

"Trust God completely and He will solve all difficulties. Faithfully leave everything to Him and He will see to everything. Love God sincerely and He will reveal Himself. And as you love, your heart must love so that even your mind is not aware of it. As you love God wholeheartedly and honestly, sacrificing everything at the altar of this supreme love, you will realize the Beloved within you."

Meher Baba

(*Listen, Humanity*, page 191)

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Meher Baba Center of Northern California

INsights

Community Newsletter

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Check out the newly updated website, thanks to Jeanne Mojé MacDonald (first link above).

Newsletter wallas:
Ben Leet, Lisa Greenstein, Cherrri Nelson &
Karen Talbot

 Baba long hair


Dear Reader,

A. K. Hazra passed away on March 23, 2012, at the age of 81. He had been a professor of English in Japalbur, India. To the Meher Baba world he was the author of several books: *Memoirs of a Zetetic*, the story of his relationship with Meher Baba; a novel, *Of Men and Meher Baba*; and a collection of stories about Baba Lovers in India, *Seekers of Love*. Keith Gunn, our Northern California neighbor, was a co-author with Hazra on the last two of these books.

Memoirs of a Zetetic was A.K. Hazra's first book and it immediately endeared him to the hearts of those who follow Meher Baba. Hazra, or Amiya Kumar, as he is called in the memoirs, possessed a powerful mind. He was very suspicious, doubting by nature, mistrustful of conventional platitudes and pat assurances of God's existence, and a true seeker. In *Memoirs of a Zetetic* he makes numerous challenges to Meher Baba to prove his Godhood. His story shows the exasperating limits of indulgence that God in human form will go to, to convince the sincere skeptic of his Godhood. In his discourse on faith, Meher Baba states, " True faith grounded in pure intuition always remains an imperative that cannot be ultimately reduced to the conclusions of

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rational intellect. It is not derived from the limited intellect but is more fundamental and primary, with the result that it cannot be silenced by any intellectual acrobatics. This does not mean, however, that faith need at any stage be blind, in the sense that it is not allowed to be examined by critical intellect. True faith is a form of sight and not of blindness. It need not be afraid of the free functioning of critical reason." Baba heard Hazra's bizarre challenges and did not turn a deaf ear to them. Instead Baba chose Hazra as an example of a skeptic developing true living faith and love. Hazra's book is packed with lively, highly entertaining and illuminating stories, truly unique to a white-hot seeker who was fortunate to find the living Avatar, Meher Baba. -Ben Leet

 Baba's Birthday 2012

Baba's Birthday No. CA Celebration 2012

Photo: Ben Leet

Amiya Kumar Hazra Obituary

by Keith Gunn

Amiya Kumar Hazra died on the morning of March 23, 2012, of a collapsed lung together with heart difficulties. His wife Gauri had pre-deceased him, but he is survived by two sons, Meher and Aabir and a daughter Mehernandini. She has two sons known in the family as Betoo and Titoo, devoted to Amiya. In addition he had effectively adopted another son, Sankalpa Shrivastava who, with his wife Meheru and their son lived at the Hazra house. The Zetetic will be greatly missed by his family.

Amiya, who liked to be called AKH, met Beloved Baba in December 1957. From about six months prior to his first meeting, AKH was head over heels in love with Baba. But prior to becoming Baba's lover he had spent about a year actively challenging Baba to show His divinity. A typical challenge was, "I feel like fish tonight. We're a thousand miles from the ocean, but I'll believe in you if, when I come home, there is fish on the table." This went on and on, Hazra's nature being to apply scientific standards of proof to every event, from which he became known as a Zetetic - one who questions.

Eventually Hazra's intimacy with Baba was such that Baba referred to him as "My most disobedient son." It was Hazra of whom Baba said, "Amiya, you have got a screw loose." Amiya replied, with all his heart, "Baba, you please tighten my screw." Baba said, "How can I? When I see you my screw also gets loosened." Such was their intimacy. This story and many others appear in *Memoirs of a Zetetic*, AKH's autobiography, written in 1985.

Only a few dozen Westerners know what happened to him after that - because his door was always open, many of us visited him in those years, including Rick Chapman, Paul Liboiron, and Will David. Irwin Luck also visited him in the early 1970s and filmed his memoirs. He wrote several books and a memoir of his times at Guruprasad with his grandson Titoo as editor. In addition, there is a web site, www.trustMeher.org/zetetic that contains his correspondence with Baba with his commentary, as well as a wonderful unpublished story.

A more extensive version of this obituary will be published in an upcoming issue of *The Love Street Breezes*.

Hazra Story

by Keith Gunn



Hazra with neighbors
Photo courtesy of Keith Gunn

I often used to visit the Hazra family. Counting everything, I've spent over 100 days in Jabalpur at their place. My ostensible purpose in going, at first, was to work on books with Amiya Kumar Hazra (who died just this week). He had written one book, *Memoirs of a Zetetic*, which I loved. It is an autobiography of his life and how he fell in love with Meher Baba - all the things he had done afterward to spread Baba's message of love and truth. It's a charming book, once you get past the first 30 pages, which were written in the style of Wordsworth, and were therefore a bit tedious, I thought. I convinced him to abridge it, to get on to his normal style, which was very readable, and together we brought out a second edition. But, I was strongly reproached for doing so by Bal Natu when he saw the finished product. Bal loved the archaic style of those early pages. Oh well.

Eventually we worked on two others: *Of Men and Meher Baba*, a novel, and *Seekers of Love*, a collection of stories by predominantly Hindi-speaking Baba lovers - stories that hadn't been heard in the West. There is still some sales volume for *Seekers*, which sells a few dozen a year.

All Amiya's stories used to be told in bed. He would lie there, and I and my microphone and tape recorder would lie next to him while he told his own stories or translated the *Seekers* stories, which were transcribed in Hindi by his grandson Titoo, and then read out to him so he could translate them into English for the book. His eyes were never good, so it took this curious method. And his health was bad, so it meant we had to do it all reclining.

There was one story in particular that I heard him tell many times. He didn't tell it in public unless I urged him to, because it cast his wife in not such a good light. He had had a tumultuous marriage. It had been a great annoyance to him, and he greatly wished he had heeded the advice Baba had given him in this curious story. A much less well-told version exists in the memoirs of Hoshang Bharucha; I've heard it both ways, and the facts are reinforced thereby.

On more than one occasion, Amiya, in his late 20s, used to be invited to Guruprasad by Baba, along with the usual collection of intimate men who visited Him - Deshmukh and Bharucha, both married were there, and probably the usual other suspects like Jimmy Mistry and Elcha Mistry (no relation). Amiya remembers entering a room containing Baba and the other men, all of them senior to him. Baba pointed at the other men, and addressed Amiya directly. "Amiya look at these old men. They are all old warriors, while you are young. They are all married men and they will try to convince you of the joys of married life. It reminds me of a story. Once upon a time, there were a group of boys, like these guys when they were younger. There were a few older boys, and a youngest boy, like you. The boys used to prowl around at night, looking for mischief. In their prowling, they chanced upon the store of a sweetmeat seller. [A sweetmeat seller makes candy.] In his lot, which was protected by chicken wire, they saw a vat of malai. [Malai is an essential syrup from which

candy is made - also Malai Kofte, which is sold in some Indian restaurants in the States, and also Rasmalai, a sweet]."

"One of the boys was very clever and he found a length of tubing, hose, and with his cleverness he was able to pass the hose through the chicken wire and reach the vat of malai. Being the leader, he got to go first and drink his fill of malai. After he was done, then the next largest boy also drank and also expressed his satisfaction. But by the time the hose got to you, there was none left, and you had nothing to content you. This went on for several nights, and always you were left out."

Naturally the sweetmeat vendor was upset to find that his malai was disappearing. He told his friend that it must be some ghost who was stealing his malai. 'That I don't know,' remarked the friend, 'but let's see what happens if you go get some raw sewage, put it in the vat and cover it over with a thin layer of malai.' The sweetmeat seller agreed, and they put their plan into practice."

"That night the boys once again went for the malai. The eldest one took the first sip. 'Well, he said, 'tonight I just don't feel like it. Let's give the young one a chance.' Now you can imagine just what happened to the poor young boy denied his malai for so long!" Amidst roars of laughter from the elder men, Baba remarked offhandedly to Hazra, "So Amiya I tell you, these guys will urge you to marry, but in the end it may be like malai for the littlest boy."

Amiya thought it was just a funny story, and Baba hadn't conveyed a real suggestion. Later that year, his mother began to pester him to get married. The reason behind this is that mothers do everything for their sons, and pretty soon it's too much and they want a wife to take over. Also, the Indian tradition is that the new wife becomes the free servant of the mother and is subjected to great overwork along with some abuse, the amount varying according to personality, but it is a tradition, and not easily disregarded.

Eventually Amiya's mother told Baba that she wanted relief and she had found a suitable wife for him. Amiya recalls Baba not agreeing very enthusiastically, but not putting any barriers up, and in the end the thing happened. Unfortunately for all concerned, the mother and the wife were at swordpoints almost immediately. Hazra's wife was not going to take the customary abuse lying down, and so there was no peace for him. He had a daughter a year after the marriage, and the two women disagreed violently about how to discipline the daughter, who was very naughty. Hazra eventually complained to Baba, but it only went better when his mother died. On top of that the wife wrote a letter to Baba. She said, "Amiya is out till late at night at your meetings. Can't you give him back to me by 10 PM? I'm lonely and frightened because our house is in the middle of nowhere and I don't feel safe." Both aspects of her complaint were true - Amiya's zeal at the time caused him to go to any gathering to speak about Baba, sometimes not coming home till after midnight, and their house was isolated (though today the same house is in the middle of a teeming neighborhood).

Baba sent Amiya an order to come home by 10 PM, which greatly annoyed him. Eventually, Amiya's wife got the daughter married off to a fellow and moved in with them. She and Amiya were polite but distant in the times that I knew her. So that's the end of the story.

A man from the mandali ran out from within the Guruprasad hall shouting "Amiyakumar - who is Amiya Kumar?" I turned towards the man and told him that I bore the name. "You are Amiya Kumar, are you? Well, leave the cup of tea and rush inside the hall for Baba wants you." I left the cup untouched by my lips and began hurrying after him. Not content with my speed he said, "Don't walk but run for Baba has been asking about you all the time." I thought to myself in surprise, "Well, it was hardly the fifth minute since I had left the hall." Anyway as the man wanted me to run, I scampered back to the hall and just at the entrance was met by another tough-looking volunteer. He looked at me a bit sternly. "You are Amiya Kumar from Bhopal, aren't you?" "Yes, I am." "Well, why did you leave the hall? You come all the way to be in Baba's company and when He wants you, you are not there. You ought never to have left His presence. Now go in and meet Him."....

I really looked small and shrivelled up before the August presence in front of me, beaming with a smile and a face so illuminated as if someone was invisibly focussing a torch on His face. Suddenly, I heard His interpreter Sri Eruch say, "Amiya Kumarjee, come to Baba and embrace Him." I heard the call and took a few steps in the empty hall but now both a deep sense of shame and guilt overpowered me at having again doubted the person who had given me so many kind evidences of His Divinity and above everything His all-giving affection. I struggled to go ahead but when my eyes fell on His pure lotus-like feet I could not proceed. No, I am not worthy to touch even His feet. He is so noble, so pure and so loving and I am so suspicious, so mean and so full of filthy egoistic vices. So instead of going ahead I sat down midway, and said, "It is O.K. from here."

But Baba gestured, His two arms continuously calling me to Him and Sri Eruch interpreted, "Amiya Kumar, Baba wants you to come up to Him and embrace Him." Again, I tried but seeing His eyes full of light and compassion, I lost the power to violate the sanctity of that Being by my unworthy embrace. As I tried to sit down, Sri Eruch again interpreted Baba's gestures that continuously motioned me to embrace Him.

"Why are you keeping away from Baba? Baba wants you to come quite close to Him and embrace Him," said Sri Eruch in soft tones. Then, seeing no other alternative, I went up to Baba slowly, closed my eyes and held my hands like a blind man does when he seeks some alms. In a second I found my hands caught by the most loving hands I had ever felt touching me and then those hands drew me close and soon I found myself locked up in an embrace that I cannot talk about but only sigh about till this day. My head rested on His shoulder and He kissed me as the Father does His son when they meet after a long interval.

Well, I felt all my sins being washed away by that holy touch and my heart full of misgivings was set to rest. Yes, Baba loved me and loves me, and He really does not mind my cross-examining silly brain but tolerates it as only the really great could tolerate the really petty. After the embrace was over, Baba made me sit near Him. Still the hall was empty as people were enjoying tea outside. Then Baba said through Sri Eruch the first words during that momentous meeting during the Darshan interval. "Amiya, you are God! (Baba pointed His fingers at me). You see God (Baba pointed His fingers at Himself)....But you have to BECOME GOD." The word 'become' had an added emphasis as Baba's gestures became emphatic and Sri Eruch faithfully lent his voice to what Baba wished to be communicated.

POETRY CORNER

I, the lost one, find my way to the ocean's shore,
Posted to blog, Darvish Khan Writes, on January 2, 2012, by bill gannett

I, the lost one, find my way to the ocean's shore,
Where none can hear my grief above the surf's roar.

I would drown at once the sound of my own thought-
I would die now and forever to all that can be taught.

The ocean wave rises, threatens and then crashes.
Spirit brightens as rolling water softly caresses.

All truth is revealed in the pure and virgin sand,
Washed clean of all mark left by unnatural hand.

I read the scattered omens of shell, wood and stone:
Only by the songbird's cry can this blame be undone.

My grief shapes slowly into verse that disappears
Along the curving ocean shore of bitter tears.

Darvish walks and walks to find the lost silence
That reveals again the beloved Master's presence.

Line in italics by Francis Brabazon

Bill has just published, *Ghazals for the Friend*, available on Amazon.com
This is the link to buy the book: [**Ghazals for the Friend**](#)

Community Service Projects

by Jess Maron

The Northern California Meher Baba Community is looking for volunteers to participate in service projects. There are three categories of projects: Baba lovers helping others within the Baba community, Baba lovers helping other communities, and Baba lovers working with others helping other communities. The last category may be the most beneficial of all. Through working with others we bring opportunity for communities to see the Baba Center that lives in all of us. Through our being among each other in the spirit of Baba, interest in Baba may be sparked in others. Our efforts would be toward serving other communities, not trying to win people over to Baba, but then what is real service if not bringing Baba to someone's heart.

What is or isn't happening in your neighborhood that could use a helping hand or two? Are you interested in cleaning up the beaches, planting trees, or feeding the hungry?

If you are and would like to be on our mailing list alerting you to upcoming service projects or have ideas for how we could help as a community, please



2012 Board

Members of the 2012 board

photo: Ben Leet

either complete this form <http://goo.gl/xhgbQ> or send an email to outreach@meherbabameherbaba.org with the following information: First Name, Last Name, Email Address, What you would be interested in participating in and/or ideas.

Please note that if working with other organizations require any fees to be paid, no money will be supplied by the Meher Baba Center of Northern California. All fees will be paid for by those participating.

Announcements

Center Library Note:

Would you like to be a "patron"? We have a library for your reading pleasure and convenience. Our library is housed upstairs in a bookcase at the MBCNC Center on Stockton Street. We have had 14 borrowers over the past year. You may access a list of the holdings at the web page meherbabameherbaba.org; look for library, and open the book or video pdf files.

When you visit the Center, remember to check out the library books. We would also like donations. For a list of books we need see the section at the end of the library holdings.

Contact the Newsletter about donations.

The Trust

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, ambkj@aol.com

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**Meher Baba Information** For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail:

[info@MeherBabaInformation.org](mailto:info@MeherBabaInformation.org)

or write to P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701.

<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>

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Meher Baba Center of Northern California

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(510) 525-4779

www.meherbabameherbaba.org

The meeting schedule is now included in our online calendar (web link above), and can be printed directly from the calendar.

Directions to our Center:

From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit exiting east, toward the hills. Cross San Pablo Avenue.

Go under the BART train tracks and less than a block after the tracks, turn left on Richmond Avenue. Head north on Richmond Avenue until Stockton Avenue (the first stop light), turn right on Stockton. About two blocks onward, the Center is located on the left side of the street. Address and phone are listed above.

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**More Local Meetings Lafayette** - Sunday Afternoons  
Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen.  
Please call to confirm. (925) 284-4066

**Sonoma County** - Arti happens once a month, usually the first Sunday.  
Locations vary. Call Ellen Van Allen at 707-528-0357 for specific information.

**Sacramento area** - Meeting times and locations vary  
Contact Marilyn Buehler: inquiry@radiant-light.org [www.radiant-light.org/meherbaba](http://www.radiant-light.org/meherbaba)

**Los Gatos** - Sunday Evenings  
At the home of Clint Snyder  
Call (408) 395-6865

contact for messages to newsletterwallas: [newsletter@meherbabameherbaba.org](mailto:newsletter@meherbabameherbaba.org)

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