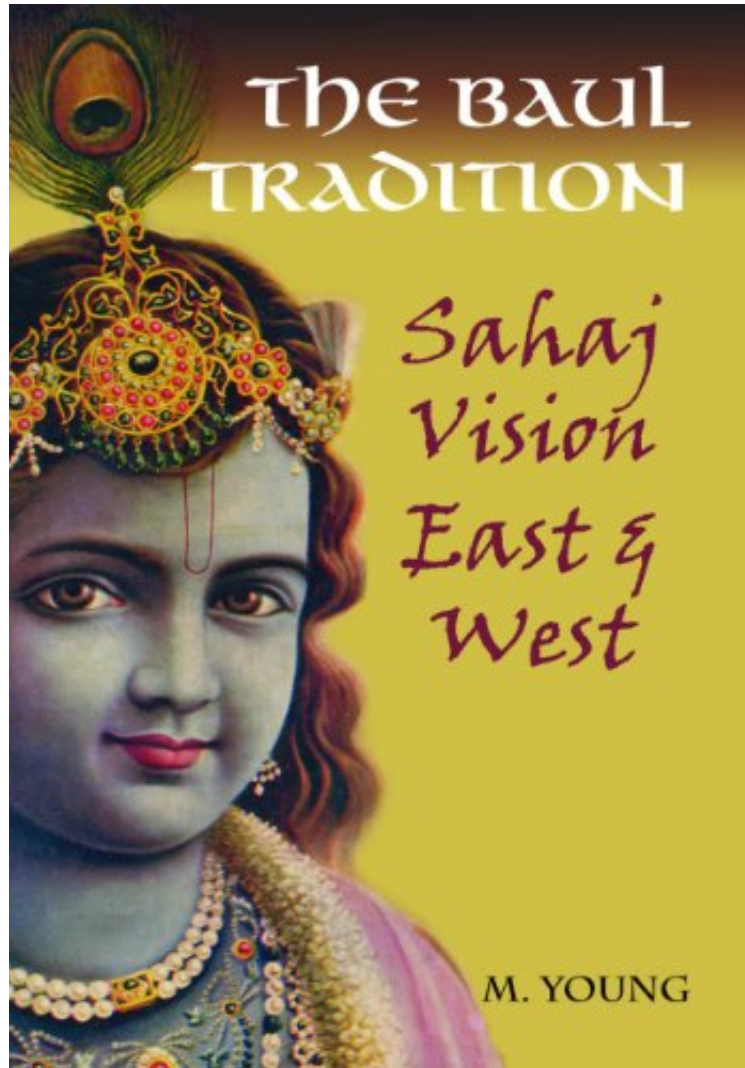


[Free pdf] The Baul Tradition: Sahaj Vision East and West

## The Baul Tradition: Sahaj Vision East and West

*M. Young*

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**M. Young : The Baul Tradition: Sahaj Vision East and West** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Baul Tradition: Sahaj Vision East and West:

This book traces the Baul Path, a Tantric spiritual tradition, from its earliest roots in the subcontinent of India, to its dissemination in the West in modern times. Baul meaning madcap or taken by the wind describes one who has a vision of reality so piercing clear that they are called to live in a way that goes against the common grain: the safe, plodding life of the mainstream. In the East, for centuries, Baul bards yogis wandered the dusty roads of Bengal singing dancing

with joy in praise of God. Their poetry-songs uplifted ordinary people, transporting all above the daily grind for survival into a direct experience of the sublime. Sahaja is the hallmark of the Baul Way, referring to the naturally ecstatic essence of being. According to the Bauls, sahaja nature is inborn, underlies ones human personality habitual social conditioning. It is a blueprint of love, beauty, bliss, wisdom dignity. From the Baul view, to rediscover sahaja is to love God. The spirit of sahaja arises in individuals in all cultures, in all times places, the author asserts. In this book, however, she details the unique vital approaches to life spirituality that the Bauls, both East West, have demonstrated throughout their history, in their philosophy, teaching practice. The Baul sadhana, or spiritual life, rests on four pillars: Radical reliance on the guru; Wandering and begging as a way of life; Teachings encoded in song and dance; Yogas of the body: including hatha, sexuality breath. Each of these tenets is elaborated in depth, as the author highlights the notable differences in their expression then now, in East West. The outstanding contribution of this book is its first-hand account of the introduction of Baul spirituality to the modern world through the life work of Khpa Lee Lozowick (1943-2010), an American teacher the spiritual Heart Son of Yogi Ramsuratkumar, the revered Beggar Saint of Tiruvannamalai, south India. In 2008, M. Young accompanied Khepa Lee to Bengal where they met with eminent Baul gurus practitioners, many who had long awaited an exchange with their American brother. On this trip, his band of Western Bauls shared their American rock blues in a unique interplay between East West. Foreword is by Parvathy Baul, internationally acclaimed musician and representative of the traditional Baul path. M. Youngs work is a feast of scholarship, rich in memoir practical wisdom.

About the Author M. (Mary Angelon) Young, M.S. taught Jungian studies and mythology at Avalon Institute, Boulder, CO, and Prescott College, Arizona before devoting herself exclusively to studying with her teacher, Lee Lozowick. With him for over 25 years, she journeyed widely in India, Europe and the U.S. and interviewed teachers from many different traditions including the Bauls of Bengal. She is the editor of a spiritual journal, Tawagoto, and has published several books on the teaching and life of Lee Lozowick and his master, Yogi Ramsuratkumar. She teaches internationally and resides in northern Ariz. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. For centuries Baul bards, minstrels, yogis, and mystics have wandered the dusty roads of Bengal, going from village to village to ply their spontaneous and simple art, singing songs and dancing with joy. They uplifted the ordinary person with their poem-songs, transporting the listener above the daily grind for survival and into a direct experience of the sublime. In more recent times, the Bauls have thrilled their audiences in both the East and the West with their evocative songs, their symbolic garb, their enigmatic spirit and unique style. Not all Bauls are singers and performers, but all true Bauls are serious practitioners of the spiritual path. The Bauls are carriers of sacred secrets, and in order to make sense of what they do, or the twilight language of their songs, one must dive into the traditional underpinnings of Baul sadhana, or spiritual life. They came, they sang and danced, and they disappeared into the mists, wrote Osho Rajneesh, one of many famous admirers of the Bauls. Perhaps it is the poetic interplay between the sahaja perception of beauty and impermanence that makes the elusive Bauls so compelling. Far from the clamor and complexity of today's Kolkata, the Bauls of Bengal have flourished despite calumny, criticism, poverty, and hardships of all kinds. Walking the razor's edge between joy and sorrow, love and loss, the Bauls have a way of life that carries a vitally necessary message like a refreshing wind to our current times, when the need to rediscover the timeless truths of ancient cultures is so crucially important. A true Baul is a spontaneous occurrence, an uprising of the awakened Divine expressing within the evolutionary pulse of Nature. Baul is simply a word meaning mad, madcap or taken by the wind to describe the state of mind of one who has a vision of reality so piercing and clear that they are called live in a way that goes against the common grain: the safe, quotidian, conservative, plodding life of the mainstream. Throughout history, we can discover in diverse cultures and times many individuals in whom the heart of a Baul beats softly or wildly. Not only great spiritual teachers, but also artists, healers, poets, musicians, teachers, geniuses, leaders in any field. The difference between these diverse individuals is that among the Bauls of Bengal, the path is aimed toward the fulfillment of one purpose to gather honey for the love of the Lord.