

Maya in its subtle state

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Maya is the outer shield of the divine beauty> If one comprehends and understands the lore of Maya, one endears in the “Leela” [the grand raas-leela of Ishvara]. Mohini was the first svaroop of Maya, Sita-Svayam was engulfed and protected by Mohini. As Radhika was transformed into Lord’s Maya but Radha’s Bhakti and Meera’s tyag realised the Parama-atman JagadPurusha Ishvara in glimpses of divine visions. Divine vision transpires when we stop “Vi-Chitt”, “A-Chitt” and “Sa-Chitt” modes of mind and realise that there is a greater subtle mind above the mind that is super consciousness, consciousness and divine trance. This is the trance that Meerabai attains after long devotion towards Krushna. Krushna became Meerabai’s Maya, reality, and even the only truth in which she established fullest prowess of truth, faith and soul mate. Maya in its absolute divine state is a joy experienced in Bhajans, Samnkirtans, hymns, poetry, and lyrics. Where the mind does not explicate, poetry splendours delight!

Udhavji a learned man had to learn this lesson from Meerabai.

“I’ll make ‘desire’ churn into my fuel,

I’ll caper to the rhythm my beloved’ flute,

I’ll make my song dance to the melodies of love divine,

I’ll make sound of music with my trinkets,

I’ll burn my mind to ashes,

I’ll put a stop to that Yogi’s wanderings:

Nameless, I’ll be reborn...in the reflection of GirdhariNaath, Mero Girdharinaath...”

“Giving up maya entails disowning all falsity; giving up all claims to ownership and all fears of living life without desire to endure in senses.”

“Insult” and “praise” do not affect such a one.



In Mira's compositions, desire is a 'maddening' force and accelerates her wish to

consummate her love. She says,

Come home, master of the universe:

The agony of separation breaks me down.

Come and quench the fire within me.

All night I wander in my sorrows:

Sleep and hunger have forsaken me.

Only this sinful soul survives.

Bring spring to my grieved heart

Life in the world is short,

Why shoulder an unnecessary load

Of worldly relationships?

Thy parents gave thee birth in the world,

But the Lord ordained thy fate.

Life passes in getting and spending,

No merit is earned by virtuous deeds.

I will sing the praises of Hari

In the company of the holy men,

Nothing else concerns me.

Mira's Lord is the courtly Giridhara,

She says: Only by Thy power

Have I crossed to the further shore.

“OUR WORLD IS DISSOLVING AS IT SHOULD, LIKE THE DIMINISHING SHADOW WITH TIME ELAPSING”

MAYA is a fundamental concept in Hindu philosophy. Its meaning has changed over time, and there are different views of it in different schools of philosophy. To some it has come to mean the very subtle force that creates the grand illusion that the phenomenal world is real. For the Nondualists, maya is that grand force that presents Being as the finite phenomenal world. Maya may in reality be identical with Brahman. [Ebu "maya"]

Appearances are tackled by sound measures. They include measurements. All "that" is maya.

Your own vigour contains seeds of some maya or measures. A constructive tradition shows both the fit way to heaven with clarity and sane ways to work and appear financially well, instead of getting undermined.

Often surprising teachings about maya have come down to us from ancient traditions.

Appearances (one form of maya) require measures, and measuring is of maya too.

In ancient teachings, as in Hinduism, we are told that maya is all (including that statement). Now as you may glimpse below, maya contains a constructive facet (side). Accordingly, some appearances empower, are constructive, and function as the sources of often stunning businesses, including stunning ways to attain heaven - which should be of maya as well.

What do you think? There are old and more recent sayings about maya on this page - a rare find it is.

Adi Sankara on Maya

L. Thomas O'Neil presents how the ancient Indian philosopher and monist Shankara views maya in Shankara's commentary of the *Brahma Sutra*, an ancient work ascribed to the rishi called Veda-Vyasa. [Cf. Bik] In his work, O'Neil surveys maya in the early Indian tradition along with that. [Mii] Conclusions:

"In the Advaita ['monism'] of Sankara these four (analogue, name-form complex, language, and maya) are necessarily connected." [Mii 189]

"Maya is the matrix or frame in which the name-form complex finds its base". [lb]

"Maya is discourse about Brahman [or God] (...) indefinable." [Mii 192]

"Monier-Williams etymologically defines maya as deriving from the root *ma* or "measuring". When one adds the suffix *ya* to the root *ma* it can be defined as "relating to measuring". ... maya can also be understood in this manner in Sankara's Advaita Vedanta [a religious-speculative system]." [Mii 202]

"Maya is provisional [providing]". [Mii 202]

"Maya measures out the the name-form complex, language, and maya itself so that ... knowledge of Brahman [gnosis] can be actualised." [Mii 203]

"Analogues ... allow maya to fulfill its necessary function ... that is to make itself transparent to Brahman [the Godhead itself]". [Mii 204]

Maya also provides what may be actualised.

The next two personages to quote on maya are known as pillars of Hinduism in recent times - they are Paramhansa Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Ramakrishna on Maya

Paramhansa Ramakrishna (1836-1886) said such as, "Do not count too much upon the fruits of your action". [More]

- Maya releases from bondage. [Rap 30]
- Ramakrishna was all love and reverence for maya . . . a majestic expression of Divinity. [Rap 30]
- According to him [Ramakrishna], Maya projects and withdraws the world. [Rap 30]
- To Ramakrishna maya itself was God - everything was God - [maya] was one of the faces of [the Godhead]. [See Rap 30]
- Maya can not be distinguished from the supreme [Godhead]
- The mighty weaver (Maya) is none other than the Divine Mother. [Rap 30]

"I tell you the truth: there is nothing wrong in your being in the world." - Ramakrishna [Link]

Maya sits on top of God -

Some Words by Vivekananda

Vivekananda (1863-1902) was Ramakrishna's disciple. "The secret of religion lies not in theories but in practice." - "Who serves jiva ["the individuality as soul"], serves God . . ."

Maya becomes beautiful ... with own real self. [Cf Via 243]

Maya is a statement of ... how it is going on." - Vivekananda [Via 222]

This universe is maya - Vivekananda [Via 227]

Maya is used incorrectly to denote illusion or delusion. - Vivekananda [Via 219]

To be real is also beautiful.

Ramakrishna on Maya

RAMAKRISHNA (1836-86) had a disciple whose real name was Mahendranath Gupta, who was known as M, and also was called Master Mahasaya. He wrote down a long row of conversations of Ramakrishna. They became a five-volumed biography of Ramakrishna. [Rap; Goa].

Ramakrishna talked well of Maya, and his chief disciple Vivekananda did too. Below are a few stories of the Ramakrishna take.

Totapuri got astonished

Once the yogi Totapuri strolled into the life of Rakrishna. Totapuri asked Ramakrishna to withdraw his mind from all objects of the relative world and to concentrate on the Absolute. Ramakrishna tried and said: "It is hopeless. I cannot raise my mind to the unconditioned state and come face to face with Atman."

The other grew excited and sharply said: "What? You cannot do it? But you have to." He cast eyes around. Finding a piece of glass he took it up stuck it between Ramakrishna's eyebrows. "Concentrate the mind on this point!" he thundered, and Ramakrishna lost consciousness of the outer world for three days.

"Is it really true?" Totampuri cried out in astonishment. Great God! It is nothing short of a miracle!"

Maya - existence of forms

Ramakrishna acknowledged the power of maya in life. He was all love and reverence for maya, perceiving in it a mysterious and majestic expression of Divinity.

To him maya was God. Through it he also recognized divine immanence. Even those who realize the absolute in nirvikalpa samdhi are under its jurisdiction as long as they live on the relative plane.

"Like the effulgent sun, bringing into existence clouds of different colours and shapes, shining through and standing behind them and thus conjuring up wonderful forms in the blue autumn heaven". - Ramakrishna laughing

Some time later, while Totpuri and Ramakrishna were discussing Vedanta, a servant of the temple garden came there and took a live coal from the sacred fire that had been lighted by the great ascetic. He wanted it to light his tobacco. Totapuri flew into a rage at the act and was about to beat the man.

Sri Ramakrishna rocked with laughter. "What a shame!" he cried. "You have explaining to me the reality of Brahman and the soriness of the world; yet now you have so far gotten yourself as to be about to beat a man in a fit of passion. The power of maya is indeed inscrutable!"

Totapuri was embarrassed.

According to Ramakrishna (above), Mother is Maya.

More on Maya

In Sanskrit works there are many terms that include 'maya'. One such term is 'mahamaya', which means great maya. Originally 'maya' signified comprehensive and creative knowledge, wisdom from of old; afterwards it came to be taken in its second and derivative sense as cunning, magic, illusion, phenomenal consciousness, the power of self-illusion in Brahman.

A mayavadin professes that the world is maya. Such a teaching would be wholly included in world-maya - and hence be illusory. Few all-is-maya teachers think of that and stand up to the hard consequences.

'Para maya', the supreme maya, stands for higher divine Nature.

'Vidya-avidyamayi maya' is maya composed of Knowledge and Ignorance. 'Vidyamaya' is the maya of Knowledge (gnosis). 'Avidya' is non-vidya, that is, not-knowing, ignorance.

In the guru Ramakrishna's experience, Maya is divine. Ramakrishna "did not, like a Vedantic scholar, repudiate the world as maya, but gave it a spiritual status, seeing in it the

manifestation of Chit and Ananda." Ramakrishna had a "vision of the divine Maya, the inscrutable Power of God, by which the universe is created and sustained [Goa 34, 35]."

His biographer, Nikhilananda, writes further that Ramakrishna "acknowledged its power in the relative life. He was all love and reverence for maya, perceiving in it a mysterious and majestic expression of Divinity. To him maya itself was God [Goa 50]."

Further, "Maya . . . is the Mother of the Universe, identical with the Brahman of Vedanta and with the Atman of Yoga. [Goa 51]."

Ramakrishna discovered that maya operates in the relative world in two ways and he termed these "avidyamaya" and "vidyamaya.' Avidyamaya sustains lower planes, but vidyamaya is enlightening, including qualities like kindness. Vidyamaya elevates a man to a better consciousness. With the help of vidyamaya he then gets free of maya, if only for a while. The two aspects of maya are two forces of creation [Goa 51, 52].

Ramakrishna further: "When I think of the Supreme Being as inactive - neither creating nor presenting nor destroying - I call Him Brahman or Purusha . . . When I think of Him as active - creating, preserving, and destroying - I call Him Sakti or Maya or Prakriti, the Personal God [Goa 54]."

Maya and the Bible

Maya is a concept that is not used in the Bible at all. However, many of the key elements in the most ancient Vedic understanding of it, are found in the Bible too, for example:

- Extensive *wisdom* is much praised in the whole Bible as valuable to man, and coming from God, and maya is wisdom.
- Special *art* was made use of to design and form a goat-skin covenant tent and its artifacts and utensils - and maya is art.
- *Extraordinary power(s)* can be said to accompany the chosen ones of God in both the Old and New Testament - such prowess may be of maya.

The three emphasised keynotes above are part-definitions of maya from very old times in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary]

Under the influence of the three gunas, the soul is (1) misled by matter, and (2) subsequently entangled and entrapped. This tendency is termed maya (illusion).

Under maya's influence, the atman, (the soul) mistakenly identifies with the body. He accepts such thoughts as "I am white and I am a man," or "This is my house, my country, and my religion." Thus the illusioned soul identifies with the temporary body and everything connected to it, such as race, gender, family, nation, bank balance, and sectarian religion. Under this sense of false-ego (false-identity) the soul aspires to control and enjoy matter. However, in so doing he continuously serves lust, greed, and anger. In frustration he often redoubles his efforts and, compounding mistake upon mistake, only falls deeper into illusion.

In ignorance (tamas), he is fully convinced that right is wrong and wrong is right. In passion he is unsure, hesitant, sometimes enjoying and at others times repenting. Only in goodness does the soul begin to develop wisdom – to see things in the real light. Thus enlightenment means moving away from tamas towards sattva. By so doing, the soul gradually escapes the clutches of maya and moves towards liberation.

CONCLUSION:

Beautiful connotations are contained in Gajendra Moksha Stotram on Maya, the clutched of attachments and the need to detach from falsity, impermanence, and trials of our family hurt. Our family grief and hurt will never go away. One way or another, we will remain in deep conflict from within because all that we regard to be our own kind, are actually not our own.

In Vedic Astrology, therefore, our aim is to make the native understand who are true friends are and who are foes are from the placement of planets and navamsha charts.

I am so proud to be born a HINDU. I would not change the way God made me. So why should anyone change God's creation? It is like one desires to change God!

Love and Peace

Jyotikar January 2010

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