
ERUCH, MANI IN MANDALI HALL

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MANI: [Clock chiming] He would take great pains to make us forget that He was God while we were with Him. He wanted natural. And when we were really beginning to forget He would say, "Don't forget. I Am God." [Pilgrims laughing] [Crosstalk]. His person was precious and obedience was there and we knew He was Master all the time. And on the other hand His humanness like he would make a face at a particular dish which. Fruit or vegetable He didn't like. Or a basic apple was put for Him Baba would say, "Nah", you know. Things like that.

ERUCH: Yeah.

MANI: And He would allow Himself sometimes to lose a game although He was perfect at all games. And He would cheat. He would cheat but on the understanding that we knew He was cheating and that we could catch Him out if we could which we never could you know [pilgrims laugh].

ERUCH: He snored when He slept.

MANI: And all these.

ERUCH: He passed wind [general laughter]. Yeah.

MANI: And He gave. It was always giving us an opportunity to serve. If He wasn't well there were more opportunities for us to look after Him. To serve Him. Not that He always listened what we would say that He should do or should eat or should. No, not that. But these were little opportunities. Like that time when Baba

one day was sitting on this chair and tired and not so well and looking so frail and so naturally when He said, "Now I have to go over to the women's side. Lunch. I'm hungry." And He was getting up so once what happened was. I'm giving just one instance so you can have an idea. Eruch and Francis both quickly went to help Him get up from the chair. That's an opportunity to do that for Him. And while He did that and they held His hand all ready to pull Him up He just gave a slight jerk and they both almost fell over in trying to avoid falling over Him. And Francis looked so you know stunned. He said, "Oh Baba You are strong." [inaudible][pilgrims laughing].

RANO: I remember Baba one time when He wasn't well in '68. He was lying on the bed and He said, "Take my hand." So I took His hand very gently while He was almost crushed my hand. And yet He was so weak and helpless [inaudible].

MANI: Sometimes even humanly Baba would you know feel heavy. For instance when He was not well and we would help Him to turn over. Eruch can tell you about that. He was. You know it was. All one could do to heave. Very next day you could just touch Him and Baba would roll over. And once Baba explained. And also when they were lifting that lift chair. Baba sitting in the lift chair and they would. Men would carry 4 sides 4 of them and the others walking along with them and they could barely just manage to lift Him. And sometimes He would be so light and they would be walking along and then suddenly the weight.

ERUCH: Hmm. That is a common experience.

MANI: Yes [crosstalk].

ERUCH: All of a sudden there would be weight.

MANI: And they were careful. And Baba explained it was the weight of this world. The weight on. And it depended on His. Similarly sometimes Baba looked. I don't mean if you measured Him but to your remembrance, your vision, your feeling, so big. And I remember Baba's big walking. Taking a walk here. And at other times He would look so small, so frail.

ERUCH: But this experience was not just my imagination or anything. But it was even Francis who remarked. All of a sudden. And it was also a physical experience for those who witnessed us. While lifting Him we would have a jerk. All of a sudden we would bend down you see as if an additional weight has been put on that. It was like that.

PILGRIM 1: I have a song to sing.

ERUCH: Hmm?

PILGRIM 1: I have two songs to sing.

ERUCH: Oh a few songs.

PILGRIM 1: 2 songs.

MANI: He has 2 songs.

ERUCH: Good. We will have a nice session with songs.

PILGRIM 1: In here?

ERUCH: Now you are in the mood to sing?

PILGRIM 1: Yeah.

ERUCH: After I will listen to the songs.

PILGRIM 1: Okay.

PILGRIM 2: [inaudible]

ERUCH: Pink was His favourite. And sky blue. Yeah.

MANI: That was. Those coats Baba wore really for darshan time.

ERUCH: For darshan time. But His plain white

MANI: I remember Him so well in grey and in white. Sometimes [inaudible]. It was His favourite with a patch in there to [inaudible].

ERUCH: You know why He would wear pink? You want to know the real personal side? How He would tease us and all that. He says, "You know. This pink color is a great fit to me. Because now I'm far advanced in age. All the glory is not there. So this pink you see reflects you see and makes Me look more radiant." That's how. That His personal. See how He would be with us.

MANI: But sometimes He would take great pains to say things like that to put us off [Eruch laughs]. To put us off the real thing that He was [inaudible]. He would take great pains for anything to appear so natural that we would just see that side of it. And in the meantime what He was really doing was with the left hand what sleight of hand which we couldn't see. What He was really doing He wouldn't always reveal.

ERUCH: One day it so happened you know. He would be the most natural when He is scantily clothed you see. Just like a sadra picture. Where's that picture? Yeah it's like that. Just plain sadra there. And sometimes [crosstalk]. Yeah.

MANI: It's natural.

ERUCH: Yeah.

MANI: And then He'd put it up because sometimes it was too hot. He wouldn't let us change it and sew it because He liked it so much. [inaudible] another one.

ERUCH: He would like to wear the ones that were worn frequently. Not new clothes. Not starched or anything.

RANO: The soft ones.

ERUCH: The soft ones yes. But even in the softness there must be that frequently used quality. What do you call that? [crosstalk]. It's not that new, costly clothes or anything. Not that but that soft due to constant wear. That softness He wanted. You see you have a soft cap but He wouldn't want to use that. He would wear the cap that had been usually worn by Him.

RANO: Gotten soft.

ERUCH: Yeah gotten soft through wearing. Constant wearing, constant association. Same thing with shoes and same thing with His coat. Even if it is torn you see then they would just pester Him to change it and change with great difficulty. Sometimes they would put it by.

MANI: No in the end we had to patch it.

ERUCH: Patch it and then put it by later on because He would continue to use it.

MANI: [inaudible] It was so soft. But this is soft Baba. At last He would have to because it was really too much. And then when it was really used more and more He would say [inaudible].

RANO: [Inaudible] That Baba wore and wore and we patched and patched and patched. [inaudible]

ERUCH: Baba used to read His newspaper in the beginning. The newspapers would be read by Him. He would sit on a bed

you see and then read like that. Specially His mail also He would read like that. He wouldn't sit at a table and do all that. On the bed only. And about that story when that Mani. That incident. He would be scantily clothed you see informal with us. Nothing special. In summer there would be nothing. Just a small half pant [foreign]. And He would be seated there in the Mandali hall mind you. Or like a place like Guruprasad palace and all that. Summer time people would be coming and going and all. Everybody seated there informally. Nothing.

When He is giving Darshan, the special gathering then He would put on this Sadra there in summer and very thin pink coat or something like that. Or blue or white, plain white. Pearl white. As they gave. He didn't care for anything of that sort. Now one day He was seated like that. Just worn shorts there. And we were having a chat and good humour that was there. Sometimes serious talk sometimes. Any talk I don't remember the talk that day. But somebody, some stranger was announced that he had come to see Baba to pay his respects to Him. It was unusual for Him. And He says, "Get me a garland immediately." [crosstalk] [foreign]

What had happened was that at that time you see whenever Baba was in His great humour, great mood or whatever it was He turned real like this. Have you seen the morning glories in the state of the sun rising or the sun set? The sky, you know that pink. The glow that is there. That would come over His this whole place you see this whole. Actually He would glow means the colors change there. Yeah it would be like the horizon you know.

So He was there seated like that. And all of a sudden he was announced. So He says, "Stop him there and get me a garland immediately." So then somebody rushed inside knocked the door and got some ordinary plain garland. We couldn't get a

flower garland. No fresh flower garland was there. We never called for garlands or anything for Baba like that. Only in the meeting time people would bring so that would be. With us we never brought any garlands for Him. We were ourselves garlands around His neck you see [Eruch laughs]. So He says, "Get some garland." So Mehera and these people, women used to keep those some very beautiful garlands presented to Baba of silk flowers or some sort of things. Or what do you call those. Tinsels or something like that. So somebody sent immediately there. And He immediately Himself wore it and sat there and He says, "Now call him."

He sat and then He smiled and all that. He accepted him there and all. After 5-10 minutes he was told to go back. He was happy. That person was happy and he went back. And then He says. With great this He says, "Take it off". So naturally we who were seated there were wondering as to. It was very unusual for Baba. He wouldn't like that burden of garlands or anything of the sort. Why did He call and Himself wore it? So He tells the. Gives us this explanation. He says, 'Well I had to do it to ward off his impression. His evil eye on My radiance.' That's. Yeah.

MANI: [inaudible]

ERUCH: Whatever it be.

MANI: But it's really. Maybe Baba didn't want to reveal so much to that man.

ERUCH: Yeah so much.

MANI: He was distracted by the garland than Baba's glory at that moment and he. That man would have received so much and Baba was not ready to give it.

ERUCH: It was a sort of a veil. [Crosstalk] So that to avoid that you see.

RANO: Smokescreen.

ERUCH: Smokescreen yeah. So such were the personal touches He would give us. Then another personal touch as I told you that He would be. They would all be playing what do you call cards. Are you inciting her for all these things? No. I asked her that. These people had already pestered him so many times.

So what happened is that He would be playing cards with so many people and a lot of noise would be created. And I had to keep watch outside so that strangers may not find unusual noise there. The people around Him would become very boisterous. They would shout and clamour at the top of their [crosstalk]. "Oh you cheat," and all sorts of words would be going.

MANI: So many. Sometimes each one would have just two cards. Just two cards? What kind of a game you play? [Pilgrims laughing][crosstalk].

ERUCH: I would keep watch outside you see and report to Baba, "Baba it's becoming too boisterous. People on the roadside are standing and trying to find out what's happening inside." So then Baba would say, "Calm down, calm down." Even then of course. Again after 5 minutes there would be another round. All of a sudden I would announce that a car has come Baba. Somebody, some family to see you. So then Baba would immediately tell the others around Him, "Put your cards there, under there." And then all would be seated you see as if nothing had happened. [General laughter] All quiet and all very respectable like this. So these are the little hints that are now very useful to us. As we. Haan?

PILGRIM 3: You said you had an old deck of cards there.

ERUCH: So. No what I say is that there are people who are asking us whether Baba encouraged us to have discipline or to use

our discretion or something like that. So yes He did. These are the guidelines you see that He had left behind. We have to use our discretion. We have to. He asks us to be most natural we have to be most natural. So will it be very natural for us to be boisterous when a stranger enters? Is it natural? No. So the most natural thing is to keep quiet in presence of Baba. So such discretion little hints He's left behind us so that we follow and we profit by it now.

Had He not done this. Had He not been human to us we wouldn't have known anything. We would have just carried on saying that Baba wants us to be natural. So we would have just sat there you see and let out a wind also and saying that passing anything very natural. But that's not what He wanted us to do. He wanted us to be natural in its most natural sense. Not in an unnatural way. You see.

MANI: But you see that's. Although it is. The human side is as we see it. We are only reporting as we see. But at the same time we realise that Baba through that was doing something else also. That He would not. He would take great pains to make it seem human. To make it seem so natural. For instance, suddenly Baba would like one vegetable okra. He would like okra and He would want it every day. We would think, "Ah Baba has suddenly developed a taste so much for okra that He wants it every day."

But He was very particular. It had to be every day and if they couldn't get it in the bazaar if we were in Pune then Eruch's family or wherever we were here then another family would go seek high and low just to get okra because Baba must have okra every day. Again and again. And then after a certain period Baba would stop. He wouldn't touch okra. Then another vegetable would be in place. Now when we look back we realise that He also did that with just like He did with the animals. Animals were such a prominent

part in life with Baba during His God-Man image. So these vegetables, how do we know? Anything eaten by Him, touched by Him, consumed by Him [inaudible]. All these things. Not just for where He is visible and where in the things. Instruments that He uses but at all levels.

RANO: Once Baba was working on Ruano in Hollywood and He wanted spinach every day. But she had to prepare the spinach. [Crosstalk] And every day she had to be down [inaudible] where the kitchen was in this house in Hollywood. And we'd all be upstairs with Baba. And she would be crying [inaudible]. Baba is upstairs and everybody's is upstairs [inaudible]. Washing, washing, washing. Spinach is very sandy.[inaudible] And one day while she was washing the spinach and the door opened and Baba came [inaudible] [crosstalk].

PILGRIM 4: Can you recall anything of the last visit between Upasani Maharaj and Baba?

ERUCH: I wasn't there. All that has been recalled is printed there you know. I wasn't there personally myself. I was at Meherabad at the time you see. He had kept me with the masts.

MANI: Wouldn't Adi know?

ERUCH: Of course Adi would know.

PILGRIM 4: Okay I'll ask him.

ERUCH: No but even Adi was not there.

MANI: Padri.

ERUCH: Padri, Padri would know. Because Adi was not present at that time.

RANO: [Inaudible]

ERUCH: Yeah. So Padri would know. Padri had gone. Or do one thing. Savak Kotwal is coming now. You know Kotwal family?

PILGRIM 4: Yes I met him in Bombay. He came to visit Peggy.

ERUCH: He was there. He was there.

PILGRIM 4: Okay.

ERUCH: So he is coming. But you are leaving when?

PILGRIM 4: The 8th.

ERUCH: Oh yes. He's coming on the 1st. For 5 days stay. So you ask him he was there.

PILGRIM 4: To Meherabad.

ERUCH: Yeah. He and his family coming. [general crosstalk]

What else? About His personal side. There are many things about His personal side. Haan? What did He do?

PILGRIM 5: What did you do with Him?

ERUCH: [Laughing] What did we do with Him?

MANI: Well it's like somebody wrote me a postcard. How many? That's 40 years we were [inaudible]? Somebody wrote me a postcard. An Indian family. [inaudible] "How are you? Please write in reply. Tell me the story of your lives. [General laughter]

PILGRIM 5: Just like Eruch was telling [inaudible] Eruch was telling [inaudible]

MANI: Oh that

PILGRIM 5: Things like that [crosstalk] [inaudible]

MANI: Oh that's a wonderful story.

ERUCH: Alright then what He would do is. Sometimes He will say, "Come here and kiss Me." So we would have to go there and kiss. He would say, "No this is the way you kiss." [general laughter].

PILGRIM 6: You would kiss His cheek?

ERUCH: He would just do like that. "Kiss me here", All of a sudden He would say that. So we'd just tenderly kiss Him. He says, "Is that the way you kiss?" [pilgrims laughing] [clock chimes]. You see that? Yeah that's how you do that.

MANI: Especially when we would sit. I mean we didn't just go whenever you felt like and embrace Baba. As I said we were free but no liberty [inaudible].

But still at the same time you see the natural [inaudible]. But sometimes when you were not [inaudible] and He were angry with us. And then Baba would say come over and embrace Me. You didn't want to budge [pilgrims laughing]. [Inaudible] And we would say, "It's alright, It's alright Baba you don't have to do that. I'm alright now." [inaudible] [general laughter]. "Come here". We would go over and just manage to kiss. [inaudible] [crosstalk]

ERUCH: I am sure and definite that never was there a day we slept when there was any strife. Because Baba was the One who always brought about a solution or an end to any strife. Even for a day. Never it went on for 24 hours. Never slept over it.

PILGRIM 7: You mean you might carry something all day but by the end of the day it all.

ERUCH: All scores gets cancelled you see. Never in our life mind you. Never in our life. Even not with anybody let alone Him. But with anybody if His attention is drawn He would be the one to just wipe the

whole thing out for the night. Nobody slept with a heavy heart.

MANI: And because of that now we are so used to [crosstalk]. Tell them about that.

RANO: We were trying really hard and we were feeling very noble [inaudible] I remember we were feeling. But what happened was that in Bangalore.

ERUCH: Record this it's very interesting.

PILGRIM 7: Yeah I'm getting it.

RANO: We were supposed to go stay in Bangalore and all the furniture and everything had been brought down [inaudible]. And Baba suddenly decided now we go back to Meherabad. Everything pack and we all go. Well we were going to need several cars plus the bus and everybody was very crowded especially in the bus. So Kitty and I decided we'd be very noble so and [inaudible] Plans were being made. Kitty and I spoke up and we said that we would go on the train. "Go on the train," said Baba. "Well yes we thought that everybody would be less crowded if we go on the train." "Oh so you want to go on the train?" "It's not that we want to go but we just thought that you know it would be."

So this went on during the whole time and then Baba dismissed us off. Then later on He called Kitty and me to His room and we went through that whole session again. And each time we were explaining to Baba that we were just sort of you know feeling that we were doing something for everybody in this. It wasn't that we wanted to go on the train. This went on for at least 2 or 3 days. In the end Baba broke us down. We were in absolute tears. We said, "Yes Baba." Of course oh yes one thing Baba said, "Oh you would rather go on the train than go on the bus."

ERUCH: With Me.

RANO: I mean with Me.

ERUCH: Haan that's important.

RANO: "No no Baba of course we want to be with you but we just felt you know I mean this time we [inaudible]. Two people makes quite a difference [inaudible]" "Oh so you want to go on the train and not with Me." And that was the theme song of the whole situation. And every time Baba after He'd dismiss all of us and go to His room. Again He'd call Kitty and me and again we went through this. Kitty and I still sticking to our guns [inaudible].

Oh we felt so righteous and we just kept right on insisting on it. This went on for about 2-3 days. In the end I mean Baba just broke us down. We were in tears, "Yes Baba of course we want to be with you. Of course we don't want to go on the train." [general laughter][inaudible].

PILGRIM 8: Did He say, "Now you go on the train?"

RANO: No, no [general laughter] [crosstalk]

MANI: You see we had to think of, "That's what Baba would want. Baba." Even if Baba says do something which would. Which would feels not too nice [inaudible]. But still, "That's what Baba wanted." To be with Baba. To be sensitive to Baba's pleasure. To be sensitive to being with Him, doing for Him. Not so much for each other. Our link had to be very strong with Baba.

RANO: Oh we felt at the time we were you know trying to be helpful to Baba.

MANI: Yes, yes. [Crosstalk] Or if Baba said somebody should do such a thing. And you thought, "Oh poor dear how could she do that? Let me go and help her." That was wrong. That wasn't right. We learnt. We learnt.

ERUCH: He would point out, “Ah want to take their side. Want take his side eh. You don’t want to take My side.” [general laughter] He would point out to us that. Amongst the mandali also. He wouldn’t like us to. He wouldn’t want us to be against one another. He would like all to be one. But none should take anybody’s side.

MANI: Not to be so attached.

ERUCH: Not to be attached.

RANO: There was a time when we were. When I was in that hill there at Ajmer.

ERUCH: Taragarh

RANO: Taragarh.

ERUCH: Yeah say that. That’s another one.

RANO: Well it just happened that Baba decided to go up there for a few days. But it meant taking all the beddings out, the food supplies, the utensils. Everything was necessary. Lanterns everything you can think of had to be carried up that hill. And we were to spend a few days and then come back again to our bungalow to stay. The thing was that Baba kept telling us every day what trouble He’s being put to in making these arrangements. Because there had to be the lift chairs to take Mani in because she couldn’t walk. And so many details and Baba kept reiterating the fact that the expenses He’s having to go through and the trouble and the dilemma . So many complications to get us up on that hill.

Kitty and I again got our heads together [Eruch laughs]. It’s such a shame. I mean Baba is going through so much trouble for us and so much expense. He really shouldn’t be [inaudible].

So Kitty and I went to Baba [pilgrims laughing] and said we would like to speak to Him. Baba said, “What is it?” “Oh Baba you know you say it’s so much trouble and

so much expense going up on the hill and Kitty and I both. I mean well why do it you know? I mean we won’t mind if we don’t get that trip up on the hill.” [general laughter].

Baba gave us one look and He dictated very fiercely on the board, “My Word comes first. You only second.” And after that Kitty and I never said another word. For His work He was going and incidentally He was taking us along with Him. And we were taking it upon ourselves that Baba is taking all this stress for us. Baba made it very clear His work came first and we only came second. So after that Kitty and I never said another word no matter how much trouble we’re going through or how much He complained about expenses and things. This is what Baba wants so alright. Once bitten twice shy.

All these little incidents like that we were actually learning.

PILGRIM 9: Where did you meet Baba?

RANO: In London. [inaudible]

PILGRIM 10: I’d like to hear about Him.

RANO: I just happened to hear about Him [inaudible]

ERUCH: But tell how.

RANO: I think most people know this.

ERUCH: Oh no. This is a new crowd now. The same house but the new crowd.

RANO: It seems that I mean from 1931 when Baba first came to the West. I mean my heart was heading towards Baba but at the time I didn’t know it. I left America with my mother and we started travelling in Europe. And we had met a very charming woman in America and she happened to be in Paris in the new year.

And we picked up acquaintance with her again and became very good friends after a while. Her name was Ruano Bogislav. So we happened to be in Paris at this particular time and we were walking down the street. There was a man's voice behind us calling out Freda, Freda. And so persistent. And Ruano and my mother and me [inaudible].

And I suddenly said to Ruano, "Your name is Freda." This is from her stage name. And she said, "Yes." Well I said, "There's a very persistent person behind us who keeps saying Freda. Why don't you look and see who it is." And she turns around and she greets the person who's calling her and they embrace and so happy for each other. To see each other and it turned out to be Quentin Tod. Quentin Tod had just come back from that trip that the Westerners took.

The first trip they took to India in 1933 to be with Baba. They were going to travel with Baba via China and they were going to California and Baba was going to [inaudible] Hollywood movie. Then the thing is that they got as far as India. Then Baba gave them a trip to Kashmir and when they came back Baba said, "Now you have to go back to the West and pick up where you left off."