta!" A dada was calling me loudly: "Ananta, Baba is calling! Ananta, Baba is calling!" I thought "It is not possible, it is early and Baba normally starts the PC later." I felt very strongly that Baba had taken me by surprise. I was not ready! Baba had shifted my attention on something else, now I was in a completely different mood, I was in trance, and I was out of myself. Dada was pushing and pushing me and for this reason I had a sudden shift of consciousness I felt a very different person, not the Ananta I knew.

We arrived at Baba's quarter, which was full of Acaryas. It was marvelous. The stairs going up to Baba's room were full of Dada's and I arrived at the door of Baba's room. There I met Baba's Personal Assistant who stopped me and said, "What is your name? And you acarya's name?" He nodded after I replied and he literally threw me in to Baba's room.

I never felt such a feeling, such different dimensions, outside and inside Baba's room.

Strangely I found myself in Sastaunga Pranam contemplating on such peace and tranquility, something I never saw or experienced before that time.

I was feeling very good and I didn't feel any of the conflict I felt during the recent days since I came to India; I only felt tranquility and peace.

Baba's voice was calling me, "Come on, come on, come on." I started crawling towards him like a turtle and then stopped and He called me again until I finally reached to Him. I was really CLOSE to Him; He was seated on the sofa and I on the floor looking at Him with a great feeling of peace. I was not afraid; I was actually feeling so good.

Baba asked, "What's your name?"

"Ananta, Baba"

"Who is your Acarya?"

"Dada Shubhatmananda, Baba"

Strangely I was able to speak in a very fluid and clear English that surprised me a lot.

He replied "Ah very good, very good."

"Where are you from?"

"I am from Italy."

"No no, no."

"Where are you from?"

"I am from Italy."

"No, no, no," Baba continued a few times, telling me "no,no,no" that I was NOT from Italy.

After awhile I then said, "I am from Sardinia Baba."

"Ahh, from Sardinia. Ah well, well. But do you know the history of Sardinia?"

"Well some," I said with a growing sense of deep satisfaction. Baba was fulfilling my heart's desire to know more about Sardinia.

"Do you know that Sardinian civilization developed on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea from a mixture of races: the Maltese, the Greek and the North African races?" Again I felt a surge of emotions; Baba was fulfilling my desires and I started crying and I grabbed His feet while He continued with His "history lesson."

"Do you know what was the food of that time?"

"I think Pasta Baba" (:)

"No, no," Baba said. "The food of that time was rice and vegetables."



"Oh I did not know it Baba," I said like a son would say to his dear father.

I was completely ecstatic; there was no more distance between Baba and me. He continued talking.

"Look, in the past you did some actions, and you should not have done those actions," (referring to specific events) and the images of those actions scrolled through my mind.

"Look, it is not good for an Ananda Margii to do such things. An Ananda Margii should be an example; why did you do those actions?"

I started crying and Baba continued.

"For those actions you did I will have to punish you," Baba said but I was not at all afraid.

"Get ready now," He told me and slowly He took His stick and He lifted it up.

I was hearing the sound of the stick moving in the air then I knelt down to get the blow but Baba said, "Stand up with your back straight." He turned and turned the stick in the air and ..... I felt...

It was like a flower that blossomed. I grabbed His feet while He continued.

"You are a good boy and surely from now on you will be a new person and you will be an example for others. You will also do Great things."

I closed my eyes and kept holding His feet, I don't know for how long. The notion of time did not apply there; I was with Baba, only that was important. I kept holding Him and He kept His eyes closed and His hands in meditation posture and at a certain point He said: "Now is time for you to go." He did not add anything.

I left hold of His feet, and trying to maintain Sastaunga Pranam I made some steps backwards but I was doing it very reluctantly.

His presence was so strong inside me I realized I was not able to leave. It was as if someone wanted to take away from you what you loved most.

He was there still with His eyes closed and I remained there a bit more, contemplating Him. He did not say anything. Then I said: "Baba I want to remain with you here, I don't want to leave," and He replied after a short pause: "I know that, I know very well but you should remember that wherever you will be I will be always at your side," and I collapsed. I never experienced Samadhi, but if "that" could have been called so then I went into Samadhi because what Baba said was exactly the reply I wanted from Him.

I understood that now was the time to leave; I want back until I reached the door, always facing Him, opened the door and left.

I was a different person. I was no more on this planet; my mind was on other levels, out of time, out of the ordinary dimension. It was as if I was walking on clouds.

I remained in that state of mind for about a week and I was not able to reconnect with the earthly life. People were asking: "How did it go?" I looked far, with the mind without waves, like a waveless ocean, without thoughts, with a feeling of inner bliss, beauty and purity. The only thing that I could say was, "Very good, very good."

I remained by myself for quite some time and that state of mind slowly got affected by the external world and got crudified. Then I left for Germany.

Slowly in the daily life, I felt that the force of gravity was pulling me towards the earth and away from the "sky."

It had been an extraordinary experience; unfortunately, even if you have been with Parama Purusa, despite that, when the mind returns to the material world, you forget. It is incredible; it is absurd.

What had I learned? I learned all I need to know, I would like to say now that He is the anchor of life, and He is that Eternal Spring from where you can at any moment draw.

# Looking At the Very Core of My Life

Ac. Shantashubbhananda Avt. (Part 2)

At the jagrti, I told the LFT that I needed a break, and asked if he had any suggestion. He encouraged me to go to Vidya Sagar LFT Training Center in Timmern, Germany, to rest and think about everything.

I didn't want to quit my job, so I asked my boss for 15 days leave. We didn't get along very well, but when I told her that I wanted to go to a yoga center, she suddenly became very sympathetic. She said it would be a very beautiful experience and encouraged me to go.

I went to Timmern with a backpack and a pack of cigarettes. I didn't want to stop smoking because I had no cigarettes - I wanted to quit voluntarily with a pack that I chose not to smoke. However, the moment I stepped inside it was like stepping into a bubble - there I never thought about smoking or other problems. Even though I'd been in the army, I found the discipline very strict. Still I adjusted, even better than the other eight brothers.

When the training finished, I came back to Italy. I quit my job, left my hometown and drove my car to Milan. I moved into the SDM Sectorial Office there and started to work as an LFT. The moment I arrived, a very positive and inspiring phase of my life began. I did a lot of Kiirtan, learned many Prabhat Samgiita songs, and my sadhana was excellent. In the materialistic city of Milan, I felt like I was in heaven. I was so happy that I didn't even want to go outside. I enjoyed being in the jagrti and taking care of visitors.

In Milan I had my first dream with Baba. He was in a forest, seated at a small table. It seemed like a scene from Robin Hood. Many people approached Him from both sides. They asked questions, He replied, and then they'd leave. I came close, sat in front of Him with my elbows on the table and watched Him closely. But instead of paying attention to me, He only spoke with the people coming from both sides. From this dream I realized that the only way to get His attention was to do something for His Mission.

At that time, Baba was giving Personal Contact to LFTs, so I was asked to go. I reached India in May, midsummer. When they opened the door of the airplane, it felt like an oven outside. Nevertheless, my first thought was, "My God, I've come home." After a long and difficult journey, I finally reached Calcutta, and stayed in the Central Office in Tiljala. Every day I went to Baba's quarters in Lake Gardens to wait for PC. We sang Prabhat Samgiit when Baba went out and returned from His two daily field walks. I was very fond of those songs and already knew many of them.

I experienced many physical discomforts, bad food, difficulties and clashes. Most of the Central workers made me tense - they acted like my bosses, very high and distant because I was new and inexperienced. I felt sad not to have a closer, family relationship with any of them.

At the same time, whenever I saw Baba, all my worries and clash disappeared. I only thought of how to get closer, to see Him better, to get His attention. Each time when He came out, about 30 of us were waiting outside; when He gave Namaskar, I felt that He gave it to me alone.

After several days my turn finally came. Many dasas were asking if I remembered the 16 points, Yama and Niyama, if I was wearing lungota, if I had a shaoca mainjusa water bottle, etc. But I was very excited and not worried at all. Just before me, another LFT from Milan got PC. He was like a role model for me, very strong. But when he came out, he seemed to be crying internally; either he didn't want to or couldn't talk at all. He was clearly in a state of mind that I had never seen him in. Then I started to worry, because I was not as strong as him.

When it was my turn, one dada opened the door, pushed me inside and closed it. I fell on the floor and did Sastaung Pranam. Because I was so far forwards, my hands went under Baba's cot. Baba sweetly said, "Go back a little bit." Then He started to ask the standard questions: name, designation, etc., and I replied to each one. Again Baba asked, "What is your name?" I again said, "Santos'a, Baba." Baba voice became very deep as He very slowly said, "Oh, Santooooos'a..." He appeared and sounded as if He was looking at the very core of my life and very deeply into my past.

Then Baba said, "In your past, you did not maintain the proper

\_\_\_." It was a terrible shock to hear Him say this. It wasn't a serious crime or sin that I'd done, but it was bad for a spiritualist. (I will not mention the nature of my mistake.) Immediately I experienced two feelings: very deep regret that I had done it, and profound love for Baba. Even though He pointed out this dreadful mistake, He said it while conveying so much love.

Baba said slowly and very clearly, "Of course I'm going to forgive you, because you're the son of Baba. But do you know why you came to Ananda Marga?" I said no. He said, "You came to Ananda Marga because at a certain time in your mind a thought arose, and this thought was to do service to the suffering humanity. Not only in a small place, but wherever there is need."

This message confirmed what I felt, that I wanted to serve humanity. His words "not only in a small place", made it clear that I should leave my home and family and become a Wholetimer to work for His Mission wherever I was needed.

Baba asked, "Should I give you punishment for what you did?" I said, "Of course, Baba." He said, "You see I have this stick and I will give you punishment. Now you choose whether I should beat you 60, 70 or 80 times. And whether on one side or on both sides." I replied, "Baba, it's the same, it's up to You." Baba emphasized, "No, it's not the same. If I give everything on one side, it will be very painful. If I give it on both sides, you can bear it more easily."

Later I realized that in our life we have to undergo much struggle and suffering for the Mission. Baba will always give it so that we can bear it, distributing it in such a way that we can handle it. He will never let it cross the limit so that we collapse.

Following Baba's loving advice, I answered, "80, half on one side and half the other." I took off my shirt and raised my arms. Baba lifted the stick very high; I closed my eyes waiting for the strike. His arm came down very quickly, but I only felt a very mild touch on one side, at my ribs.

Then Baba started to ask me about languages. "Do you know Sicilian language?" I said no. "Sardinian?" No. He said, "Yes, they're very different languages." He then explained that Italian comes from Latin, which has two branches, Oriental and

Occidental. He said French and Italian came from the Oriental, and Spanish and Portuguese from the Occidental. Then He again asked whether I know Sicilian and Sardinian. This time I wanted to be more clever, so I said, "No, Baba, because they're very different languages." He became serious and said, "I told you that they're different languages!" He then said some words in Sardinian and German and demonstrated with his voice and hands how their intonation were different.

Then Baba said, "Come close to me." He embraced me with my head on His lap. He recited something which I hoped was a blessing. I was completely overwhelmed by His intensity. He added that I must follow the 16 Points, Yama and Niyama, and that I had to become an ideal person. Finally He said the time had come to leave. I said, "I want to promise to become an ideal person, Baba. I want to be an ideal person." He seemed very happy to hear this.

Then I said, "Baba, the Margiis from Treviso asked me to give You their Namaskar and tell You that they love You very much." He smiled and said, "Of course I know that they love me very much."

Slowly I left the room. Although I did not fully realize then what had happened, by His grace, the intensity of the love I was feeling for Him and the desire to please Him were growing stronger.

The moment I went out, the sense of regret at what I'd done started to dominate my mind. For one and a half years it grew until I finally said, "I have to return to India, because I can't endure this anymore. But first I should do some good work for Baba, so I can get closer to Him." I decided to organize many conferences for the acaryas in different places. They all went well, with 100 to 150 people attending each one.

I went to India and attended LFT reporting. There were three phases of this meeting. First Baba sat with all the Margiis and He was very sweet - I thought He must be in a very good mood and will surely help solve my problem. Then the general Margiis were asked to leave the hall, and Baba became more serious with the Bhukti Pradhans and LFTs who remained. When the BPs finally left and there were only LFTs, He became still more serious and started giving punishment.

LFTs were called one by one, and all were getting punished by being ordered to hold different yoga postures. I thought, "I hope someone else goes if He asks for Italy." When He called for someone from Roma Region, another LFT pushed past me and did Sastaung Pranam. Baba suddenly turned and spoke to the General Secretary for at least a minute. Then Dada GS told the LFT to go back again. I thought, "Is this a message for me?" So I did Pranam and when I rose, Baba looked straight at me. Dada GS asked for my name and posting. I replied that I was SDM Circle Organizer, Area South, which included Italy, Switzerland and Austria. Dada wasn't satisfied and asked which region. I insisted I'm not working in only one region. Baba finally turned to GS and rebuked him, saying, "He doesn't have a regional posting, he has a circle organiser posting!"

Instead of asking about my work done, Baba asked me philosophical questions. "What is the difference between otah and protah yoga?" I replied that otah refers to Purus'ottama's personal relationship with every entity while protah is His association with the Cosmic Mind and the entire universe. Baba said, "Yes, quite correct."

A few more, then a tough one: "What is the difference between Raganuga Sadhana and Ragatmika Sadhana?" I hadn't even heard about them, but I didn't want to disappoint Him. Philosophically it is said, "Originally I was one with the universe, but now I'm not, and I don't remember what happened before." Thinking thus, I said, "I don't remember, Baba." He smiled and said, "Very smart!" (Later I learned that Raganuga Sadhana is when one meditates because it gives one bliss, while Ragatmika Sadhana is when one meditates with a strong desire to be established in Parama Brahma and direct all one's psychic thoughts and feelings toward Him because it gives bliss to Parama Purusa.)

I was very happy responding to Baba's questions, and when He finally smiled, I forgot my pain.

Baba asked GS, "Should we give him punishment? He's a very little boy." I said, "Yes, I want punishment." Baba said, "You're a very little boy, I don't want to give you punishment." I said, "Yes, You must." He said, "No, I won't punish you. But we can ask your friends behind you, the other LFTs."

Suddenly I remembered a traumatic incident from my childhood. When I was 6 years old, one child had said, "You cannot stay with us, you have to leave." I felt then that everyone in the world was bad and I decided I wouldn't do anything for them. I realized that I'd never really forgotten this resentment and promise not to forgive people for what they did. Baba put His finger on it; it wasn't just a childish thought, but a real promise that I'd taken.

I turned around and looked at all the LFTs. Together they said, "No, Baba, we should not give him punishment." The sound of their voices wiped away this bad memory as well as the negative promise I had made as a child. Baba listened and then slowly said, "OK, you also go to the corner, but no punishment for you." While standing there, I was smiling in complete bliss.

Several times Dada GS motioned to me that I should raise my hands or assume some position for punishment. Suddenly Baba turned towards GS and shouted, "There is no punishment for him!" I felt then that I was completely cleared and forgiven of my past deeds, and that He would protect me from harm.



# Some More Stories

Ac. Daneshananda Avt.

## All the Languages

Once Baba was discussing all the ancient languages of India. He asked one Dada to say, "I am going home" in different languages. Then Baba drew parallels to ancient Sanskrit and Vedic times. He spoke the same sentence as it would have been pronounced one, two, three and then four thousand years ago. As He did this, Baba's voice took on a totally different ring - His voice sounded as if really did come from thousands of years ago - from historical times. Afterwards He said mysteriously with a deep, dramatic voice, "I don't know any languages, but I know the transformations and transmutations of all the languages of the world." When Baba said this, it was as if a chill ran down the spine of every one of us.

## Talk To Me!

One sister from Singapore had come to Lake Gardens to see Baba. She saw Him every day for several weeks. She had a deep desire that Baba should talk to her. But Baba always ignored her. Then, on the last day before leaving, as Baba passed by the driveway to enter His house in Lake Gardens, she shouted loudly to Baba, "Talk to me, Baba!"

Baba immediately stopped, walked up to her, and talked to her so sweetly for quite some time. It was just beautiful to see!

## Binding the Devotee

One sister from Greece stayed for two weeks in Calcutta, and saw Baba every single day. I could see that she was a very great devotee. When her last day came, she was going to give a garland to Baba. However, as she stood there with the garland, Baba just passed her by as if she was made of air! She became quite distraught - then she extended her stay for one more day, determined to offer the garland to Baba. The next day the same thing happened. This great devotee postponed her departure again, but Baba continued to ignore her for several days.

Finally, on the absolutely last day that she could stay (because she had to return to her children), this is what happened. Baba passed her by again. Then, she went down on her knees again and called Baba internally, without making any sound. So great now was both her pain and her devotion. This time, Baba walked a few steps past her; then He turned around, came back, and talked to her for several minutes, allowing her to garland Him. Then He again left - but AGAIN He came back! Two more times Baba left and came back. The deep devotion of this sister, who had traveled all the way from Greece to see her Lord, was making it impossible for Baba to leave.

Finally, Baba was able to free Himself from her bondage. When I witnessed this scene, for the first time I could understand what it means when people say that the devotee can bind the Lord, and that the Lord is obliged to come when the devotee calls Him.

# Just Crying and Crying

Vidyananda / Netherlands (part 3)

Some years after He had been in Europe, I had another chance to meet Baba. I went to India as a representative from the West area. Baba was again giving PC. Dada Shambhushivananda asked me to be ready to have PC. Although I already had PC in Europe, I wanted to have it again. I was nervous, thinking that the people preparing the PC would ask whether I had already had it. However despite my worries, when the call came for the PC, I went up to Baba's room without any major problem.

I entered the room. At first I thought I did well as I managed to sit properly this time. But I was also thinking, what will Baba say, will He not become extremely angry because I should not get this second opportunity for PC.

Then He said, "Come boy, and sit in front of me." And He asked my name. He said, "Well it's a very nice name. And, where are you from?"

"Oh from Holland, Baba."

"Oh Holland." Then He asked, "Holland, or The Netherlands?"

I said, "The Netherlands, Baba." Then I told Baba that actually the Dutch people would call the country The Netherlands, while people from abroad always talk about Holland.

And Baba said, "Yes, it is correct."

Then He said something about the language also. He said that the Dutch language is most related to the Scandinavian languages. While most Dutch people think that English or German would be more closely related, He said definitely that the Scandinavian languages are more closely linked with Dutch. It was the most beautiful experience in my life, this moment with Baba, because He was extremely sweet and He asked me so many things. And then, at a certain point, He asked, "My little boy, do you think that Parama Purusa hates you or that Parama Purusa loves you?"

In that moment I just thought about the years ago when I had been with Baba in Europe, and I just could only cry. I was so moved that I just let myself fall over, and somehow my head came on His knees and then on His feet. On His feet I was just crying and crying and crying and He was stroking my head. It was one of the most blissful experiences in my life as a Margii.

## Food and Devotion

Suman / Italy

In January 1985, right after DMC, Baba's benevolence manifested in one of His amazing liilas, when together with three other Italian sisters I had the grace to cook for Him.

The Berlin Sector room in the Didi's building in Tiljala, Calcutta was always full of sisters coming from different countries. A small, bare room, there was hardly space to turn over at night or to sit on the floor in the daytime. The room overflowed with joyful devotion and clash, while Baba's grace always showered on us.

Usually Italian sisters were greater in number, expressing their love and devotion for Baba by running madly after Him and pushing hard to be in the front during darshan, when He was walking in the garden, or when He was going out in the car for His field walk. We also chattered the most, to the great disappointment of the sisters from Norway or Germany, who always tried to shut us up at night putting an end to our Baba stories. But our thirst was unquenchable, and every night the stories continued, whispered under the mosquito nets.

In Tiljala He was always very close to us. Even late at night we could see Him, having the bliss of His darshan before returning to our quarters. In the dark we could see the lights of His house in the distance, feeling His physical presence so closely.

For a long time I had the desire to cook some Italian dishes for Baba. When I asked Didi Ananda Sharada, she told me that for foreign sisters it was very difficult, and she did not seem ready to help. But her discouraging words only increased my desire and determination. Then I decided to ask Didi Ananda Karuna, who was taking care of Baba's food and the garden. She was always very busy, running from the Didi's building to Baba's quarters, but in spite of her severe look, I knew she was kind and gentle.

The night before I approached her I discovered that Shashii, Rukmini and Nandita, all Italian sisters, also shared my desire to cook for Baba. So when I asked Didi Ananda Karuna for permission, I asked on behalf of all of us. Fearful that Didi would

also say no, to my great surprise she said, "Yes, why not! You can cook for Baba tomorrow. But you have to bring the food ready to eat no later than a quarter to two, because at two o'clock Baba takes His lunch."

Those words filled us with joy. We never imagined the great liila that Baba had planned, and how many adventures we would have to face in the next 24 hours, testing our faith and determination.

In the afternoon we decided the different dishes we wanted to cook, making a list of all the ingredients. We learned that to cook for Baba we had to use pots, dishes and utensils that are only used to cook for Him. The didi's told us there is a set of these carefully hidden somewhere, but nobody seemed to know where they were.

Didi Ananda Prajina came to our rescue, promising that the next morning she would bring all these. The next crucial thing was a small kerosene stove that we did not have, so we started asking in different rooms, trying to borrow one from the didi's and sisters, with no success. Finally Didi Ananda Prajina also promised to give us a stove.

At that point we needed to find a quiet place to cook for Baba. Our overcrowded room would not work, nor the kitchen downstairs which was always full of people running in and out. We looked everywhere in the building. Finally the didi's decided that we could use a small room, but we could not see it until the next morning because they could not find the key.

Another difficulty was to adjust our menu to the few ingredients available in the small market across the street. Due to CBI harassment and deportation of foreign Margiis, we could not go there ourselves, so we had to find an Indian sister to shop for us. We were only allowed to go to Baba's quarters by a footpath in the rear that ran along the pond and through the small village of bamboo huts. Every day our routine was the same: leave in the morning and come back late at night, tired but happy at spending the whole day close to Baba.

Finally Sunyadi, an Indian sister living with the didi's, promised to go to the market the next morning. By then it was already

night, and we could not do anything more. We were too excited to sleep much and got up very early, eagerly wanting to start our work.

We collected the special pots, dishes, utensils and the kerosene stove from Didi. Then full of hope and expectation we ran downstairs to see the room that we had started calling 'the holy kitchen'.

But when we opened the door and stepped inside, we were shocked. The small, dark room was dirty, full of dust and cobwebs, the floor was filthy, and the attached bathroom was even worse.

Dismayed, we looked at each other. What to do? Should we really cook for Baba in that situation?

'We realized we had no alternative. Digesting our clash, we accepted the Tantric challenge, and worked hard to clean the filthy room and bathroom as fast as we could.

Another dilemma arose: the room had no table or chair, so where to cook Baba's food? We ran upstairs, washed our sleeping mats, dried them in the hot sun, then lay them over the floor of our kitchen. Didi Ananda Prajina gave us some new black plastic garbage bags. We happily cut them open with scissors, cleaned them and spread them over the floor mats. This would be our working board, worthy to accommodate Baba's food.

Meanwhile Sunyadi had come back from the market. Unfortunately many of the ingredients were not available, so again we had to simplify our menu. We made ravioli stuffed with fresh-made cheese and spinach, seasoned with butter, tomato sauce and parmesan cheese; eggplant parmigiana; fresh stewed peas; and a simple sweet made of fruit without sugar, because Baba had diabetes and could not take sugar. We chose to prepare a larger quantity of food than Baba would eat, so that the remaining amount could be distributed as prasad to the Margiis.

Making the ravioli dough and everything else on the plastic garbage bags was a challenge worthy of the best chef. We also made the fresh cheese, called paneer in India, by curdling the

boiling milk with some lemon juice, then straining and squeezing it to get the proper consistency. We washed and cooked the spinach, peeled and smashed the tomatoes to make the sauce, fried the eggplant, etc. In that situation, everything took much more time than usual.

Then we realised that we needed a second kerosene stove. But to find the first one had been so difficult, imagine another! Rukmini ran upstairs to search. But as soon as she came back with the second stove, the first one ran out of kerosene. Another clash, another challenge! Off she went again in search of more.

Step by step Baba was testing us, creating all sorts of obstacles. He was giving us a great lesson in Tantric determination and adjustment, while immersing us in devotion and bliss at the same time.

The kiirtan that Rukmini sang when she came back kept our spirits up. The two stoves sped up our work, but they caused the temperature in that tiny room in hot Calcutta to soar to almost unbearable heights. We felt so much tension: "What if we don't make it in time? What if Baba doesn't like our food?" We were probably burning an equal amount of samskaras as the food we were cooking. But in spite of it all, in my heart I felt a deep calm, like the eye of a storm, the Tantric point beyond clash where everything is quiet, and the mind surrenders completely.

When we finally finished cooking it was already two o'clock. Exhausted and sticky, we quickly refreshed, put on our saris and ran through the village to Baba's quarters, holding the dishes and pots containing the precious results of our struggle.

We reached Baba's house at half past two. We knocked on the gate, asking the guard to call Didi Ananda Karuna. She appeared with a serious look, saying, "You're late!"

Those words froze us; pain grabbed our hearts, thinking that everything had been in vain. But seeing the dismay on our faces, she then smiled, saying, "But today Baba did not take food yet."

We had made it, and our hearts were bursting with joy.

Baba was more or less regular in eating, ringing the bell and His

food would be served. But that day He delayed, giving us time to finish cooking for Him and offering our food at His feet.

But then we worried: was the food good enough, or was it a disaster? Would Baba eat it or refuse it? And if He ate it, would He like it? While cooking for Baba we could not taste the food, so we proceeded blindly, without verifying the taste and salt.

Shashii paced up and down like a tiger in front of the gate, repeating like a mantra: "What if Baba doesn't like it? What if Baba doesn't eat it?"

But I felt calm inside. By now I was convinced that Baba had organized everything, delaying His schedule on purpose and not ringing the bell.

Finally, Didi came back to the gate with a broad smile on her face, followed by Baba's cook holding a bowl with the remaining food to give to everybody as prasad. She said that Baba liked it very much. Baba asked who had prepared it and Didi told Him our names.

We were floating in the seventh heaven in front of that gate. In pure bliss, jumping and singing His name, we ate mouthfuls of delicious prasad. Four devotees mad with love for Baba, surrounded by all the enthusiastic Margiis who had gathered around us.

The news that four Italian sisters had cooked for Baba spread like wildfire among overseas Margiis. After a few days some sisters from Nairobi Sector also got permission to cook for Baba, and the following week Italian Margiis from Bologna prepared pizza and other Italian specialities for Him.

Overcoming all the obstacles and clashes had required a tremendous effort that was both physical and mental. The food we cooked was prepared with all our love and devotion.



## A Garland for Baba

Suman / Italy (part 2)

By the Grace of the Lord I met Ananda Marga and was initiated in 1980. Then I was not aware of Baba's special blessing and of the profound mystic meaning of the process of initiation, but somehow by reading some books I had an idea of the concept of guru. With that idea in mind, and having no realization of Baba, I went to see Him in Calcutta for the first time in 1981.

It was surely His attraction that brought me in the overcrowded small building in Jodhpur Park at the time of dharma samiksa, but my approach was intellectual and not devotional, as I did not know yet where the tree of devotion grew.

The guru knows what the disciple needs, and Baba gave me the special treatment I really needed: ten days of tremendous clash and torture, physical, mental and spiritual. But that was only the beginning, and it took time and a lot of ups and downs before I completely surrendered to Him and jumped into the stream of His overwhelming love.

Again I went to see Him in 1984, 1985 and 1986. Slowly but steadily His call and attraction grew in my heart, until it became so strong that to be separate from Him was an unbearable pain. That's how, by His Grace and inspiration I left my job and somehow found the means to go to India as often as possible to get His darshan.

From August 1987 to October 1990 I went to see Baba seventeen times, and in spite of the fact that I could not get any opportunity to give report as Bhukti Pradhan or AMURTEL representative in front of Him, nor get Personal Contact in group with other sisters, all through those years Baba was showering His grace on me and gave me a collection of secret jewels of His divine love. This story is one of them.

It was, maybe, the end of August or beginning of September 1985 in Baba's house in Lake Gardens, Calcutta. At that time I was still working as a teacher in a public school in Italy and on a certain day I had to be back in Italy at work. In fact I was supposed to leave in a few days but my desire to stay longer with Baba was

very strong, so I decided to delay my departure and remain in Calcutta a few more days to enjoy His Grace and His presence. I had to send a telegram to Italy and that's how, while going to the Post Office, I discovered a special place, Lake Market, where, since then, I used to secretly go and buy flowers and fruits for Baba when I was in Calcutta. It was already getting dark in the late afternoon when, after sending the telegram, I passed by a man who was selling flowers in the street, and on top of one of his baskets I saw a very appealing, unusual garland, like I had never seen before. At once I had a strong desire to offer it to Baba.

It was a very small tiny cheap garland, but the fresh deep blue colour was so intense and appealing to me. A very special garland to give to Baba with all my love! I bought it, and carefully holding it in my hands as if it was a treasure, I took a rickshaw to go back to Baba's quarters. On the way my mind was playing and I was thinking: "This is very cheap garland, maybe is not worthy of being given to Baba!" And then again: "No, no! It is not the price that makes it valuable!" And I was happily going along, enjoying in my heart the thought of offering it to Baba.

On the way I met one dada and he came with me on the rickshaw towards Lake Gardens. Sitting by me he saw that I was holding the package with a garland in my hands, and he told me: "You know, it is quite late already and Baba is not taking garlands at night!"

He was a very senior Acarya so how could I not believe what he was telling?

My mind was going up and down while clash and frustration were jumping on me, but still deep in my heart I was determined to offer the blue garland to Baba. In this mental and emotional state I reached Baba's house and sat on the bench by the gate in the small garden in front of the house, waiting for something to happen.

Baba was supposed to come out a little later for His evening field walk, and I thought I maybe would get the chance to offer the garland to Him, giving it to His Personal Assistant according to the usual procedure, as it was generally not allowed to give a garland directly to Baba.

I was waiting and waiting, and thinking and feeling. So many thoughts, so many feelings, mostly of hope and deep love for Him. It was quite late in the evening, and very few people were scattered around, nobody except me apparently waiting for Him to come, not even the relaxed security guard, a young boy on guard duty by the gate. All of sudden I became totally alert. Didi Ananda Karuna had appeared coming out from Baba's quarters and, standing by the bench where I was sitting, was speaking very fast in Bengali to the boy by the gate. I could not understand what she was saying as I did not speak Bengali, but I repeatedly heard one word which I knew very well, "mala," which means "garland."

I became very excited and immediately I asked Didi what was happening. She told me, "You know, one boy from our children's home in Ananda Nagar has completed his studying and now graduated. He came to see Baba tonight and he has to offer a garland to Him, but he has none." My heart jumped and I asked to Didi, "Please take my garland and let the boy offer it to Baba!" She slightly moved her head to the sides in a typical Indian movement to nod and replied, "Okay, give it to me!"

I was mad with joy while opening the package to give her the garland, but when she saw it an unexpected crisis came on me as she exclaimed: "It's blue!" This, apparently, was the worst attribute for a garland, and she added, "Impossible! It will make Baba's shirt dirty!" She then ran out of the gate to buy a garland. What to say? What to do? In one second I passed from extreme joy to extreme sadness.

I felt completely lost and disheartened, but still in my heart I was catching Baba's feet, and in spite of my inner turmoil I quietly sat on the bench still waiting to see what would happen next. Five minutes later the gate opened and Didi was back, her hands were empty, and she roughly told me, "The garland man is gone, give me your garland!"

With all my love and gratitude for Baba I gave her the garland and my heart was melting in joy when ten minutes later Baba came out for His evening field walk and He was wearing my tiny blue garland around His neck.

# Personal Contact

Ac. Rudranath Brc.

I first came in contact with Ananda Marga in 1986 when I attended a lecture in San Remo, Italy. Soon after my initiation, my acarya asked if I wanted to work for the organization. I thought to myself, 'Now you are of a certain age, what you will do with your life? So if you don't decide now, maybe later it is very difficult. So let's have a look at what it is, and how it is.'

I told him, "Okay, I will come, but I have to see the head of the organization. Without that I will not stay a single minute."

He said, "You can see Him immediately."

And I said, "Okay, I will come."

I travelled from Italy to Mainz. There I met Dada Shumbhushivananda, and I saw also Baba's photo. I could not feel anything from it. He looked like a very ordinary person, nothing special, nor any beauty. So in that sense I could not feel anything, but I made plans to visit India shortly.

I went to India and when I saw Baba for the first time He was walking on the roof. I could not feel anything, I just saw an old man moving with a stick to and fro. But then I was copying the movement, how He was walking. I felt that He was quite a balanced person.

During that visit I also had the opportunity to get personal contact. In order to get PC, one had to pass many tests and answer many questions. I had never been interested in studying and memorising in school and so I also could not learn all the things for PC. I thought, if I have to pass these tests, I don't know if I can get personal contact. But then finally, after three or four days, I got the personal contact anyway.

I never have experienced such a strong vibration before in my life as when I entered Baba's room for PC. It was so dense, the subtle, spiritual vibration, that I felt one can cut it easily with a pair of scissors. So out of the respect which I had absorbed already from this charged atmosphere, immediately I did sastaung

pranam, that means one lies down completely flat on the ground in front of the guru.

Then He said, "Come, sit down." I did, and I looked at Baba's face. One eye was going up, one eye was down, maybe due to being poisoned in the prison or whatever. He asked me my name. At that time it was Rudreshvara. Then He kept repeating my name. It was like He could not find me, and then suddenly He found me.

Next He asked, "Who is your acarya?" I told Him my acarya's name. And I could feel that moment also, that He somehow was not present. I got the impression that the body is a physical medium, but that actually He is not the physical body. It was if His energy was only speaking through that physical body.

Then he told me, "You know you are a very good boy, I can see some black spots also." Then came some black spots also in my mind. He asked, "Shall I give you punishment?" Then I didn't want to disturb Him much in the flow, because I felt that He did not have much time, so I said to everything, "Yes, yes, yes," just to be quick and ready also.

He commanded, "Yes, Lift up your arms." I lifted up my arms. Then, He touched me with the stick. While He was touching me with the stick, I looked at Him. His whole body shook and jumped up. I got a shock, and I felt, what I have done. I felt immediately that He has absorbed, that He has taken some things which I had done in the past, which I had to work out, and so that I don't have to face so much trouble, He took it at that time. Then He asked me if I would do certain specific things. I said always "Yes, yes, yes." Then He gave me some blessing. "I will give you some strong character, and do you want to do some great work for Baba?" I said "Yes."

## "If I Send You Very Far Away, What Will You Say?"

Ac. Moksananda Avt.

I was born in Savona near Genoa, Italy. In 1980 I was studying Freudian psychology and philosophy, which were both very analytical. When I met my acarya, my mind started to also analyze in which kind of group, and from which kind of Guru I was taking initiation. Yet simultaneously a devotional feeling started to develop in me. The second day after initiation, I said to my friends, "I feel this is my path, this is my way." This inner conflict between the critical and devotional parts of my mind continued.

After one year my acarya advised me to go to India to know my Guru. A very strong attraction to Him was growing inside. I wanted to check and see if He really was the perfect Guru that I believed He was. I went in August 1981 with ten other Italian Margiis. At that time Baba was giving Dharma Samiksa, a type of purification process. Everything was incredible and exciting. The Ananda Marga Central Office in Jodhpur Park was small and very crowded. So many Margiis from around the world were squeezed in there, waiting to see Him.

I saw Baba for the first time walking in the yard, very slowly. My immediate feeling watching the expression of His face was that He had real knowledge, all knowledge. He said something in Bengali which was later translated for us: "Parama Purusa is everywhere, even in the smallest particles of the universe, the subatomic particles."

We waited for four hours sitting in a serpentine line on the hard floor, which was very painful for me. Acaryas repeatedly asked me what organizational work I was doing as a Margii in Milan. Their questions were frustrating, because whereas I was helping to distribute an Ananda Marga magazine and was organizing yoga classes and lectures for the acarya, they did not care about any of that. They only wanted to know how many schools I'd opened, how many jagrtis I'd purchased, etc.

Finally ten of us entered Baba's room. The person before was me was LFT Sumitram from Verona, who followed 16 Points very

strictly. Baba held a bamboo stick which He used to remove impurities. Yet He was very soft with Sumitram, only touching him lightly on both sides. That was a great relief for me!

I spoke little English then, so when my turn came, I couldn't understand everything that Baba said. He said something about the organizational work I had done, and then asked if I was satisfied with that. The dadas had instructed me to say no to that question, so like a parrot I said, "No, Baba." He said, "Do you want punishment for this?" I said, "Yes, Baba," again as I'd been told. "In that case, take off your shirt." Very slowly He raised His arm, and hit me very hard four times on my left side and four times on my right. I was shocked. Then He very gently said, "Come to me." I moved very close, only 5 or 10 centimeters from His face, so I could clearly see His eyes through the glasses. But I was analyzing again, instead of feeling.

Then I put my head on His shoulder. I got emotional, cried a little, and said, "Help me, my Baba." He said, "Mmmm." Very affectionately He squeezed each of my cheeks. Finally He prescribed asanas for me and then said, "Now you can dress up and go."

As I put on my shirt, I saw the eight red marks on my ribs where His stick had struck me. Only several months later, when looking back, did I realize how much inner strength He had given me and how many impurities He had removed with this special attention. Baba works very slowly, day by day, to change us within. I feel that He made my mind less analytical, and cleaned it in a subtle and deep way so that I could move faster on the path.

After that, my life started going straight to Him. I began working as an LFT, and in 1987 I had Personal Contact. I had a very strong desire to work as a Wholetimer for His Mission and decided that I would go to the Sweden Training Center after my PC. When I entered His room in Lake Gardens, Calcutta, He said, "Come near."

After asking my name and where I was from, Baba asked me my age. I was 32, but the rule was that every trainee should be less than 30. Baba's Personal Assistant had told me to say I was 29. I was torn. Should I lie to Baba or tell Him the truth against the

PA's directions? Finally I said, "I'm 32." He smiled and looked surprised and said, "Only?" Then He asked me other questions. Finally He said, "OK, now you can go."

But I had a request, so I said, "I'd like to be an acarya and work with You, near to You." He replied, "This is an organizational question; please go to Dada Vijayananda and ask him."

When I had finished my training two years later, I went back to India to take the final examination. Though PC is usually given only once in a lifetime, by keeping quiet about my earlier one, I had opportunity to get a second one. This time He asked me, "Do you speak French?" I answered, "I can understand a little bit." He asked, "Do you speak Sicilian? It is very different from Italian." I said, "Yes, but I can understand very little."

Then Baba said, "Ah, so you want to become an acarya. But if I will send you very far away, what will you say?" I replied, "I will work hard for the Mission."

"No, no, no, if I will send you to another planet, for example to Mars? Will you cry and say, Baba, Baba, Baba?" I answered, "No, Baba, because You will always be with Me." Baba smiled.

Again I wanted to ask a question. I bent my head down and touched it to His right foot. This time, instead of asking in an organizational way, I spoke devotionally. "I will become an acarya, but I want to serve You and physically be with You, Baba."

He did not reply. A few long seconds passed. Finally I looked up and was shocked to see Him appear very hard, like a rock statue. He gave His namaskar in a very serious mood. I immediately understood it had not been a proper question, so I did pranam and left immediately.

My first posting was in Japan. Then I understood what Baba had meant in my PC, because for me, Japan was like another planet! Later I went to Siberia, another very different place. There I understood that He was always with me. He still is.

One year later Baba physically departed. Then I understood why it had been impossible for me to stay with Him. I realized that I should just go ahead and try to please Him.



# Baba Did Everything

Amrta / Italy

I joined Ananda Marga in order to be a bit healthier.

As soon as I gave birth to my child and after various experiences I've had, I understood that it was not only mere material happiness that is important in life. Already before going in India, I had experiences that confirmed to me that my life is all part of His liila.

I had no money and a family with 4 children to take care of, so in order to procure money for the travel, I had to find a night job; so during the day I took care of my family and at night I earned money babysitting a child of 4 months.

The child (she) I had to take care of was not in a good health, she could not sleep or eat, she was very lean and fragile.

The first evening the mother showed me the clothing change and the food for the baby.

Now as soon as I took her in my arms and sang her kiirtan, almost magically the baby that had so much difficulty sleeping, fell asleep. Later around midnight, I was thinking that she would wake up as the mother said she would, but she continued to sleep. Later on, I gave the feeding-bottle to her and the child drank it all! From that day the child, when with me, always slept and ate. It was Baba's doing, for sure.

So after earning a little money I left for India.

I have to mention that my husband was contrary and skeptical about AM. He told me that I could go to India only if my 14 year old daughter also went, so she could witness (and report) all that would happen.

It was 1987, and at that time India was very warm and I was very sick. I could not move my body. The situation was quite serious and in this case, Baba showed His Grace. Due to some circumstances, there was nobody who could go and fetch a doctor for me. My daughter with her very basic knowledge of English,

found the determination to go with a taxi to find a doctor, and to bring him to me.

I cannot describe the feelings I felt the moment she arrived with the doctor after managing to take the taxi, alone, go in the city, find a doctor, explain the situation and manage to take him to me. Then also I felt very clearly that it was all a game of Baba. The physical situation though remained serious.

Later on, my daughter arrived running saying: "Quickly Baba wants us all there for darshan." I could not manage to stand up but nevertheless, my daughter and other persons insisted in helping me dress up in order to go to the pandal. Then something very incredible happened; as soon as I wore my sari, I felt completely transformed and unexpectedly I started saying: "Quickly we must go!" Unbelievably I was 100% well, I started running, only in order to see Baba. I even managed to jump a heap of stones in order to reach faster to the pandal.

As soon as I entered, as if by magic, a person stood up and offered me her place in front of the door. Finally Baba arrived. He had to pass close to the door where I was sitting and when He was just a few steps from me, He stopped and gave me Namaskar. Baba was dressed in white. When I first saw Him I felt I saw a "normal person" but when He gave me Namaskar I felt He belonged to me: He was me and I was Him. The feeling is much greater than the joy of giving birth to a child. He belongs to you, while in the case of the child it seems that one belongs to you but ... it is very different. Baba's thoughts were mine and my thoughts were His; I even felt we were one beyond thoughts.

Every time that I close my eyes, I see Him again giving me Namaskar. It is an indescribable emotion. A total Union. I feel I am His and that the Universe has no borders.

Then Baba walked up the stairs and left.

Two days before we left Baba gave another darshan: we arrived in the room. My daughter made her way and arrived in front of Baba. At the end of the darshan she returned to me and she said "Mother did you feel the earthquake?" Surprised I replied: "There hasn't been any earthquake," but she insisted, "Everything was shaking; the entire pavement and the walls!"

I don't know what Baba did but maybe the energy in Baba's presence was so strong that she had such a perception (even today as a grown up mother she clearly remembers what happened then).

The next day it was very hot, and we were singing Prabhat Samgiit and kiirtan, while we waited for Baba to come, with all the Dada's and Didi's in front of us. As soon as Baba arrived in the darshan hall my daughter said, "Baba arrived, do you feel this breeze?" She then said, "If Baba is really Baba, He must give one answer to me." We were not so close to Baba, and my daughter was beside me next to a plant. Small as she was she could not see Baba and in order to see him she stood on a vase (of a plant) and she shouted "Baba, Namaskar!" Baba stopped, and He gave Namaskar to her, a long namaskar that seemed not to end. He was looking straight at her and she was looking to Him. Then she said to me, "Mom, Baba's eyes are blue like a lake." She later recalled that in the moment she shouted "Baba, Namaskar" she felt a strong burning sensation in her stomach and she saw with her inner eyes a flash of past deeds that were not good, like a projection on a screen. When Baba replied to her Namaskar she felt a very pleasant feeling like that of fresh water pouring on her. Baba did everything.

Baba was Baba.

The people who have not been able to see Baba have had the same experiences in dream or meditation. For me the difficulty was to go beyond the physical body. Physically Baba was a man and that limited me; after that experience, my disease also disappeared and I felt my body was running towards Him.

I think you can see Him in many moments, similar to those that I have had. It was the most beautiful thing that can happen to a person, and I would like it to happen to all.

## "Should I Really Let Them Pass?"

Avtka Ananda Udaya Ac.

I have been practicing sadhana for more than 20 years. Baba gave me many chances to meet Him and be graced by His loving compassion, which is beyond imagination. In 1987 I finished my a'carya training in India where I stayed almost six months and had a special time with some Indian and non-Indian trainees. Then several of us had so-called examinations with Baba. I remember some studied very much for those. But I knew this was not about passing any ordinary type of examination and I sometimes sat on the roof in Tiljala and cried a lot out of spiritual longing. Luckily, He called me five times. In the end, I was with another Didi and we couldn't pass the examination although we correctly answered many of the questions He gave us. We even had to go with the central WWI to a room downstairs and it had to be reported later if we did the asanas properly. I remember not doing one particular asana perfectly. Later it was reported that we did as we were told and He asked, "Really?" Of course, He knows everything.

Then also He asked the other Didi who was with me, "Why do we say that women can get liberation in Ananda Marga?" Because she was nervous, she couldn't answer immediately. Baba helped her step by step to find the right answer and in the end, He said with an arms-extending gesture to Himself, "Hare Baba, I never had so much patience with anybody!" He asked mostly spiritual questions. To me He asked, "How do we strengthen Sahasra'ra Cakra?" I said it is through dhyana. Then He even asked one question from the Senior A'carya diary which we couldn't know at the time as we hadn't received it yet. At some stage, He scolded all the senior workers for not giving us proper training and everyone was running back and forth. It was such an interesting drama to be part of. One day He called us and was furious that we didn't come, as we expected to be called on the following day. In the end He said, "Should I really let them pass? Are they fit to go to the field?" I felt that tremendous love from Him as if He didn't want to see us leave Him.

Many years later when I had the chance to go back to training centre, I understood what He meant. He gives us such tremendous trials that we almost collapse. Then He gives us

everything to realize Him more and more. When I was in front of Him during that examination time I just said mentally, "I may not know the answer to all Your questions, but I just want to love You more and more and more." And He gives me the chance to do that, although He plays hide and seek and we have to cry and cry for Him! He wants to see every moment how much we long for Him, and then only He gives us everything.

# I Really Felt the Supreme Consciousness

Kamaleshvar / Italy

I joined Ananda Marga in 1987, and I was quite lucky, for after five months I was on my way to India to see the Guru, Baba. It was quite strange because I didn't really understand what I was doing, but my good friend was urging me to see Baba. I had come to Ananda Marga for yoga and relaxation, but in India, I encountered a tense situation. There was strong and sometimes violent opposition to Ananda Marga from the local communist government, so to reach Ananda Nagar we had to travel by bus in the night and hide in the forest in order to avoid the police. Fortunately, my friend was taking care of me and we arrived safely. On the night of DMC, I sat only 20 metres from Baba. We were waiting a long time and I was not used to sitting on the ground for so long, so I experienced discomfort and pain. When Baba entered the room, however, the pain disappeared, I didn't feel it anymore; my attention was drawn to him like a magnet. He gave a discourse on Microvita. As I was interested in science I found it great, but still I did not have the kind of feeling for Baba that I have now.

What changed my life was when Baba started to chant and when He opened His hands to give the mudra. I felt like there was a vacuum cleaner on my anahata cakra, which was drawing something out. No one had explained about this mudra to me and I saw people in front of me jumping and making sounds, and I too felt something. When He closed His hands, I felt it was a strange experience.

When I came out of the tent, I was another person. It was night and there were so many stars and I felt like I was in the cosmos and that my feet were not on the ground. I then had a stronger desire to do meditation. Before this experience I did it twice a day. Then I started to do it three times, four times and even five times a day.

When I came home to Italy I was not the same as when I left. When we started from Frankfurt to India, there had been many problems - the airline had overbooked and we were not able to get on the plane even though we had confirmed reservations. Instead we went to a hotel and stayed for two days (while our

baggage had been sent to India). We missed the flight and had much inconvenience but were awarded a free ticket by the airline as compensation. So when I came back I already had another ticket and decided to see Baba again. I prepared myself to have a closer relation with Baba. I started to learn English and read Baba's books and went to LFT training.

My second experience was personal and I had to overcome many obstacles to reach that point. I read the book of Milarepa and understood that a Tantric guru puts many tests before His disciples. My second time in India I was sick for ten days with much fever. In the middle of my illness, I was called for the LFT examination, and it was very crowded. Actually, I was almost ready to go home before getting PC and I had decided to go the Maha Kumbha Mela in another part of India. Dada Shambhushivananda came to me and said, "What are you doing?" Then I realized that it was all a test and I decided to stay.

In the night, after ten days of suffering, a dada came, asked what was wrong, and gave me homeopathic medicine. In the morning I was like another person, I felt great and the sun was shining in my face. Another dada said, "What happened? You look great," and I explained that I had been sick during my previous examination. I took the examination again and passed. I then waited a little bit longer and then finally had PC. When I entered the room I felt a strong vibration. My mind was so high, that I didn't know who I was. Baba asked, "What's your name?" and I had to come down to reply. Then Baba started to explain personal things about my past and what I had done. I had to give a promise, He touched my head and gave a Sanskrit blessing, and then I began to massage His feet.

After I left, I still felt His thumb on my ajina cakra where he pressed to give the blessing. For two or three months, I really felt the Supreme Consciousness.

# Baba's Birthday Present

Avtka Ananda Surabhii Ac.

Every time I tell or remember this little story it brings back sweet memories to me.

After I had just finished my Acarya training in Sweden I was waiting with a number of other new graduates in Tiljala for our final examination with Baba. As you might know, the rules for the new graduates were quite strict at that time. We were under all kinds of restrictions and not allowed to leave the building without permission. It was quite an intense experience to share a small room with about ten other sisters and to be under observation basically all day long. I believe now for our spiritual development it was very beneficial since there was really not much scope for individual extravaganza. The better you accept the given situation the more you feel everything is part of His cosmic flow and the happier you are. What we most enjoyed during this time was the opportunity to see Baba on His field walks twice daily. Thinking back now it was a truly amazing time.

Baba's birthday was approaching and I was thinking deeply what I could give Him as a present. I wanted to give Him something special, different from all the other things that people would give Him on this special day. Of course He would probably get lots of flowers and garlands and some people might give Him sweets. So, flowers and sweets were out of question. Another thing that made it a bit hard to think about a present was the fact that I had only a few rupees in my pocket and that I was not even allowed to go to the market.

So, one good day I decided to go out anyway to look for Baba's special birthday gift. Well, I had to say that I need to see a doctor and was then given permission to leave the building. In the market I had a good look but for awhile I couldn't find anything that satisfied my criteria. Then I found some nice gentlemen style handkerchiefs - I thought Baba might like one of those. It took me about half an hour to choose the nicest one. I got a white one with a border of stripes in different grey tones. It was really nice and I returned happily to Tiljala.

But then I thought it might be a bit dusty coming straight from



the market and that I should wash it. Since the handkerchief was going to be a present for Baba nobody should see it before I get the chance to give it to Him. Secretly I washed it using my shampoo, which had a mild, pleasant fragrance. Then I secretly dried and ironed it.

Since it was difficult to talk to Baba directly, on the day before Baba's birthday I went to Dada Keshavananda, His Personal Assistant. I asked Dada if he could please put my handkerchief in Baba's pocket in the morning of His birthday. Dada replied that Baba has a system for everything and on that day he would not change His handkerchief but that he could put it in His pocket the following Sunday. I was very satisfied with that and thanked Him.

We celebrated Baba's birthday and it was a wonderful day. I then did not think much about the handkerchief any more.

On Sundays Baba used to give darshan in front of many devotees. This was also happening on the Sunday following His birthday. Baba explained to us that He was going to give a Microvita demonstration about smell. Then He pulled His handkerchief out of His pocket and used it as a medium to demonstrate how He changed the smell of it. I almost couldn't believe it, Baba was using the handkerchief that I had given Him for His birthday and which I had carefully washed with my shampoo to give it a nice fragrance. Imagine how happy I was...

I feel Baba is a Master of acknowledging even our smallest efforts to please Him. He does things which we can't think, can't imagine and don't expect. This makes life vibrant and we learn to understand that things happen only according to His wish and His flow. If we try to make Him happy He returns the happiness to us manifold.

I also learnt one more thing: in our relationship with our Guru we don't need to care about anything; only He counts. We might have to break some external limitations or restrictions or go against the expected - as long as it doesn't hurt or harm anyone. The relationship with our Guru is a truly personal one and everybody has to decide for her/himself how to live our life as His devotee. It is an intimate story between Him and you.

## "We Have To Be Fast"

Ranjit Moepert / Germany

It happened in 1987 when I was an LFT posted as office secretary in the SDM Sectorial Office. Because SDM and especially the Vidyasagar Training Centre in Timmern, Germany had financial problems, Sourabha (another LFT) and me booked one place for selling in the Christmas market in Oslo, which is a very profitable place. We had been selling there the previous summer and Sourabha was happy that he was able to arrange this place for Christmas as well. I have to mention that Sourabha was a very speedy person and always used to say, "We have to be fast, we have very little time." That year Bábá gave much Personal Contact (PC) to LFTs and other Margiis. We had heard stories from many LFTs that they had to wait in India a long time (up to one month) and had to undergo a lot of struggle to get PC. Our turn to go and get PC was about middle of October, so we would have come back immediately for the Christmas selling.

We were already in the Frankfurt Prout office, one day before our departure for India, when we got a call from the Shraman in Vidyasagar. He said that because of some misunderstanding or some "quarrel," two other brothers from Italy went to India two days before for reporting and that we should go one month later. Of course we were very frustrated because now we could not do our Christmas selling and get money which we wanted to use for the training centre renovation. Finally, we surrendered and thought, "OK, if He wants us to be with Him and not do selling, then it is His wish and we should not be too clashed." So we left one month later in mid-November with the expectation of coming back maybe in the middle of December. As we arrived in Delhi around 1 am we saw there one travel agent where we could book our train for Calcutta which was leaving around 8 o'clock. We took this train and arrived Tuesday morning in Calcutta. There we showered and went immediately to Baba's quarters for reporting. We stayed there the whole day and Dadas told us to be ready also in the night because nobody knows when Bábá gives PC. Late in the night, we went back to Tiljala for sleep, but early in the morning somebody woke us up and said that Baba was going to give PC and that we should go immediately to Bábás Quarters. When we arrived some Dadas took us and gave us some instructions how to behave and what to say in the

naive belief that we would remember all that.

Afterwards Sourabha told me that when he entered Bábás room, He told him: "My little boy, we have to be fast, we have little time", and I laughed like anything because this is what Sourabha was always saying. After some sadhana we were thinking and deciding that we will go in the city and book our train back to Delhi. Surprisingly we got our train reservation for the very next day in the evening, which was quite unusual because normally the trains were rather full and you had to wait several days to get a seat. Afterwards we called our airline for arranging our flight back. Also there we were lucky, because we got two seats Saturday morning to Frankfurt. After we came back to Bábás quarter the Dada was very angry with us because after PC we should have stayed there to do meditation, but what to do - we had to be fast and had very little time. So we reached six days later on Saturday in Frankfurt airport and everybody was very surprised to see us again in such a short time. Some days later, we were in Oslo just in time to start our Christmas selling. We earned enough to make a new roof and insulation for the building. So you see, sometimes things go very slow and there are so many obstacles and clashes, but if He wants, everything can go also extremely fast and smoothly.

Main body of handwritten text, consisting of several paragraphs. The text is very faint and difficult to read.

# Chapter 6

## 1988- 1990: Last Meetings

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When I reached our point He halted, turned towards me and offered the most beautiful Namaskar so that an extraordinary spiritual wave of sweetest bliss poured through that wall and I got a tremendous feeling of fulfilment and of extraordinariness...

*"When He reached our point He halted, turned towards me and offered the most beautiful Namaskar so that an extraordinary spiritual wave of sweetest bliss poured through that wall and I got a tremendous feeling of fulfilment and of extraordinariness..."*

*Prabhakar*

Experiences with Baba in the late 1980s are told in Chapter Six. These accounts are particularly poignant as they tell of various devotees' last glimpses of Baba (up to October 21, 1990), even though no one would have imagined that soon Baba would physically leave the planet.

*"In the realm of devotion He is purely a personal Entity. He is mine, He is my Father, He is my closest relative. He is my bigger self. He is not a second entity; that is, the relationship is purely a personal one. There cannot be any love with an impersonal entity. One cannot be in love with an impersonal entity. Love requires a personal entity."*

*Baba: 11 May 1979 evening, Fiesch, Switzerland*

## A Dear Long Unseen Friend

Avtka. Ananda Cetana Ac.

When I worked in Baba's garden for a short time, I realized that the plants had suffered so much from being unwashed. I felt it was such a disgrace for the Lord's garden to be so dirty. So I set my own mission to clean the plants.

On my first attempt, the tap dripped a few drops only every 3 or 4 minutes. There was only a small rusty can to contain it and a filthy small rag for wiping. No sign of even a cloud in the sky. No hope for rain. Maybe the next day would be better.

Well, it was two more days, the same situation. But the following day, as my determination was slowly going on pause-but-watch mode, lo and behold it rained.

I was so overjoyed that I did not care about getting rained on in the process. Also not caring that I was scolded for not taking care not to get wet. I washed every plant in the garden. It looked better than I'd seen it during my recent visit.

It seems that Baba was pleased. He walked through his garden on field walk the following day which He hadn't done for a long time.

He came with the tall gardener who looked to me like a reincarnated vine. There was a new blossom that was higher than Baba's eye-level which the gardener reached up and pulled to Baba's eye-level as He walked slowly through. As Baba looked at the flower like it was His dear long unseen friend, everyone watching gave a collective sigh of admiration for the creator of Neo-humanism.

Some time later it was time for me to leave from Calcutta. Thus it was garland giving time.

I wanted to give a garland that was better than I ever saw with the ready-mades. So I'd sew one. Two attempts to buy weren't achieving desired results.

Once the flowers weren't what I wanted where I went. The second time the rickshaw driver took me around in a circle instead of taking me to the market. There was only the next early morning to do it in.

So the sewing started with much more difficulty than I had expected.

When people went to see Baba go on field walk my thread had just broken and I sat sweating to finish by the next chance I had to give it. The flowers kept falling apart and hanging wrong, etc. By the time He came back from field walk I was nearing the completion but I was still not finished. I had only one last chance before I had to catch my transportation to fly home. By that time I managed to be a bit pleased but still not early enough to get a first row viewing of Baba. As I carried what I thought was quite acceptable to Baba, someone said "Oh what happened to your garland?"

My feelings really sunk to rock bottom in a flash. The garland was just like me I thought: kind of socially unacceptable and untogether. Then I increasingly panicked to plead with Baba to accept me through that garland.

Baba was proceeding with a forward momentum up the stairs. Just in front of me, between Baba and I was a senior Didi. I thought this is my last breath if He doesn't accept.

Baba's position on the stairs was in exact alignment with mine. I frantically dumped my garland in the Didi's hands and said "Didi, Didi!"

He turned. He did accept! Because He did, my life proceeded.

# Cyclones and Thunderstorms

Rosemary / England

It was our first visit to see our Guru, Baba, in the late 80's and Sринi, Maya and I went with Dada Citkrnsnanandaji from Malaysia to Ananda Nagar, flying to Bombay and then by train to Calcutta and on to Ananda Nagar.

We were all hoping to meet Baba personally, and one of my preparations, on a physical level, was to keep one set of clean sentient clothing in a plastic zip bag for the occasion. It was a white top and coloured skirt.

We stayed at the school hostel, about fifteen minutes walk from the Pandal and Baba's house. One day Dada told us he was arranging to buy garlands so that we could garland Baba when he came out of his gate to go to the Pandal. We should get ready and I was told to wear a sari.

Although I had a sari in my luggage, being Western, I didn't like being told that I ought to wear Indian clothes. When I voiced my objections, Dada told me that Baba had expressed His liking for the sari and that I may not be able to present my garland if I didn't wear one. This created such a dilemma in my mind! Dada couldn't understand why I just didn't do whatever it took to see my Guru but I felt a principle was involved. If Baba wanted me to see Him, as long as my clothing was sentient and respectful, I felt that cultural issues were not important. I was reduced to tears at my own stubbornness.

I wore my prepared Western clothes and we went to the gate. A big crowd was there and Dada told us that we would not be able to garland Baba after all. It had not been approved. After waiting outside the gate for a long time, one of the Dada's came and told the crowd that Baba had already left for the Pandal and we should go there. Everybody rushed off, except a few of us. I was already emotionally drained with crying about my dilemma, and had given up hope of seeing Baba close-up that day.

After a few minutes, suddenly somebody exclaimed, "Baba's coming," and the few of us there moved closer to the gate. Baba was walking directly down the path to us. When He got really



close to the gate He looked at me directly and said quietly,

"I am not afraid of your cyclones and thunderstorms, and nothing can extinguish my lamp of love."

I don't know how many other people heard it but one brother who was only feet away came up to me and asked 'Sister, what did Baba say to you.' And I repeated it to him. He said, that I should write it down quickly while I remembered it correctly, as some of the things Baba said may be lost.

When the mind is in turmoil, it interprets things according to its own expectations. When Baba addressed me, I thought He was going to be angry that I had not worn a sari and I heard the word 'cyclones' as 'short skirts.' But this soon passed when I heard the second part of Baba's message and the word hurricanes made me realise that Baba was using the weather as an allegory for my behaviour.

One of my character traits (is/was) a quick and violent temper and with the first part of His message I felt He was telling me that He knew all about it, but as my Guru it didn't affect Him and He would always love me, as His own, no matter what - temper, clothing, stubbornness. I also felt He was telling me that I was right to adhere to my principle of what I thought was right.

The lesson I learnt was that my Guru knows what's best for my spiritual progress and to trust my own judgment and my own heart when making decisions.

# Varabhaya Mudra

Suman / Italy

To be in Baba's presence was always a special blessing. In front of Him, one's entire being vibrated with His spiritual energy. Being in front of Him was like diving into a cosmic ocean of pure mystic love.

Parama Purusa, God, was in front of our eyes. We could see Him, hear His voice and laughter, feel His strength. His impenetrable gaze and the power of each gesture drenched our hearts with His grace that showered on us like rain.

But there were some moments that were even more special, when Baba held His hands for a few seconds or longer in the special position that is called the Varabhaya Mudra. He usually did this after every DMC, and sometimes at other special occasions. I remember one afternoon in Ananda Nagar when, during some meetings with the acaryas, He gave three mudras, one after another, in only one hour. From downstairs we heard the ecstatic shouting of the acaryas, overwhelmed with bliss.

To express the thrill I felt when Baba gave the Varabhaya Mudra is very difficult. It is like trying to describe the sweetness of honey or the special taste of mangoes; without tasting them, one can never really know what they are like. Already when Baba was closing His eyes and His voice became grave and deep as He recited the mantras before giving the Mudra, the air seemed electrified and glittering. In our souls we were vibrating deeply in unison with Him. After the mudra, the mind remained in a sweet state of lightness and bliss, offered to us with a simple gesture of His hands.

In August 1988 I reached Calcutta carrying a heavy bag full of plants for Baba. When I reached the Didi's building in Tiljala, I had a very strong desire to see Him. So after taking a shower and putting on my sari, I immediately went to Dada's quarters. I wanted to hand over the plants to Dada Asiimananda, who was in charge of the garden. It was already afternoon, which meant that until Baba's evening walk, there would be no opportunity to see Him.

It was very hot and I was tired from the journey which had lasted more than twenty-four hours. The refreshment I felt from the shower quickly disappeared while dragging the heavy bag on the dusty path. When I reached there, I could not find Dada Asiimananda, so after leaving the plants in a safe place, I went to the back of the building and looked towards Baba's house.

I saw that there was much excitement in the air, and in front of the gate there was a crowd of devotees waiting for something to happen. It was not Sunday, when Baba gave His weekly darshans. I did not realise that it was Shravani Purnima, the anniversary of Baba's first initiation to the infamous criminal Kalicharan at Kali Ghat, Calcutta.

I hurried down to the gate, but was at the back of the crowd. I sadly thought, "Baba, this time I can't make it! With this crowd, I'll be lucky to even enter the hall and see You from the back. I have no chance to successfully run to the front and be close to You!"

Suddenly the gate opened, but not the main door, only the small door that allowed just one person at a time to pass through by stepping over and bending the head. At that very moment a miracle happened. A sudden whirling movement stirred the crowd, and suddenly I found myself just in front of the the small door. Pulled by an invisible hand, I was one of the first to enter the garden.

I ran as fast as I could through the courtyard and then upstairs to the Darshan Hall. My heart was beating in my throat, and I was one of the first sisters to enter. I sat just behind the front line of the Calcutta writers, the sisters and brothers who were responsible for noting down Baba's speech just in front of His seat. I sat no more than three meters from His dais.

Everything happened fast. After a very short time, Baba entered and took His seat in His graceful, agile way. I was so happy. Everything was wonderful and amazing.

Baba gave namaskar in His special way. He was offered garlands, and some beautiful Prabhat Samgiit songs were sung. Then He gave a short talk. Suddenly He started reciting the special mantras, and then gave a long, overwhelming Mudra. Lost in

bliss, I was merged in His love and grace. Tears fell from my open eyes as I contemplated His divine presence and mystery.

That was the closest I ever sat and the strongest Mudra I received in my life. It was less than an hour since I had arrived in Tiljala. Only by His grace could I have that Mudra, along with the blessing of being so near to Him on that special occasion.

## A Few Plants

Ac. Dhrtiishananda Avt.

In 1989, many Italians were going to DMC, so I also decided to go with them, as I was posted as the Regional Secretary for Roma Region. The Margiis from Sardinia arranged a donation of thousands of tree seedlings, both native varieties and special ones, for Baba's gardens. They brought them up to Venice from where we would fly to India. Because there were so many trees and they were very heavy, we checked in together to avoid paying for extra luggage.

I had heard that some Margiis who were carrying plants to Delhi got deported only because they were Ananda Margiis. (As the Customs and Immigration officials were aware that Margiis brought plants to India, for Baba's garden, they could sometimes understand that someone carrying plants was a Margii.) But because we knew that Baba wanted plants very much, we decided to carry these plants anyway and leave the rest to Him. We planned that when we arrived in Delhi Airport, we would each leave separately and meet outside at the taxi stand. However, somehow I forgot to assign responsibility for each Margii to carry out a certain number of the plants from the airport.

So I found myself standing alone in front of the luggage conveyer belt with huge bags containing more than a thousand plants! They were far too much for me to carry, and I started to worry. Then I remembered that they were a gift for Baba, so I put a few bags on a trolley and rolled it to Customs. They asked just a few questions and allowed me to leave. I left the bags with the Margiis outside, turned around and went back inside to get more plants! By the third time, the Customs officers were asking a lot of questions. Yet somehow, with the quarantine papers and Baba's Grace, they let me go.

Later I heard that Baba was very happy with the Italian Margiis for their gift for His garden. Together we enjoyed a beautiful program.

# Waiting for a Glimpse

Indrajit / Germany (part 2)

I travelled to India in December 1989. Everyone was disappointed to hear that Baba could not give the planned DMC because of His bad state of health. In fact, He had been taken to hospital, so everybody went to Ananda Nagar in expectation of a DMS, not a DMC; anyway, it was all done appropriately, and we had by now returned to Calcutta.

Baba had been released from hospital and was recovering at His house in Tiljala. Once or twice a day He would go for a little walk in His garden, and a small crowd of Margiis would assemble on the other side of the wall that separates Baba's house from the organizational building where we were staying. Some of us had managed to get on top of the wall, or at least into a position from where we could look over to the other side. We had to be patient, but eventually Baba came out of His house, accompanied by half a dozen or so acaryas.

Baba was walking very slowly. And one acarya would always be very close to Him, ready to step in and support Him when needed. His path would lead Him past the wall where we were waiting, but during all those minutes, He would not look up even once! And all the while, He was walking sooo slowly ...

So He passed the spot where we were looking on, and we were still waiting for a glimpse of His smile, but He did not even give us a glance. He was now 10 metres past already, and I was just coming to terms with the fact that, after all, this was a rather old man, Guru or not, stricken with a deadly disease... when suddenly He stopped, and He DID turn around, and He DID look at us. But this was not the face of a patient recuperating from a severe diabetes attack!

His face was gleaming with energy, His skin was soft and shining like a baby's, and His smile, His eyes, were so absolutely encouraging, so beaming with unassailable optimism, that it gave me a spontaneous thrill -- and yes, I am absolutely sure that He was looking at me, and specifically at me. We did Namaskar happily, and so did He. He then continued His walk, and I left that place, too: His smile and His optimism forever in the treasure case of my mind.

## He took time out for me

Mahaviira / Iceland

I have been living in Iceland for many years now. I was initiated in 1976 and in the winter of 1988 and 1989 I attended the DMC in Ananda Nagar. It was at that time I attended a Bhukti Pradhana (BP) meeting. As soon as I got in the meeting, the thought came that I would really like to have some private time with Baba, but looking around at the mass of people it didn't seem likely. There were 300 people at this meeting.

Finally, it was the time for Margiis to give a report to Him. We made a semicircle around Baba. I was standing in the front row and I could see the SS Dada talking. He called me to the back - he said that if Berlin Sector would be called to give a report that I would represent as a BP of Reykjavik, so I went back to the front. I had an idea of what I could report, but still I was very apprehensive. So one sector came and went and then another, and Berlin Sector was called. I stepped out and gave my report. It was difficult for me to understand what Baba was saying. His PA would repeat and then I could understand. Before this, I had a great fear of being ridiculed. The thought would make me shiver, to think of Baba ridiculing me in front of everybody.

Baba asked me, "Is there anybody in your bhukti who indulges in alcohol, drugs, heroin, cocaine?" I said, "Yes." Then He said, "Is that a sin or is it a crime?" And I said that I don't know. Then he said, "Do you know the difference between a sin and a crime." I said that I don't know and then He continued, "Sin is where you do something which affects your own spiritual potential. A crime is where other people's spiritual potential is affected." He said, "Is what you do a sin or a crime?" I said "A sin." "Correct." Baba said, "Do you want to take punishment for this?" and I said "Yes." So, the form of punishment was that the General Secretary would come with a stick and hit my hand, but the stick never really hit my hand. I did pranam and rejoined the group.

The implication was that I was involved in drugs, which could be the highest form of embarrassment, but I wasn't really affected. The overall feeling was that He took time out for me and gave me punishment and did so much for me and my confidence, and so much for my relationship with the Guru. After, I met the

other brothers who were discussing the content of what Baba was saying and it didn't seem to matter. Just to have the contact and attention from the Guru was enough.



# A Glittering Star

Avtka. Ananda Jyotishrii Ac.

I became a Margii in 1982 in communist Hungary. Travelling abroad was so restricted it never occurred to me to go to see Baba. However, in July 1990, Didi SWWS gave me a call, "I am taking a group of sisters to India. Jayati, please join us." I was smiling at her naiveté and was about to give a list of reasons why I couldn't go. To my great surprise, I found not a single reason! I had money, time and passport. In mid-August I arrived at Tiljala.

Baba was in the hospital with the second heart attack. More than twenty sisters from all over the world were waiting for PC. Every day we went to the dada's' quarters where we were told, "Tomorrow Baba will come home." This went on for about two weeks. Didi SWWS had to return to Berlin Sector. Before leaving, she told me, "Wait for Baba. Don't go back without receiving Parama Purusa's vibration. Promise!" (I remember her exact words because they puzzled me - to tell the truth I thought they were superfluous. I felt God's presence already in so many things of this world - I did not expect there was anything extra in store for me.)

When Baba finally did come, He was very weak. For a few days, He didn't come out of His room, and the following days He only walked a few times back and forth on the driveway in front of His door. I stood in the crowd that watched Him from the other side of the fence. Once, as He was coming toward us, I thought, "Even if You can't see me as I am standing in the dark, covered by trees, behind the wall, in the middle of this crowd, I have come in order to see You. So let me give You namaskar." As I was lifting my hands, simultaneously He lifted his hands, and when they were in front of our faces, I felt a golden bridge stretching out from His hands to mine, spanning 15 meters, disregarding the above-mentioned obstructions. Then He turned and went into His room. Later I saw that each day at His last turn He gave namaskar to the crowd. However, this fact did not lessen the experience of that namaskar being 100 per cent only for me. ("He is mine and only mine" - this specialty of God is beyond logic.)

Later on, He started to walk in His garden, with slow, tired steps. One Dada was always supporting Him by holding His arm, still

at times His stick slipped. I was shocked at His physical condition. I thought, "I don't want Him to spend any energy on me - I'd rather withdraw from getting PC." But I had promised SWWS I'd go for PC and I was an obedient girl.

On September 24 with a group of 10 sisters, I entered His room. One by one the sisters stood up and He talked to them very briefly, mostly only explaining their names. I got disappointed and thought, "He won't say anything new to me." I already knew that my name meant "spiritual victory" - something beautiful but too high for me to relate to.

There was some tension in the room. Baba couldn't hear some of the sisters well. At those moments, PA Dada and the Didi who accompanied us started to shout at that sister to make her speak loudly, but it didn't work very well. By the time my turn came and I stood up I was stressed.

Baba said, "Jayati is a winner. She is a winner. She is a winner in every moment of her life. In whatever she starts, she will be successful. She never loses. Do you understand?" While He said this, peace descended upon me and all my stress miraculously disappeared. I felt struck by a shower of love of a kind I never experienced before. It was as if all the different types of loves I had received from my father, mother, relatives and friends were put together and amplified a thousand-fold. It was not what I would have expected from God. It was very human. Its vibration seemed brown, like the soil of Mother Earth. And it was very personal. I thought, "How can He have such a deep, personal feeling for me when we see each other for the first time?" This question came to me then and it is still there until today. In spite of the many experiences I have had with my loving, protecting, guiding Supreme Guru, I haven't been able to grasp this mystery. He knows and loves me fully while my feelings for Him are so fragmented!

Then He asked, "What is your mother tongue?" "Hungarian, Baba," I said. "Hungarian," He repeated with such naturalness as if He met a Hungarian person every day. Then very suddenly He asked, "Will you become a glittering star among the LFTs?" "Yes, Baba." This was the moment I really got into the conversation: "I will become."

I wanted to say something more, and I wanted Him to say something more. But He lifted His right hand and moved His fingers as a sign for me to sit down. It lasted only about a second, but from His right palm I felt a current of vibration. He was making a simple signal, yet at the same time it was a blessing. Its color was light blue, the kind you would expect from "God above the sky."

I estimate that the whole PC for the 10 sisters took less than 10 minutes. Leaving the room, just as the door was closing, I looked back and saw Baba taking off His glasses and rubbing His face. Yes, we must have made Him tired.

A few months later I arrived at the Didi's Sectorial Office in Mainz and became an LFT there. I started a completely new life in a completely different environment. Since then this kind of complete change has been repeated several times: with each new posting I was suddenly surrounded by unknown people of an unknown culture speaking an unknown language, in a new climate, with new duties, new types of challenges, etc. On those occasions it was nice to remember Baba's words: "Will you become a glittering star among the LFTs?" Its peculiarity is that my laokik name (given by my parents) means "glittering star." I feel that in this subtle way Baba suggested that though along the Path we have to change so much, we don't need to ever give up our self. Rather we should preserve all the virtues, knowledge, and positive identity feelings that we acquired during earlier life-periods. Growth is an organic process even in this chaotic, crisis-stricken world.

This was the very last time He gave PC for sisters. Out of the twenty waiting, only ten got it. Out of the ten, three that I am aware of became Didis. Out of those three, I alone remain. Why all this happened like this? I have no reply.

## Baba's Eyes

Nandita / Italy (part 2)

It was a splendid morning in Tiljala, Calcutta in 1990. The lukewarm sun bathed my skin. The fragrance of incense filled the whole ashram. All the Margiis were happy, busy in their duties. The chirping of the birds was delightful - they flew unafraid throughout the compound. Different types of birds had been brought from every part of the world because Baba was requesting this. He had told the dadas and didis to bring Him not only birds, but also plants and trees.

I remember an old Margii sister with white hair, dressed perfectly in her sari; she waited patiently for Baba to walk in the garden. She was not the only one; slowly the area filled up. To see over the wall we had to stand on bricks, stones and sand that had luckily been left there.

I had a good spot, and could see well. But that morning Baba was late. We waited long past 12:00 noon, His usual time. Some dadas who came out of the house told us that He was very busy explaining about a university in Ananda Nagar and the future world government. These topics sounded strange to me. But then, as a history teacher, I remembered that Plato had also tried to create a universal society! I was anxious and very thoughtful.

Finally, more than an hour late, Baba arrived! He was accompanied by several people. A young man held a very big multi-coloured umbrella over Baba, protecting Him from the sun. He always used a walking stick and was dressed in white.

Everyone became silent. We were not allowed to speak when Baba drew near; only when He got further away could we sing kiirtan again. Then He came very close in front of me. I looked at Him, and it seemed as though we were alone together.

Suddenly I shouted, "Baba!" My voice sounded like a cry for help.

A dada next to Him gave me a stern look because I had interrupted the silence.

But Baba looked deeply in my eyes and did Namaskar. It was as



# So Close Was That Moment

Prabhakar / Norway (Part 3)

The last time I experienced the physical wall between Him and me was in Tiljala in 1990. We were a number of families from Scandinavia who had gone with our children to Ananda Nagar for DMC, but Baba's health had prevented Him from leaving Calcutta, so we had come up to see Him there. Baba was out of the hospital and was wheeled around in His garden; sometimes He would walk carefully supported by a stick and a person at His side. The atmosphere was as electric and massive as the 1979 days in Jodhpur Park but more universal; new and old workers and Margiis from all over the world were present; some even crawled on the roof of His house to get a closer look! I lifted up my eldest son and told him to look at Baba. It was a bit difficult to get a good view over that quite tall wall around the garden; we somehow managed by standing on bricks. Again came the excitement: Baba is coming! And sure enough, Baba came walking very slowly up towards where I stood. When He reached our point He halted, turned towards me and offered the most beautiful Namaskar so that an extraordinary spiritual wave of sweetest bliss poured through that wall and I got a tremendous feeling of fulfilment and of extraordinariness, and it turned out to be the last physical contact with Him in this life. So beautiful, so close was that moment.

Once in 1979 brother Pankaj of Göteborg, Sweden and I decided to hide in Baba's private garage. As Pankajji had some physical trouble we'd come up with this ingenious plan to receive Him back there when He would step out of His car at the house in Lake Gardens, instead of following the crowd to the airport to receive Baba from His tour there. And sure enough, after a long wait in came the car and first stepped out His personal assistant who eyed us two foreign bodies with mild discontent. Then Baba stepped out - on His own. We, Pankaj and I, undoubtedly the two greatest fools of the Universe, were standing in front of the car so there was no one there to actually open up His door and assist Him. He did it Himself. I will never ever forget with what style and flair He stepped out, lightly slammed the door back with a great hand movement, and then proceeded to graciously greet us the idiots, as He walked up to the house. His vibration was such that poor Pankaj was thrown against the wall inside







# Chapter 7

## 1990 to present: Continuing Bliss

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*"Baba had a strange, unusual look. What was unusual was that He had looked at each of us personally, like He wanted to tell us something. Normally He just gave a circular look, but that moment He gave each of us a short look."*

Jyosna

After Baba's departure the relationship of each Margii with the Guru naturally had to change. But while there were the obvious, definite changes on the mundane level, Margiis still feel a close, inseparable connection with Baba. As one Dada mentioned after Baba's Mahaprayan, He is a spiritual Guru, not a physical Guru. Thus, while the medium by which we relate to Baba has changed, there is the continuing realization that Baba is still with us, even after His physical departure.

*"You are never alone; He is always with you. You are never helpless, you are never shelterless, you are never weak, you are the strongest personality of the universe, because the Supreme Entity is always with you."*

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

8 May 1979 evening, Fiesch, Switzerland, A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 12

# That Special Day

Jyotsna / France

In 1990 in the second half of October I was at the Ananda Marga Global headquarters in Calcutta. I had been in India for two months and I was blessed almost every day with the sight of Baba. Every morning and evening Baba came out of His house and took a little stroll in front of the steps. During the daytime, around noon, He walked around His luxuriant garden. We Margiis were there in time to see Him coming out, waiting for His appearance while singing kiirtana. He never failed to salute us, to give us namaskar. As soon as He came out, He touched our hearts, all together while we were singing His name. It was a nice, sweet and deep experience.

That day, on that special day-nobody among us knew that it was special yet-I went to view His walk at noon, and that day there were not so many other Margiis. As usual He walked around the garden and at the end of the garden, before going back, He saluted us, He gave us namaskar. It was usual, but that day, taking His leave, He looked at us in a special way, with a strange look. I remember coming back to my room and telling my roommates that Baba had a strange, unusual look. What was unusual was that He had looked at each of us personally, like He wanted to tell us something. Normally He just gave a circular look, but that moment He gave each of us a short look. At that moment I could not ascribe to that gaze a particular meaning. A few hours later, as people were gathering for the Sunday collective meditation, we learned that Baba had left His physical body in the beginning of the afternoon.

## A Special Cat

Atman / Italy

This story took place starting the day of Baba's departure and taught me how Baba personally takes care of the devotion of His devotees. I was initiated in 1987 and by intuition I perceived immediately the feeling that meditation was the real thing. With much effort and much determination I started converting my whole life-style to adjust to this new philosophy, and sincerely I did not let one single day pass without having a priority in my mind to improve my relationship with my guru. After two years, I received my 6th lesson (an advanced lesson in the Ananda Marga system of meditation). During this period I had complete faith in Baba.

I continued in this state of mind until the day I received a phone call from my unit secretary informing me that Baba had suddenly left. "WHAT?" was my reply at the phone call. Yet, my unit secretary confirmed his statement that Baba had left the day before without further instructions.

That unexpected news broke the thread of the mental link which I shared with Baba. I felt betrayed! In all His teaching and discourses He put so much emphasis on the unity of the organisation and then He Himself departs without prior notice, leaving His job unfinished, unattended, uncompleted and even without appointing an official successor. I was much more than upset with Him; I was furious!

During the previous two years I had to overcome many internal conflicts but somehow I could always come to the conclusion that either these psychic conflicts were necessary in order to teach me a lesson concerning my behaviour or the conflict could be attributed to the failure in the behaviour of some organisational officer who, anyhow, being human could make mistakes even if he was motivated by good intentions. But from Him, I could not expect any mistakes. I felt cheated!

And feeling cheated, I could not resist the pressure of my wife any longer. My wife had never approved my decision to join Ananda Marga. She had always said that this movement was too young, that I could receive surprises, that you can never really

know whom you are getting involved with, and that things were happening too fast to permit me to be detached from events and see things more clearly from outside. She always said that the search for God had been going on for centuries and if you do not want to have surprises it is far safer to join a movement with long established roots in history and society.

Having broken my heart-link with my guru, I started to consider the reasoning of my wife and I had come to the conclusion that that day was my last day of membership in Ananda Marga. Simply I would continue my search for God within another movement, one with a long history and record of fellowship: either Christianity or Buddhism. And having to choose between the two, I decided to opt for the Buddhists since they practice meditation. That was my point of view at that time. That was my conclusion.

However, even if I had already decided in my mind to leave Ananda Marga, I accepted the invitation to participate in the funeral ceremony at Oasi, the Ananda Marga centre outside Verona. Somehow I felt that my years in Ananda Marga had not passed in vain, and from an experiential point of view they could not be considered a waste of time. Somehow I felt I had to give respect to this man who permitted me to discover the desire to search for God. My participation in the funeral however had the meaning for me of a final good-bye. With respect but final. Even that very morning while on the trip to Oasi I still continued to have the same conclusion in my mind. The Margiis came in large numbers to the funeral ceremony and we were pressed one to the other doing meditation in a small room of Oasi. While doing meditation, and still being absorbed in the thought of leaving Ananda Marga, one small young cat entered the room. Proceeding slowly, slowly but without paying attention to any other Margii he directed himself towards me, stepped on my lap and started purring

From my lap he jumped on my shoulders, circled my neck, jumped about me many many times. He jumped and jumped, over and over again. Several times he licked my throat with his tongue and for the whole time of his dance around me he was always joyfully purring, brushing his fur against me and his whole attitude was pleasing and care taking. His dance went on in such a way without stopping for about 30 minutes.

At the beginning, I did not pay too much attention to this small young cat since my mind was fully engaged with the other type of thought as mentioned before and I had no free space in my mind to permit this cat to enter within the periphery of my attention. However after some 10 minutes of this joyful dance up and down and around me, I could not continue to ignore this little cat and while paying attention to him I really enjoyed his playing with me. I had become a curious and interested spectator of this entertainment. He would jump from one leg to the other and from the legs to the shoulders, lick me while brushing himself against me, all tuned with intense purring. As I was now distracted from my initial thoughts due to this cat dance, my mind had now changed from the initial restless state into a more quiet mood and after some time I was able to regain my normal mental wave: I was feeling at peace with myself and relaxed. At this point the cat dance had been going on for some 30 minutes.

It was while in this mental state of peace that I started considering this cat not just as a simple cat but as an ambassador carrying a message for me. I started thinking that perhaps this cat did not come by his own initiative but had been sent on purpose just to make me quiet and not so impulsive in my final decision. Perhaps this cat, I was thinking, is intending to tell me to take it easy, and not judge events emotionally, but wait to see what happens next. Don't be impulsive but accept things as they happen to be, just watch the life-dance as a spectator. Don't pretend to judge since you cannot see the whole picture of the story, just accept things, wait and see.

I was absorbed in this flash of thought that had entered my mind and I was analysing it from the different angles of my personal experience, when the cat that had danced for me around 30 minutes, continued just some 30/60 seconds more and then silently left the room without staying with any other Margii. He never came back again.

At the end of the funeral ceremony I asked the Dada living permanently at Oasi if they had any cats and the reply was: "No!" And your neighbour? "No," he replied. "There are no cats around here."

I smiled, acknowledging his reply which at that point I somehow

expected to receive. Indirectly, he confirmed for me about the real identity of the cat and my mind went automatically in search of the link of the relation that I had previously broken with Baba.

# Above All Powers

Ac. Jyotirindra Brc.

I first saw an Ananda Marga monk near my home in the Philippines. His orange uniform and tantrik personality attracted me immediately. When I learned that he would give a lecture, I decided to attend. I was very interested in occult powers and I thought that would be the topic. He never mentioned them, but he convinced me by his clear explanation of Baba's philosophy. That is why I decided to become an acarya.

After my training, I went to Calcutta for Personal Contact (P.C.) with Baba. I heard that Baba gave many demonstrations of occult power. I hoped that Baba would be kind and show me some proof that these powers really exist.

In P.C., Baba made me promise to do many things to help society. He did not show me anything special, but instead gave me clash. So I told myself, occult powers don't exist, the power of the mind cannot do anything in this objectivity. Still, at the back of my mind, I hoped that some day Baba would make a drama about occult powers for me.

Then, after two weeks, Baba left His physical body. I became more clashed. I know Baba is still with us, and to me, He is God. Only Baba's physical body died. I know that He exists in both Saguna and Nirguna Brahma. But I felt mentally clashed because there was no more chance to see His occult powers.

I talked to some senior Acaryas who were occultists before, but they told me that Baba forbade them to use their powers. So I said to myself, okay, let it be. I know what I have got in my meditation, and I am aware that now my mind is not so perplexed and disturbed as before. I am also happy that I have learned to appreciate and understand the reality of life, and now I am enjoying it.

After a few months, I was posted to Romania after the Communist rule had ended. I found that some yoga groups already existed and the people were very interested in spirituality. Sometimes people told me about psychic powers. Whenever I heard this, I just laughed inside, because I thought it could not be true. I only

believed in Baba's grace, because I felt that always.

One day a man came to me and asked for initiation. When I sat with him, I first asked him about his personal feelings. I asked him why he wanted initiation and what he knew about yoga or spiritual practice.

He said, "I know something." Then he stared above my head and said, "Dada, I can see your aura." It sounded a little bit funny to me. But I went ahead and instructed him in sadhana. He told me that he really accepted it and promised to practice it strictly.

Then another man came for initiation, and he did a similar thing. He knew much about the cakras and asanas and he knew many Sanskrit words that I did not know. I felt embarrassed, so I tried not to talk too much. In my mind, I felt like blaming Baba because He made this organization with so much work to do that the workers do not have time to read a book.

A few days later, another man came. He was already initiated in first lesson by another Ananda Marga acarya. He said he could not meditate for more than five minutes because he felt so much energy that his body became heated. I thought he was only trying to impress me. Then he politely said, "I have so much energy in my hands, Dada. Can I show it to you?"

I was curious, so I closed my eyes and remembered my Guru Mantra. Then I said, "Okay."

He positioned both his hands in front of his chest with his palms outward. Two fingers of his right hand pointed at me. He asked, "Can you feel this, Dada?" I felt nothing, so I told him so.

Then he moved his arms as if he was going to embrace me, though his hands were about fifty centimeters (two feet) away. "Now I am playing with your aura, Dada. Can you feel it?" This time I really felt like he was pressing me without touching me. It was very strong.

I closed my eyes and did Dhyana. I thought, "What is this, Baba? You are the greatest Master and I am Your disciple. You made me Your acarya, and now I am very inferior to this man."



Then I remembered that Baba told us, "You must not feel inferior to anyone because you are the children of the Great." Then I started feeling courage again. I thought, "Even if I don't have this power, I can be a medium of the Great power."

I opened my eyes and said, "You only have first lesson, called Ishvara Pranidhana. You are not supposed to think about your power. When your body gets heated, your energy is activated and is being expressed. So you are exhausting your energy and not assimilating the cosmic energy. That is why you cannot do long meditation.

"Everybody possesses tremendous energy, but only a few know how to use it. So don't think that you are overflowing with energy. Try to do more meditation, and do it in the proper way."

Then I explained about Bhuta Shuddhi, Asana Shuddhi and Citta Shuddhi. As I explained Citta Shuddhi, I found myself describing the feeling of samadhi. As I spoke, I closed my eyes. I really felt that state. I fell silent, enjoying the highness of my mind. Tasting that bliss, I forgot that the man sat in front of me, waiting.

When I finally opened my eyes and saw him, I felt that he was very small for me. I managed to control my ego and stopped myself from calling him "little boy" like Baba used to address us. Afterward, the man thanked me for my explanation. Before he left, he expressed his deep respect for me.

Now I feel another doubt. I doubt whether this man really existed, or whether Baba just made a drama to fulfill my desire. Whatever the case, I know that though I am a very little boy, I am a son of the Greatest! Indeed, above all powers is spiritual power.

## "Do You Really Think I Left?"

Ac. Shantashubbhananda Avt. (part 3)

When I returned to Europe, I decided to go to the Sweden Wholetimer Training Centre. In mid October 1990, we heard that Baba was very sick. Dada Dhruvananda, the trainer, said we must do non-stop kiirtan. Then after a few days, the terrible news came that Baba had left His physical body. Everyone, even Dada, went into shock. We continued the kiirtan, but it was difficult because none of us knew what had really happened. I thought somebody must have given the wrong information, or else it was a bad dream. When I felt very tired, I went to bed, but couldn't sleep. I thought, "Baba, why did you leave?" Then I felt a reply within me, soft but clear and almost scolding: "Do you really think I left?" I realized two things: while Baba left His body, He has not left us; and now it was up to us to take responsibility for leading His Mission. I still felt very sad, but not abandoned or lost.

I spent two and a half years in Sweden and then went to India for my final exam. After passing and copying the Acarya Diary, we were taken into Baba's room for meditation and Guru Puja. Of course the vibration was very beautiful. At the end when we did Guru Puja, a wave of emotion flooded me. I promised, "Baba, I'll work for Your Mission under any conditions." Then I lay down for a long Sastaung Pranam.

I was posted as Regional Secretary, Damascus. I thought, "God, where is that?" but I happily accepted it. When I reached Qahira Sector, the Sectorial Secretary told me there was no need to go to Syria because there were no Margiis there. He said it would be better to stay and work with him in Turkey first. I worked there for two years, but though I was very motivated, I could only do three initiations. I don't memorize things easily, but somehow Baba graced my efforts at learning Turkish and Arabic, and I quickly became rather fluent in them.

One day I had a disagreement with Dada SS. I proposed that it would be better if I went to my actual posting, and this time he agreed. So I took a bus to Syria with US\$100 in my pocket. At that time, the government was more rigid than today. At the border an immigration officer took me aside and asked me very seriously, "Why are you coming to Syria?" I was worried that

they would not tolerate new and strange things like yoga, but I also didn't want to lie. So I said, "I'm interested in Sufism and want to find out more about it." He immediately smiled and said, "Welcome!" and put the entry stamp in my passport.

I had been given the telephone numbers of two contacts in Damascus, but neither one was correct. I found a church that gave hospitality to pilgrims. The Franciscan monk there agreed to give me a small room for little money, so I would be able to stay there for a month or so. But I couldn't cook in the room and I didn't want to go to restaurants either. With very little money, my diet was not good and I started to get sick. Finally I thought, "Baba, I can't continue like this, I can't work like this. What should I do?"

Suddenly someone knocked at my door and called, "Dada?" When I opened it, I saw a brother there with a shining face. "Namaskar," he said, "I am Nabil. Someone told me you're here. I'd like to invite you to my home so we can make spaghetti!" I thought I would faint. I felt so grateful for Baba's help and attention.

I stayed in Syria for about six months and initiated many people - when I left, I again had US\$100 in my pocket. I went back regularly for six years, and managed to learn Arabic well.

People in other countries often have false preconceptions about Muslims, Arabs and Syria. After regularly visiting Syria, Ananda Marga has been invited to train and qualify yoga teachers around the country through a branch of the government's Health Department that specializes in yoga.

Many Sufis are sympathetic to Ananda Marga. When they adopt the Ananda Marga lifestyle, they do it with the whole family and all become vegetarian. There are 400,000 Druse people or Muahedun living in Syria - part of their belief includes reincarnation. One of their leaders proposed a high level meeting between them and the leaders of Ananda Marga. I hope this happens someday, because I believe there is a great potential for that entire community to embrace Ananda Marga as a way of life.

It was a great honour and pleasure to live with many wonderful

people there, because it gave me an opportunity to understand even more the meaning and importance of Ananda Marga. To understand that on a deep level all spiritual paths are based on the same unique truth. There is a beautiful Sufi poem expressing this idea: "Oh God, I wanted to become one with You. Now that I see Your light, I forget my way." The "way" referred to is Islam. Many Muslims say that to forget Islam is blasphemy, totally unacceptable. However the Sufis have a more mystical perspective.

This made me realize that Ananda Marga is not just the people in the organization; it is the Path of Bliss, for all those people who are moving in a straight line towards union with God. All these people are knowingly or unknowingly following Tantra. Even if they don't do Ananda Marga practices, they follow many of the principles that also guide us. I understood that Tantra and Ananda Marga are much more than what we see now, they are a highway that leads to God. It is a subterranean flow that guides all humanity and that one day will be embraced by everyone.

Once in a small meeting a Druse intellectual challenged me. He pointed out some differences in our approach and concluded by saying, "We have different concepts of reincarnation, so we cannot say that Muahedun and Ananda Marga are on the same path to God." I felt Baba's inspiration and replied, "Those who are close to God will see unity in everything, while those who are far from Him will see differences and duality in everything." Everyone was very happy with this.

I believe that to be simple and sincere are the most important qualities of a sadhaka. Simple means to be straightforward, that our thoughts, words and actions should be the same. Sincerity means to do our very best for others. As Baba said, nothing is due to us, but we have a responsibility towards the whole Creation. I wish everyone could feel that it's more important to give than to receive.

# Signs of Growth

Avtka. Ananda Arpana Ac.

It was the year 1993, and I, as a WT trainee, was with most of the trainee sisters in Oslo, during a retreat. By Baba's Grace, something happened which clashed me very, very much, and I kept thinking a lot about it and crying to myself the whole retreat. One day, during noon kiirtan, I was dancing in the first line, just before the big photo of Baba's smiling face. I had seen that photo shortly before in the training centre, and somehow didn't like it so much - until then I preferred His serious moods, where He looks like the Master of the Universe.

But now I had no choice - it was the only photo available, and it was huge, and I was standing in front of it with smashed ego. Suddenly, through all the agony and tears, His big smile entered into the ruins of my heart, and a very clear thought or understanding or realisation flooded my whole being: "This is the way God smiles at us. He is not laughing sarcastically at us. But He smiles at our tears and pain, just like the mother smiles when her baby's teeth are growing. The baby cries in pain, but the mother smiles, glad for the signs of growth of her child. My pain, my clashes are just the signs of my growth, and He is glad, glad for it..."

I fell in love with that photo. Whenever I could, I would sit in front of it - in front of my Loving One - and cry bathed in His embracing Warmth without end.

Then the retreat was over, I got some more clash that pushed me to the limits of what I could bear... and made me resolve to never again let other people's negativity plunge me into hell. Baba's photo was a link that kept me somehow. It turned out it was sister Kusumita's, and we were staying in her house, so I could keep seeing Him, even give Him a kiss when all were gone.

But very soon the last day of our stay came and, surprisingly, I was ready with packing before others. What to do? I thought of going upstairs, to see His photograph once more - one last time - and say goodbye. Someone else had the same idea, and I was annoyed for the lack of privacy, but there was no choice, so I sat before the photo and started meditating.

Well, I don't know what it was - I just became more and more sad that I had to leave Him, that I had to go alone, and the tears turned from drops to streams, to waterfalls. The other sister left the room and I cried freely, just calling and calling Him: "Come, Baba', come, please, come..."

Then someone came to call me to the car, and I had to do Guru Puja. Now, that was a catastrophe - then I really had to go, and my heart just wanted to burst. I thought I'd die there on the spot if He doesn't come - if I have to leave Him - wishing that Guru Puja might last forever, or at least until my soul leaves this body and this cruel world.

Someone else came into the room and started walking and making noises around, and for a moment I hated that disturbance - why can I not even cry for God in peace?! But then the pain of separation overtook me again, and I kept swimming in the ocean of sorrow.

Suddenly, Kusumita's voice next to me: "Sister, take this with you to Training Centre."

I opened my eyes: she gave me that photo of Baba, wrapped in plastic.

I thought I would choke.

He came.

I kept Him in my arms, caressing His face for many, many hours during our journey afterwards.

You know, He is here. He listens. And He replies. We just have to listen carefully.

# Dancing Kiirtan

Punam / Switzerland

I was born into a Margii family in Bihar, India; my father was a family acarya, Sur Narain Sah. For some reason, my parents did not take me with them each year when they went to see Baba at DMC. This made me very frustrated.

When I was 12, I used to be afraid of the dark. But then I would feel that Baba was always with me, and this would calm me down. I would see Him very clearly, even His dhoti and kurta.

Once He gave me a special sweet round bunya, made from gram flour, and put it in my hand. When I ate it, I started to experience a very beautiful feeling in all my cakras.

I married Sukanta and came with him to Switzerland when I was only 18. Soon afterwards, I became pregnant with my first child, Pradip. In this new country, I felt very alone. One night I was crying when I fell asleep. I dreamt that I was dancing kiirtan with others in front of Baba. Then He asked me to walk in front of Him. He indicated that I should go ahead and forget everything else. This made me understand that He is always with me, that I am never alone, and that I should go ahead.

Several years later, I had another dream. Once again, I was dancing kiirtan in front of Baba. Then He called me into a room alone. I entered, and He said He wanted to give me Personal Contact. I sat in front of Him, and He touched and massaged my Ajina and Sahasrara Cakras. He told me some Sanskrit slokas. I felt so happy watching Baba. When I woke up, I started crying. I felt very special; my cakras felt different.

Whatever I have wanted in my life, Baba has fulfilled like magic. When I teach yoga courses, I am supposed to know everything and help everyone. Sometimes I wonder how I know all these things. When I teach people Baba Nam Kevalam, I really feel that Baba is teaching them through me, because everyone enjoys it so much. They express that they are very confident that I am teaching them well. I feel that He is doing His work through me.

## Who Are You Who Came?

Pankaj / Netherlands

Once during a retreat in Germany a video was shown. In that video the inner courtyard of some building could be seen. In that place an elderly man was walking up and down, up and down. He was using a stick. It was Baba and His security personnel were also there watching Him while He was walking. Nothing more happened; there was no talking or any sound whatsoever. I didn't really know what to think of it and I was becoming bored when the scene shifted and I forgot about it.

Not long afterwards, maybe a week or so, I was doing sadhana and my mind was in an expanded state. Some awareness of the cosmos was there. Suddenly, there was a strange experience. There were footsteps. Not like normal footsteps. They sounded big, their vibration resounding around the entire cosmos. Step, step, step. The sound may have been there already for awhile, yet unnoticed. But at a particular moment, I became aware of it, and right at that moment my mind shifted to the scene in the movie. It was His footsteps that could be heard in the entire universe! How strange. It was dramatic and funny at the same time.

I realised that in His presence, everything is expanded to cosmic dimensions. The play of light and shadows becomes a vibrant play of the universe itself, the smallest sound seems like it is stretched to an eternal dimension. Everything becomes vivid and meaningful, yet at the same time Silence Itself seems to be the shelter of everything. While I was wondering Who had really been walking there, the word of a beautiful Prabhat Samgiita song came in my mind, "Ke tumi ele, ke tumi ele," meaning, 'Who are You, who came?'



## "I want to be in this bliss forever!"

Asiim Kumar / Ghana & England

I was initiated on April 28 1989 in Ghana, before I came to live in the UK. Perhaps it was a coincidence, but on that same date eight years later, something so extraordinary and personal happened that I find it difficult to describe.

While doing my evening meditation, I suddenly felt immersed in an ocean of love. I started crying with happiness and joyfully singing Baba's name. As blissful tears fell from my eyes, I started repeating, "Lord Anandamurtii, I don't want to go back to my physical body. The world is not what I want - I want to be in this bliss forever!"

I have no idea how long I remained in that state. It might have been ten or twenty minutes, or an hour. But during the following three days, whatever I was doing, when I remembered His name I felt exactly the same as I did on the night of the 28th. Each time I started crying again with happiness.

Even now as I write this story, tears start to come to my eyes. It isn't possible to describe my love for Parama Purusa. Anandamurtii is my God. I only wish that everyone could have this kind of experience. Because it happened on the anniversary of my initiation, I am always reminded how very important that process is.

Always remember Him. Play kiirtan whenever possible. Go to sleep while listening to kiirtan, wake up with kiirtan and finally die with kiirtan. There's only one thing to do - love Him.

***"Now what should you do? What a good person should do, what an intelligent person is to do, what a spiritual aspirant is to do, is always to remember the loving Father. And this is what meditation is. Why should one always remember the loving Father? Because each of us will have to keep in the closest psychic and spiritual touch with the Supreme, because He is the Supreme abode of all. And finally one will have to sit on His lap. That is the final Desideratum."***

*Shrii Shrii Anandamurti,  
12 May 1979 morning, Fiesch, Switzerland,  
A'nanda Vācana'mrtam Part 12*

## Conclusion

Spiritual stories inspire us, whether we experience them directly or whether related to us by others. They give us a glimpse of Baba, who admitted He was and always will be "a mystery."

Yet no mystical experience, however dramatic, is enough to carry us to the goal of human life. What we choose to do with this inspiration depends on us.

His message was very clear: each of us should use this inspiration to continue our daily efforts of regular meditation. Sadhana is the most powerful and effective practice to transform our lives. It enables us to progress on the spiritual path, to build our character, to awaken love for humanity, to journey from imperfection to perfection. Through His touch, He wanted to inspire us all to become what He called "mini-Babas"!

Publication of this book commemorates 50 years since Ananda Marga's founding in 1955 by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti. This is the first volume of what we hope will be a continuing project to record European Baba experiences. As Baba is an expression of the infinite Supreme Consciousness, countless devotional experiences of Him continue beyond His presence in physical form.

We wish to sincerely thank the people who kindly shared their stories for this volume. Those who have other stories are invited to contribute them, so they can be considered for later volumes. Sharing your experience can be seen as an important service to other spiritual seekers, both now and in the future.

Your stories may be sent to 'The Berlin Sectorial Publications Secretary':-

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Email: [sprs@ber.amps.org](mailto:sprs@ber.amps.org)

(Please keep a backup copy of whatever you send)

## Glossary

**Ac:** abbreviation for 'Acarya'

**Acarya:** one who teaches by example; a monk or nun of Ananda Marga engaged in teaching meditation and service

**Ajina Cakra:** the so-called third-eye cakra, located between the eyebrows; central point of the mind.

**Anahata Cakra:** The fourth cakra, also known as the 'heart cakra', which signifies its location.

**Ananda Marga Unit:** The basic structural cell of the Ananda Marga organisation, often geographically centred around a Dharmacakra or Jagrti. The Unit Committee organises various Ananda Marga activities, including Relief, pracaar programmes, etc.

**Ananda Nagar:** Global Master Unit community and organisational headquarters of Ananda Marga, located partly in the states of West Bengal and Jharkhand, in eastern India.

**Ananda Vacanamrtam:** A series of books by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, covering many spiritual topics.

**Asana Shuddhi:** part of the first lesson meditation process involving withdrawal of one's identification with the material world

**Asanas:** posture comfortably held; yoga posture

**Avtka:** abbreviation for the term Avadhutika

**Avadhuta:** a male acarya who has learned kapalika sadhana; a complete renunciate, wearing full orange dress.

**Avadhutika:** a female acarya who has learned kapalika sadhana; a complete renunciate, wearing full orange dress.

**Baba Nam Kevalam:** A universal mantra, developed by Baba. Lit: "only the name/vibration of the most beloved" with spiritual meaning 'everything is an expression of infinite loving consciousness'. Used for introductory meditation and as a chant for kiirtan.

**Bhajan:** devotional song

**Bhakti:** devotion for God; spiritual devotion, love for the Supreme.

**Bhukti Pradhana (BP):** 'district head', a family person who is a local leader of Ananda Marga (District Secretary).

**Bhuta Shuddhi:** part of the first lesson meditation process involving withdrawal of one's identification with the material world.

**Brahma:** Supreme Consciousness or God.

**Chakra (more correctly spelled: Cakra):** psycho-spiritual controlling point in the body, linked on the physical level to the endocrine glands. There are seven major cakras along the spinal column, according to the yogic system. These are also meeting points for the flow of vital energy flowing through the body.

**Citta Shuddhi:** part of the first lesson meditation process involving withdrawal of one's identification with the material world

**Dada:** "Respected brother". A name for a male teacher of meditation.  
**Dharma:** Spirituality; original nature or innate tendency  
**Dharma Pracar:** the propagation of spirituality among the public  
**Dharma Samiksa:** "analysis of one's adherence to the path"; a program conducted by Baba in 1981 during which He gave direct guidance to many Margiis.  
**Dharmacakra:** "circle of dharma"; collective meditation.  
**Dharshan:** "to see." Being in the presence of a master. Also refers to the talks and discourses given by Baba.  
**Dhoti:** a type of clothing for men, in India.  
**Dhyana:** contemplation; merging one's mind into Cosmic Consciousness; the sixth lesson of AM meditation.  
**Didi:** "Respected sister". A name for a female teacher of meditation.  
**Diiksa:** initiation into spiritual practice; learning meditation  
**Diirgha Pranam:** Yogic asana, known as 'long salutation' in English.  
**DMC (Dharma Maha Cakra):** a spiritual gathering of Ananda Marga, in which Baba presented a discourse, and then bestowed a blessing through the varabhaya mudra.

**ERAWS:** Educational, Relief and Welfare Section of Ananda Marga

**GS (General Secretary):** The administrative head of Ananda Marga

**Guru:** "the dispeller of darkness"; one qualified to be a spiritual guide. Ananda Marga philosophy holds that while the qualities of Guru are expressed by each individual to a greater or lesser degree, Guru is supreme Brahma alone, and not any particular physical form.

**Guru Mantra:** second lesson of Ananda Marga meditation; a process for realising the divine in all things.

**Guru Puja:** a method by which the devotee may offer his or her egoic attachments to Guru Brahma; an accompanying verse is recited after meditation and also is sung after group meditation.

**Ishvara Pranidhana:** first lesson of Ananda Marga; meditation on the Supreme Controller.

**Jagriti:** "place of spiritual awakening"; local Ananda Marga meditation centre.

**Kalyanamastu:** a blessing of welfare (lit: "Let there be welfare").

**Kaoshikii:** a dance exercise designed by Baba, which harmonizes many glands of the body and prevents 22 diseases.

**Kapalik Diiksa:** meditation designed to overcome fear, performed at night in the graveyard, most often by avadhutas and avadhutikas.

**Kiirtan:** collective singing of an uplifting mantra, accompanied by a rhythmic dance.

**Laokik:** Referring to worldly affairs, as opposed to spiritual affairs.

**LFT (Local Full Timer):** Local Full Time volunteer. A recommended period of commitment to personal growth and service under the guidance of an Ananda Marga Acarya, before embarking upon career, wholetime or family life.

**Liila:** Divine sport or play.

**Lungi:** Simple Indian male garment that wraps around the lower half of the body.

**Lungota:** Yogic underwear worn by males.

**Mantra:** subtle sound that when repeated and focused upon in meditation liberates the mind.

**Maonobrata:** a period of spiritual silence during the day.

**Margii:** "one on the path"; Ananda Marga practitioner.

**Master Unit:** A model comprehensive Ananda Marga rural community. Ideally includes every aspect of an integrated rural community, such as organic agriculture, medical and yogic therapy centres, schools, social service projects, cottage industries, etc.

**Microvita:** The root cause of life in the universe.

**Mudra:** a 'meaningful gesture', particularly a positioning of the hands for a special effect.

**Namaskar:** Yogic salutation with accompanying mudra

**Namaste:** A greeting given to God.

**Neo Humanism:** PR Sarkar's practical theory of pinnacled human fulfilment through cultivated devotional sentiment to embrace everything animate and inanimate in the universe as an expression of the Supreme; a significant extension of the spirit of humanism

**Nirguna Brahma:** "without qualities" Brahma; the state of Supreme Consciousness beyond all expression.

**Niyama:** 'to regulate'; observances; one of the two branches of yogic ethics, comprising five principles. (see Yama)

**Otah Yoga:** The individual association of Supreme Consciousness with every entity of the universe. (see Protah Yoga)

**Pandal:** A large tent used for meetings.

**Param pita Baba Ki - Jai!:** "To the Supreme Father? - Victory!" an emotive rousing call and spiritual affirmation.

**Parama Purusa:** "Supreme Consciousness"; God.

**Prabhat Samgiita:** a body 5,018 mystical songs and poems composed by Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (Baba).

**Pracar:** propagating spirituality

**Pranam:** a respectful greeting.

**Prasad:** food infused with spiritual vibrations, having been first offered to Guru

**Pratik:** the symbol of Ananda Marga ideology; representing sadhana and service as the means to self-realisation.

**Protah Yoga:** The collective association of Supreme Consciousness with

every entity of the universe.

**PROUT:** Progressive Utilization Theory; a unique spiritually centred socio-economic theory proposed by P.R. Sarkar (Baba).

**Raganuga Sadhana:** meditation performed with motivation to receive bliss.

**Ragatmika Sadhana:** meditation performed with a strong desire to be established in Parama Brahma and direct all one's psychic thoughts and feelings toward Him because it gives bliss to Parama Purusa.

**Regional Secretary:** Administrative head of a geographical area of Ananda Marga usually incorporating one or more populous states or countries.

**Sadguru:** eternal or perfect guru, whose qualities are only extremely rarely expressed in a living person.

**Sadhaka:** a spiritual aspirant.

**Sadhana:** "sustained effort to complete"; meditation,

**Sadvipra:** established spiritual moralists; spiritual revolutionaries working tirelessly for social progress

**Saguna Brahma:** Brahma 'with qualities'; the state of Brahma in which Prakrti is active.

**Sahasrara Cakra:** the seventh or crown cakra, located at the crown of the head.

**Samadhi:** state of complete absorption; merging with Cosmic Consciousness.

**Sangacchadhvam mantra:** mantra sung before dharmacakra, signifying unity and collective movement.

**Samskaras:** karmic reaction lying in potential form in the mind, waiting to be expressed. Their presence tends to distort experience of reality.

**Sannyasi:** renunciant, monk or nun.

**Sari:** An Indian style of dress for women.

**Sastaunga Pranama:** posture of extremely respectful salutation to the Guru; prostrating forward, extending the arms and body straight - symbolising complete surrender of ego and an un-crooked approach of simplicity and dutifulness.

**SDM:** Seva Dharma Mission, one of the branches of Ananda Marga. Dharmic "Service" specialising in the propagation of spiritual practices and kiirtan

**Sectorial Secretary (SS):** Administrative head of Ananda Marga within one of 9 large geographical areas worldwide

**Shlokas:** Sanskrit verses.

**Shaoca Manjusa:** A small container carrying water, to be used after urination, as prescribed in 16 Points.

**Shraman:** Head teacher of spiritual subjects in an institution of learning.

**Shravani Purnima:** a day commemorating the first initiation Baba imparted when he was a Calcutta college student (19 August).

**Shuddis:** processes of withdrawing one's identification with the material world during meditation.

**Sixteen Points:** Essential Ananda Marga spiritual practises; an enlightened summary of the most important practices expected of a Margii.

**SWWS:** Sectorial Women's Welfare Secretary, the administrative director of Women's Welfare Department within one of 9 geographical areas worldwide; a department of Ananda Marga run by women and dealing with women's development and issues.

**Tandava:** A vigorous dance for male spiritual aspirants, originally formulated by Shiva. It develops the glands in a way that enhances courage and fearlessness.

**Tantra:** A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by Shiva. It emphasizes the development of human vigour, both through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations, to overcome all fears and weaknesses.

**Taraka Brahma:** 'bridge'; that being who links the spiritual world with the material world.

**Trikuti:** ajina cakra. The 6th cakra, in the yogic system, located between the eyebrows.

**Upabhukti Pramukha:** lit: 'Block Secretary'. A Margii who is an administrative head of a local area, which is a subdivision of a District, or Bhukti.

**Varabhaya Mudra:** "blessing of fearlessness"; a bestowal of spiritual energy through a particular hand gesture; Baba performed this mudra usually during DMCs.

**Whole Timer (WT):** A dada or didi who has taken sannyasin training and vows, who has dedicated their life to working for Ananda Marga.

**Yama:** lit. 'control', abstinences; one of the two branches of yogic ethics, comprising five principles. (see Niyama.)



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