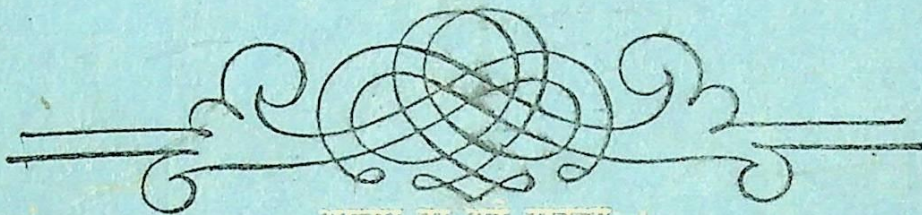


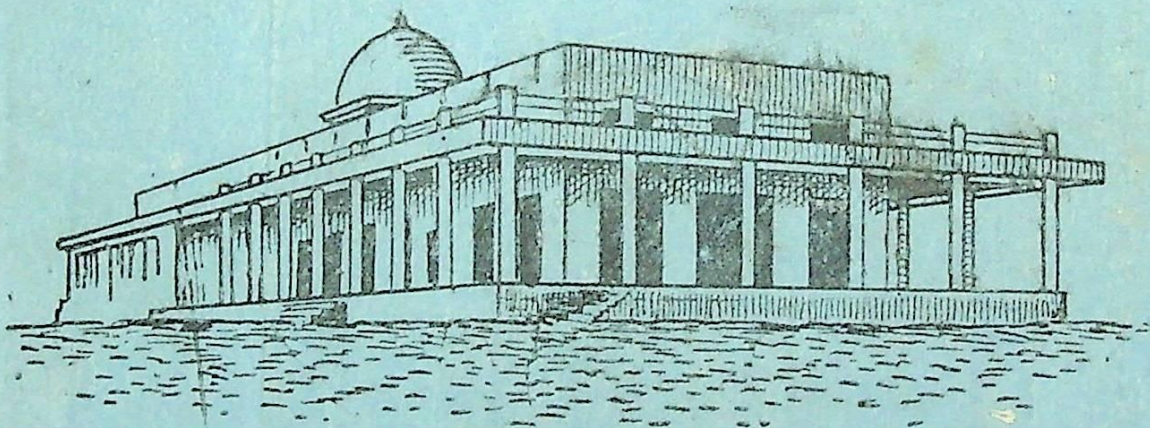
11/75

Pathway to God

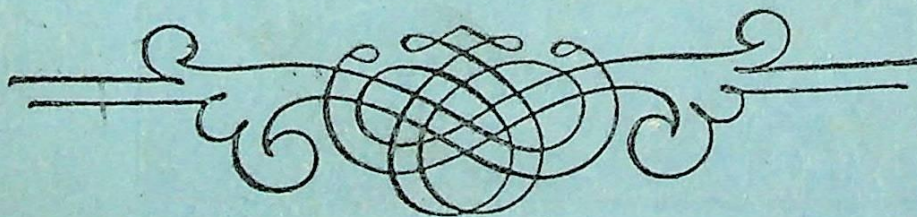
(A Journal of Spiritual Life)



आत्मा का अरु द्रष्टव्यः ।



SRI GURUDEVA MANDIR



Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion
Belgaum

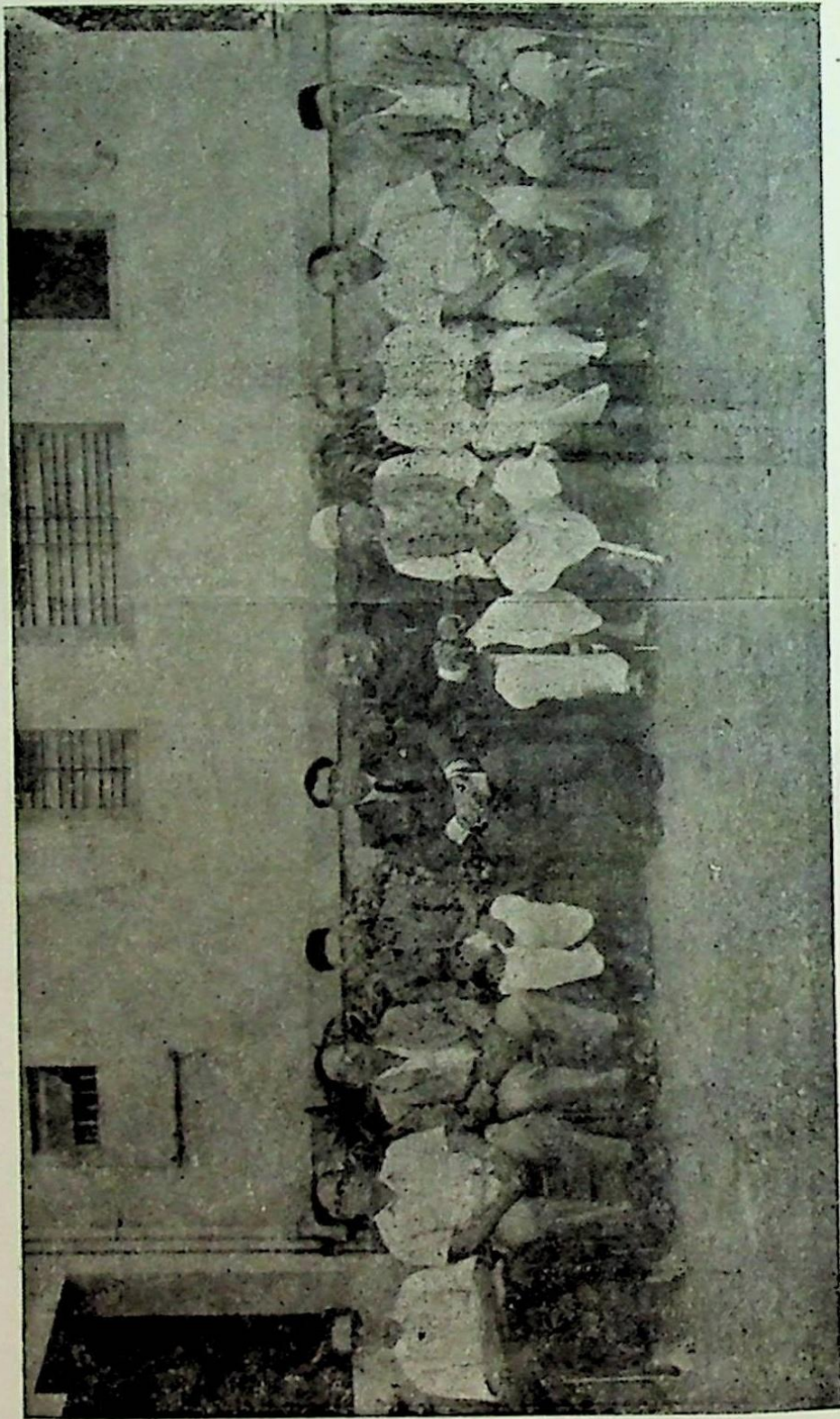
Vaikuntha Chaturdashi

VOL. X No 1)

SAKE 1897

(NOVEMBER 1975)

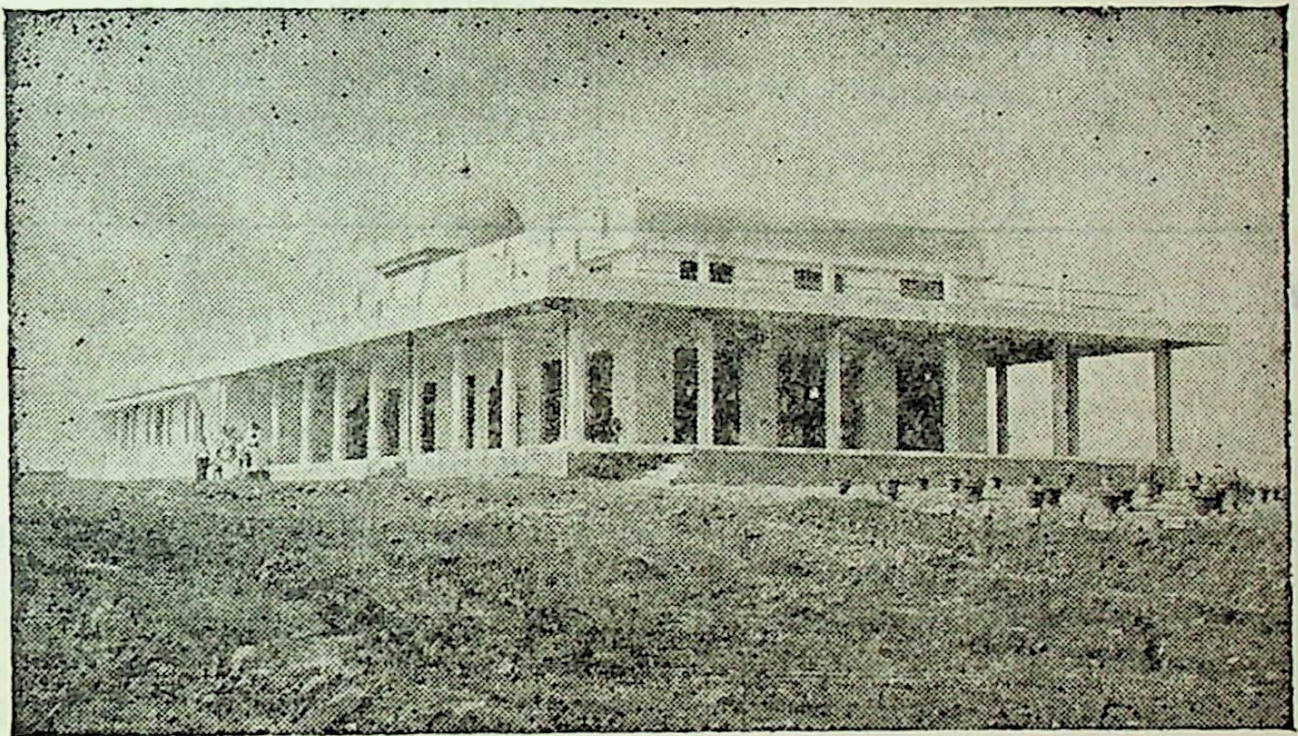
Publication of Shri Jnaneshwar Charitra (5th June 75)



- (1) Shri G. S. Chhatre (2) Shri R. S. Bhide (3) Shri G. S. Kulkarni (4) Shri J. V. Parulekar
(5) Shri P. R. Dubhashi, I. A. S. (6) Dr. D. R. Bendre (7) Shri Kaka Karkhanis
(8) Shri Rana jit Desai. (9) Shri D. B. Parulekar. (10) Prof. K. D. Taugod.

PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Journal Of Spiritual Life)



SHRI GURUDEV MANDIR

Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion
BELGAUM.

VAIKUNTHA CHATURDASHI

Vol. X No. 1

November 1975

Sake 1897

Rs.2-75

Editorial Committee :

1. Shri R. S. Bhide
B. A. LL. B. Chairman
2. Shri M. S. Deshpande
M. A.
3. Dr. B. R. Modak
M. A. Ph. D.
4. Shri G. S. Chhatre
B. Sc.
5. Prof. K. D. Tangod
M. A.

Board of Trustees

- 1, Shri G. V. Tulpule
M. A. Chirman
2. Shri J. V. Parulekar
B. A. Secretary
3. Shri K. D. Sangoram
B. A. LL. B.
4. Shri K. R. Ranade
- 5, Shri R. S. Bhide
B. A. LL B.
6. Shri G. S. Kulkarni
7. Shri N. S. Metrani
B. A. LL. B.

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS

- 1) Subscription may be sent to Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion Belgaum, Tilakwadi East : Belgaum-590006.
- 2) Complaints about non-receipt of the journal should be sent within 15 days of publication.
- 3) Any change of address should be intimated to us at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 4) Subscribers may kindly inform us beforehand if they desire to discontinue subscribing to the journal.
- 5) Regular subscribers of Pathway to God will get a discount of 25% in the price of our publications, if they want to buy them.
- 6) This Public Trust will be happy if every subscriber tries to enrol one or two of his friends as subscriber of this journal of spiritual life. It will help us in giving more pages of reading material.
- 7) The next Number will be out on 6-6-1976 : Gurudev's Punyatithi.
- 8) Readers may write their opinion on the journal to the Chairman of the Editorial Committee.

Published by : Sri. J. V. Parulekar, B. A. Secretary, A. C. P. R
BELGAUM

Vol. X No. 1

November 1975

Pathway to God

CONTENTS

		Page
1. Divine Descent		1
2. Editorial		2
3. Nama-Yoga	.... Shri. M. S. Deshpande, M. A.	9
4. Fragrant Flowers of Spiritual Garden	.... a florist	12
5. Adhyasa	.... Miss Yogini Nighoskar, M. A.	14
6. Akka Mahadevi - St. Mira	.... Sri M. S. Deshpande, M. A.	21
7. A Philosophical Zero	.... Shri. K S. Arjunwadkar, M. A.	27
8. Svadharma	.... Dr S. R. Talahatti, M. A., Ph. D.	35
9. A Scientific Explanation of Religion	.... Shri. K B. Dabade, M. A.	43
10. Bhagavad - Gita, in the Ethical Plane	.... Shri. K E. Parthasarathi, B. A.	55
11. Glimpses of Shri Gurudev Ranade		61
12. Vratam as a Pathway to God.	.... Dr. C. L. Prabhakar M. A., Ph. D.	71
13. Gurudeva Ranade's Approach to the Gita	.... Dr. B. R. Modak, M. A. Ph. D.	77
14. Nature and Destiny of the Finite Soul (Visishtadvaita View)	.... Dr. M. N. Narasimhan, M.A., Ph.D.	81

15. Book Reviews		90
16 A Short Report of the Academy		92
Photographs		
1. Publication of Jnaneshwar Charitra	Cover page	2
2. Shri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade	against P.	60
3. Participants in the Seminar	against P.	92
4. Participants in the Seminar	against P.	94
हिन्दी विभाग		
१. संसारमें रहना कैसे ?	प्रा. टी. कृष्णमूर्ति , एम. ए.	१
२. गुरु बिनु भवनिधि तरं न कोई	यशोद	४
३. संत तुलसीदास	प्र. वा. म.	७

THE AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE TRUST

To work for the spiritual unity of mankind and consequent peace and goodwill upon earth. bringing together intellectual and spiritually minded persons through :-

- (1) Spiritual Symposium
- (2) Study and Research
- (3) Lectures
- (4) Meetings and Conferences and
- (5) Religious and philosophical publications.

Pathway to God

(*A Journal of Spiritual Life*)

“ One God, One World, One Humanity ”

Vol X

November 1975

No 1

Divine Descent

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

Whenever there is decline of Dharma (*righteousness*) and rise of Adharma (*unrighteousness*) then I embody Myself ! O Bharata !

परित्राणाय सधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of Dharma I am born from age to age.
(Geeta IV 7-8)

Editorial

Prayer

This is the tenth year of the publication of our Journal. We pray Sri Gurudev to grant us proper light and strength to convey his Message of Peace and Bliss to an ever widening circle of aspirants.

This is also the Seventh Birth-Centenary year of Sri Jnaneshwar – one of the greatest Saints of Bharat-nay, of the world. We would, hence, offer our reverential homage to the sacred and inspiring memory of this Eminent Saint, through our ardent Prayer to the Lord, in his own memorable words:

“ May the wicked leave their crookedness and have increasing love for good ! Let universal friendship reign among all beings. Let the darkness of evil disappear. Let the Sun of True Religion rise in the world. Let all beings obtain what they desire. May the company of the devotees of God, Who shower down blessings incessantly, meet the beings on earth! They are verily moving gardens of wish-trees; they are living mines of wish-jewels; they are speaking oceans of nectar. They are moons without any detracting mark; they are suns without any tormenting heat. May all beings be endowed with all happiness and have incessant devotion to the Primeval Being. Let all those who live upon this work, have victory in the seen as well as the unseen!”

Problem of Languages:

Of all the problems our Nava-Bharat is required to solve this problem is both simple and difficult – simple to those who have the right vision – the proper national outlook and difficult to those who don't possess it.

Now what is the nature of the right vision? we must at the outset properly realise that our Bharat is not a small compact

nation, with a limited homogeneous population. It is a vast nation of about more than 50 crores of people, professing different faiths, having different castes and creeds, speaking different languages and developing different types and degrees of cultures and yet it is one nation. Our eminent forefathers have successfully introduced strong bonds of unity in this rich diversity, on account of which, in spite of colossal calamities overpowering us, we have successfully survived as a nation. Now that it has regained its lost independence, it is our bounden duty to strengthen those bonds and forge as many more bonds as possible so that we may not allow ourselves to be divided and destroyed as of yore, but would rise with redoubled vigour and fulfil its lofty mission creditably in near future.

We must also remember that Bharat has a great part to play in building a world on the firm foundation of good-will and peace. It has to deliver its spiritual message to the world in general and Asia in particular. Our modern Saints had a pre-vision of this lofty mission. Hence it is bound to be realised sooner or later, for which also we must equip ourselves properly by developing our head, our heart and our society in the right spirit.

Once we try to have clear ideas about these all-important factors, we will automatically move in the right direction and realise the proper place which each of the following four languages namely, Sanskrit, English, Hindi and Regional language (we are primarily concerned with these four only) has to occupy, in the affairs of our nation. We will not, then, allow the love of a particular language to develop into veritable linguism. A pure love for a particular thing is good. But if it develops into an 'ism' it is bad. Love is inclusive while 'ism' is exclusive. Love is creative while 'ism' is destructive. Prudence, therefore, lies in controlling our over-zeal and giving the angel its due.

Cultural Language:

Now Sanskrit is the language of our Religion and culture. It is the language in which the valuable words of wisdom of our ancient Seers and Saints have been enshrined for centuries. It has continued to give to our nation, from times immemorial, the necessary cultural unity, light and strength. In fact, it is Sanskrit that

served as *Lingua Franca* of our elite before the advent of British domination and has given our nation a strong bond of unity. It is this language that was—and even now is—the perennial source of nourishment to our different regional languages. Hence we cannot afford to neglect it with impunity. We must, at the same time remember that, though rich, it is comparatively rather difficult and hence cannot be easily learnt, by all. We must, therefore, arrange its instruction in such a way that at least a few gifted students should have full mastery over it and many more—less gifted—should be able to understand simple verses like those in *Panchatantra* and *Mahabharat*. It is with the help of these students that we must try to bring the Sanskrit lore to the doors of our masses through their mother-tongues. This modest result can be achieved by giving an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit to those students who select the Art Course in the Secondary Schools and higher knowledge of the same to those who continue the same Course in the colleges. *Pathashalas* run by *Pandits* should also be properly encouraged by giving them liberal grants. Thus the torch of Sanskrit knowledge should be kept blazing steadily and powerfully.

International Language:

English is the language of international communication. It is a well-developed language, containing the best thoughts of the best brains of the modern contemporary world. It has been, we may say, a good legacy of a bad rule. We are still required to make a good use of it, both in our internal as well as in our external affairs. So we must neither thoughtlessly hug it to our bosom as we were doing in the past, nor try to kick it off, as some of us are proposing to do now. We must not forget that it is not and cannot be our national language. But at the same time we must not fail to reap as much benefit from it as possible. We must, therefore, try to bring all the knowledge it contains in our national language and then gradually displace it by Hindi in all the fields of our national life. But its place in the international life is bound to remain the same for a long time. Hence we must see that we have always at our command a good batch of persons who can claim a fine mastery over that language and can handle it effectively in all international gatherings. Our scientists and other scholars of international repute cannot also

afford to remain without a working knowledge of English. This present requirement of ours can be fulfilled by teaching English to the students taking science courses in the secondary schools and as a compulsory subject for those continuing the same course in the colleges and as an optional subject for others. In all walks of national life, however, gradual substitution and not hasty displacement should be our policy.

National Language

Next comes Hindi or Bharati-our national language. Our new Constitution has declared that Hindi written in *Devanagari* script should be adopted as the national language of Nava-Bharat. Out of all the languages of Bharat, Hindi has been selected for this place of honour because of its present extensive use and its rich potentiality. Its relative simplicity and fine melody and expressiveness have been other factors that were also responsible for its choice. The present Hindi literature though on par with that of many other State languages, cannot compete with English literature, no doubt. But that is exactly the reason why we should all try our level best to study it thoroughly and enrich it by our whole-hearted, all-round and united effort and secure for it an exalted position in the nation and proper recognition in the world forum.

Hindi should never be treated with scant respect, merely as a link-language of inter-state communication and official use. It should be offered the dignified place of a genuine National Language. The rich intellectual and cultural product of the whole contemporary Bharat should be properly expressed in Hindi and the master-minds of the whole nation should vie with one another in pouring down their rich thought-contents in Hindi. What English is to England, French to France, Russian to Russia, that should Hindi be to Bharat. Our loyalty to Hindi should not be in any way less than that of other nations for their national languages. It is only then that Hindi will rise to its supreme height and even aspire for becoming the *Lingua Franca* of Asia - nay, in times to come, even of the whole world. This should be the aspiration with which we should all be actuated. This is the high consummation we should attempt to reach. We must bend all our energies and utilise all our resources to bring

about this result at the earliest possible date. A passionate love for Hindi, inculcated in our young men, will also create an indissoluble bond of cultural and emotional unity in the nation, which is an indispensable foundation for our future national strength and glory.

How to enrich Hindi? Our Education Ministry, the Sahitya Akadami and some other Bodies have been trying to achieve this in all possible ways. They have been getting valuable works on various subjects, in world literature, translated and published in Hindi. They have also tried to prepare and fix the terminology of scientific, technological, medical, legal and administrative terms in Hindi. This terminology may require revision with the help of experts from all the State languages before they are finalised once for all, so that they may all accept them willingly when they are introduced in their respective languages. Some fine and inspiring selections from a few classics of different State languages may be published in the *Devanagari* script along with their translations in Hindi. At the same time, Hindi scholars of outstanding erudition may be asked to simplify and regularise the grammatical structures in Hindi with the help and guidance of expert linguists from State languages. These linguists may also be invited to select some fine, expressive words that are current and popular in their respective languages. Such words may, thereafter, be incorporated in the Hindi vocabulary. Hindi, polished and enlarged in this manner, would naturally assume the dignity and expressive power required for a national language. Then she would become a real Bharati—a genuine national language of Bharat and would command loving respect from the whole nation.

This may take some time for this object of ours to materialise. But education, persuasion and self-imposed compulsion is the surest way of achieving it. We must properly educate the people in the non-Hindi States, explain to them the absolute necessity of adopting and developing Hindi from the national point of view and gradually persuade them to love it. We must try to convince them that in the interest of national unity, solidarity and strength, all educated nationals should learn at least two languages viz. Hindi and the State language. Those whose mother-tongue is Hindi should love and learn at least one of the other State languages—preferably of South Bharat—with the same reverence with which we expect them to learn Hindi. We should try to allay their fear of Hindi hegemony

by granting their respective languages all the facilities for their full development so that they might effectively take their rightful place and discharge their functions properly in their respective fields. A steady inculcation of this national out-look in a persuasive manner will soon disarm and weaken all opposition and all will be ready to impose voluntary compulsion wherever necessary and smoothen the way.

It is in this context that we must fix the place of Hindi in our educational system as well. What should it be? Hindi should be made a compulsory subject in the Secondary Schools and a medium of instruction in the Colleges (of course after the requisite literature and teachers are available) at least for scientific and technical subjects, while State languages should be used as medium for other subjects. This arrangement would speedily bring about the proper development of Hindi as well as of the State languages, and would enable Hindi to take a dignified position soon in the national life.

The higher examinations of I.A.S. - I.P.S - I.M.S. and I.F.S. should be conducted in English or Hindi for the Central Cadre while they should be conducted in the State Languages for the State Cadre. But Hindi should be compulsory for all.

State Language:

Last comes the State Language. It is the language of the masses. In a democratic set up, we must 'educate the masses' through their mother-tongue. Hence it should be the medium of instruction in the primary and secondary stages of education. In the colleges also all the subjects of the Arts Course should be taught through this medium. All the departments of administration should carry on their business in the language of the State. The national language should be employed in inter-state and state-centre communications. Hence the higher staff in the Secretariat of each State should possess adequate knowledge of Hindi.

Our State languages have also got rich literature and great powers of expression. They too need and deserve proper development. At the same time the study of State Languages should be made relatively easy for all the nationals by the introduction of a common Nagari script. This would practically remove a big hurdle in the way of

learning them. Moreover, as was recently pointed out by our Vice-President Sri B. D. Jatti, "Nagari Script will be an effective instrument to bring about unity, understanding and integration between different regions of our country..... It is our good fortune that this fine script is available to us for our use, as it is the accepted script of Sanskrit -the mother of most Indian languages". A beginning in this direction may be made by publishing a few works of outstanding merit in all the state languages in the Nagari script and thus slowly and steadily to popularise the measure. However, the position of the present scripts should not be disturbed in any way.

Minority Languages:

In each State of Bharat, there are bound to be minorities whose mother-tongue is different from the State language. They should be given adequate facilities for receiving education in their mother-tongue in all stages-from the Primary to the University stage. However they should be asked to possess a working knowledge of the State language in the Primary or Secondary stage. This would enable them to play their part properly in all the affairs of the State. So far as text-books for them are concerned, those that are current in the neighbouring State should be freely introduced to avoid the trouble and expenses of publishing translations of the books used in the State. This arrangement would automatically solve the border problem as well and ensure harmony among the subjects of all States.

Conclusion :

We must never forget that our life and death, rise and fall is indissolubly linked with that of our nation. If our nation lives, we would live; if it dies, we would die. Let us keep this vital relation constantly before our eyes; let us develop a genuine national outlook. Let us not weaken our Bharat.

—M. S. Deshpande

Nama-Yoga

(Yoga of Divine Name)

(Extracts from the letters of Sri Bhausheb Maharaj, selected, classified and translated)

By
Sri M. S. Deshpande M. A.

(A) Worldly Weal (*Continued*).

(34) It Destroys the Effects of Past Karma.

There are two courses viz. the worldly life and spiritual life. Of the two, man is familiar more with worldly life and hence likes it the more. He is engaged in experiencing the happiness and misery arising in it. When he is required to face sorrowful situations, he implicitly believes in the stories narrated in the *Puranas* about the experiences of great men under such circumstances, and like them tries to endure his sorrow with fortitude. Even gods had to suffer in the past. They were also required to lead a life of privation. What is ordained by God cannot be avoided, all should enjoy the fruits of their past *Karma* (*action*). Such a conviction has taken deep root in his mind. He is not prepared to abandon it at any cost, even at the cost of his life. He has failed to recognise its second spiritual meaning. "Meditation on the Divine Nama will destroy the effects of past actions, it will wipe out dictates of God." These are the assurances of Saints. But man refuses to believe in them even though they are repeatedly dinned into his ears several times. He continues to pin his faith in his old theory,

entangles himself in the meshes of *Maya*, suffers a lot and spends his days and nights in constant worry. He harbours passion and irritation in his bosom and utterly ruins himself. Really happiness and sorrow, merit and demerit, honour and dishonour belong to the perishable body and hence they are all perishable. Both these bind a person—ensnare him. He fails to understand how he should behave in the meshes of *Maya*. He is at a loss to know what course to adopt and what to reject. Under these circumstances he should seek the guidance of great Saints, live in their company, repose implicit trust in them and faithfully practise the discipline prescribed by them. This would grant him lasting bliss. And when this bliss develops a good deal, it would automatically drown all his passion and irritation. This spiritual course, if adopted sincerely, will eliminate the effects of past action. “Who would reverse the Divine Decree? A *Sadguru* would reverse it,” so do the Saints declare. Abandoning such a spiritual course, man fondly trusts in the working of Fate and simply wastes his life in vain anxiety. What is to be done for such a folly?
(PP. 227-228-229)

(35) It Removes Obstacles and Ensures Success.

For the fulfilment of all our desires, constant meditation on the Name Divine is absolutely necessary. If we meditate on the Name with firm faith and devotion thrice a day, as instructed by the *Sadguru*, our mind would be free from all kinds of doubts. “Meditation on the Name of *Hari (God)* would drive away the obstacles in all directions.” If the disciple constantly remembers his *Sadguru*, he will always feel and experience the presence of his Master near him. It is the assurance of the Lord that if the devotee constantly calls upon him, He would remove the obstacles of His devotee.
(P. 99-100)

If the Name granted by the *Sadguru* is meditated upon with faith and conviction, by fixing the gaze on the tip of the nose our work will automatically be crowned with success, without any hindrance. As is the intensity of your devotion, so is the grace of the Lord. God’s help depends upon your devotion. Constant remembrance will confer delight. (P. 169)

(36) It Enables the Seeker to Transcend Pairs of opposites

The Pairs of opposites namely *Maya* and *Brahma*, Duality and

Non-duality, Worldly life and Spiritual life, Knowledge and Ignorance, With Form and Without Form, Master and Disciple—all these contribute to stimulate thought and enable man to attain Self-knowledge. And through the grace of the *Sadguru* when he attains it, both his awareness and non-awareness disappear and he transcends the pairs of opposites. "A critic should ever be our neighbour as he would always expose our merit and demerit." When a critic points out our merits and demerits we would consider them and reflect about them more and more. We would then fully understand their essential nature. And we would be able to transcend both worldly life and spiritual life and attain liberation even in this very life.

For the present we are living among these pairs of opposites. But when we are firmly convinced that these opposites, the products of *Maya* together with love, greed, compassion and forgiveness, are one and indivisible (*in essence*), we would realise their essential nature. Then both these aspects of *Maya* would become identical and our likes and dislikes about them would vanish. But for realising this identity, meditation on the Name Divine is absolutely necessary. It must be immensely developed. In the worldly life none becomes wealthy or learned all at once. Likewise none can attain Self-knowledge instantaneously. Everything depends upon continuity of practice which should increase the number of Names repeated. Moreover, this practice should be carried on sincerely-wholeheartedly. Then alone would Self-knowledge flash upon us. Even after this attainment, we are required to continue our worldly life. None can abandon it. In the same way we are to lead our spiritual life-continue our meditation on Name Divine. Hence we should love both these aspects of our life, perform our *Sadhana* with all sincerity and maintain Self-knowledge. We should be firmly established in it. Then alone will real secret of spiritual life be realised. (PP. 286--287)



**Fragrant Flowers of the Spiritual Garden
of
S r i G u r u d e v**

Garnered By
"a florist"

About Himself

1. I believe nothing; I perceive.
2. I love nobody; I love God's men.
3. I am a citizen of the Spiritual World.
4. I prefer to speak through others.
5. I am brief because I want to be heard.
6. What we experience, what we feel and what we realise - that alone should be our philosophy.
7. I always believed that the function of philosophy is for the consolidation and consummation of spiritual experience and it is only the acquisition of this spiritual experience which makes a man worthy of being the handiwork of God.
8. We are full of joy when we are in the contemplation and realisation of God. That state of beatification is itself our liberation. Liberation is not to be found after death. But to know God, to do His work, to enjoy His presence and to devote oneself to His service are exactly what a Jivan-mukta ought to do.
9. Spiritual life has been the beginning of my philosophic career and let me hope, it will be its culmination as well.
10. I studied philosophy to find rational justification for my faith.

An Assembly of Saints

(This is the description of a Vision by Sister Shivalingavva – a renowned, advanced lady-disciple of Sri Bhausahab Maharaj. She was a modern Mystic -poetess (1867–1930). Sri Gurudev had a very high regard for her superb Spiritual attainments, which were, according to him, not less brilliant than those of Saints Mirabai of Rajasthan, Muktabai of Maharashtra and Mahadevi of Karnatak. As this is “Women’s Year” we wish to share her Spiritual Experiences graphically described by her, with our readers along with those of Sister Mahadevi in our next article. This is one of the songs translated and included by Sri Gurudev in his book – Pathway to God in Kannad Literature. We propose to publish the free renderings of all her songs in the coming issues of our Journal.

–Editor)

Free rendering of the Song — Sai, Sai, Kuntidene.

While I was sitting for Meditation, I was able to visualise a large number of faces. I saw the Santa Sabha, the Assembly of Saints, where a number of saints, sages, yogins and fakirs had taken their seats. I was also able to fully visualise Lord Siva, who was presiding over them. How shall I adequately describe this assembly? Vaikuntha itself seemed to have descended there upon earth for him who realises the full significance of what was presented on this vision. The Assembly was all lit up with stars, moving in the all-pervading crimson dust. The great Sesa appeared in designs of various colours – blue, green, yellow and red, each one of them being the unique form of God with a beauty that baffles description.

How easy it is to find access to this God? what is wanted is only a sincere uprising of devotion in the heart. When the door of the heart is opened and God is visualised, there bursts forth the supremely reverberating sound in which I drowned. Where will you be able to see all this vision? In the centre of your forehead, if you will. It can be seen only by him who has transcended the three qualities and has devoutly followed the great advice of his spiritual teacher. Such a great Saint was the Saint of Nimbargi, who had fully realised the nature of the Atman by Yogic process, and had been able to merge himself in the personality of his Master.

ADHYASA

By

Miss Yogini Nighoskar., M. A.

Though the word is peculiar to Shankara's philosophy, the idea is not; it is well explained through words like Avidya, Maya, Ajnana, Abhasa, Avabhasa, Aprama, Mithyajnana, Viparyaya and Bhrama. Shankara uses the word in a sense, unique to his philosophy. In order to understand its full implication, a thorough acquaintance with his 'advaitin' nomenclature is a primary requirement. Then alone shall we be able to appreciate the so called fluctuations and variations in his definitions of Adhyasa, for definitions of Adhyasa are as varied as its types. Shankara describes the phenomenon of Adhyasa, at each level of the 'Panchkosha'. Philosophers stress different aspects, and thus fall under a specific category. Annamayakosha is stressed by materialists; but all of them are tinged with Adhyasa, even the Brahma—Vakya, 'Aham Brahamasmi' is an example of Adhyasa. Thus Adhyasa pervades all our discursive thought.

Types of Adhyasa:

With respect to the level at which Adhyasa occurs, it could be classified as Gaunadhyasa, Arthadhyasa, Jnanadhyasa and Mithyadhya. The common feature in all of them is this; there is some degree of identification of two principles either similar or divergent. Gaunadhyasa would be an apt instance of this; (§) Jnanadhya is an example of the identification of two attributes. This is explained by the stock example of a jaundiced person seeing white things yellow. Arthadhyasa is perhaps the one with the maximum field of application; for it is the identification of the self and the 'Antahkarana'. Mithyadhya perhaps is used to show the identification of knowledge of one, upon the knowledge of the other, (Critics misinterpret the word Mithya as substratumless. But we have already seen that the word Adhyasa has wider connotation).

Cause, Beginning, End.:

These concepts of cause, beginning and end are highly relative to spatio-temporal aspects. Therefore they have negligible influence on the non-dualistic philosophy of Shankara. But strangely enough, Shankara is often criticized on these trivial points. There should be no questions, once we grasp what he means by Adhyasa. But since questions were asked, he attempted to answer them. To the question where and when does Adhyasa begin, Shankara says, 'It begins with the very postulation of 'I', the Jeevatman.' The maximum degree of identification is here. He calls this as 'Fundamental Error'.

§ And it is beginning-less. To the question 'What is the cause of Adhyasa?' Shankara says, 'It is Maya'. No doubt the answer enlightens us no more than the question; but it is nevertheless consistent with his empirical phenomenon of Vivartavada. If effect Adhyasa is manifestation of the cause Maya, Shankara's position, his central theme, 'Brahma Satvam Jaganmithva' is easily explained by explaining away the world as nothing other than Maya. But one important deviation of Adhyasa from Maya is worth noting; Maya has no beginning; Adhyasa begins with 'I' - the Jeevatman, and ends with the knowledge of non-dualism.

Now, this point in my opinion is the crux of Shankara's theory of Adhyasa. It throws light, not only on the nature and status of Adhyasa, but has repercussion on the concept of Maya. Before we develop this thought, it would be necessary to examine different definitions of Adhyasa along with those propounded by others, so that we can categorically rule out all ambiguities that have led philosophers to discuss so elaborately, on so evident a concept. Ramanuja, for instance, in his arguments for refutation of Mayavada, called Ashrayanupapatti, or inconceivability of the substratum of ignorance. How can omniscient Atman be the 'Substratum' of illusion? Whereas Shankara talks of Adhyasa as possible even without a substratum as is the case of the perception of objects in space (Talamala), though we never experience actual space as such. Here, he is stamped as the corroborator of shunyavadins. Madhavacharya

§ Kant too believes in fundamental error, but with the important

in his Vivaranaprimeyasangraha, has been quite tolerant with Shankara for he contends to show that with all its inexplicable character, the principle of illusion is a fact. It is somehow related to the constitution of reality. Similarity between two opposed principles (e.g. self and not-self) may be on the basis that they are attributes.

Moreover similarity need not always be present for the occurrence of Adhyasa. Shankara contends that Brahman as the substratum the only substratum logically proves everything as the Atman, (*Identical with Antahkarana*) Jeeva (*embodied soul*) and world, as illusory.

Definitions of Adhyasa:

1) Smruti Rupah Paratra Purva Drushtavabhasah.

Of course, this definition of Adhyasa wherein he says that something is perceived before it is superimposed on another substratum, is based on the fundamental concept of non-dualism.

2) Anyatha anya dharmadhyasa – this definition is also given by Nyaya and Yogachara Buddhism.

3) Yatra Yad Adhyasah tadvivekagraha nibandho bhramah, – this is also given by Mimansakas.

4) Yatra Yadadhyasah tasyeiva viparit dharmatvakalpana – is also given by Madhyamik Buddhism.

The common feature as is evident in all is that, something which comes to be seen. 'Atasmin tadbuddhih'.

There is false combination of the Sat and Asat, and that such an error is prevalent as a deep rooted one due to one of the three factors. One – Dosha i. e. Pramana, Pramatra and Prameya, Two, Samprayoga – Sannikarsha i. e. general acquaintance with the substratum on which superimposition takes place. Three – Sanskara, i. e. the impression of the previously experienced object. Shankara is of the opinion that Smruti is essential for Adhyasa to occur. Since nothing but 'Chit' is changeless, Shankara's concept of Adhyasa stands for all phenomena.

difference; that while Shankara positively asserts its removal any moment, Kant calls it unremovable. According to Kant, we can never comprehend the noumena.

Substratum of Adhyasa

What is this 'changeless' entity upon which Adhyasa takes place? Ask the critics. According to them, there cannot be Adhyasa of the attributes independent of their substrata. Even in the case of experiencing redness in the crystal owing to the nearness of Hibiscus flower, what we perceive in the crystal, is not the redness by itself, but redness belonging to the flower which is reflected in the crystal.

Attributes are quite unthinkable without having any reference to the substance to which they belong. Hence no Adhyasa of attributes by themselves is possible. Such objections are elaborately discussed by Madhvacharya in his Vivaranaprimeyasangraha. But this objection does not stand when Shankara already talks of substratumless illusion. Even though there is 'knowledge' that it is illusion the 'experience' of illusion continues; e.g. Mirage; though then we refuse to be deceived by it. Similarly knowledge of Brahman before realisation will at least have a positive function of making us aware of our position. That is, the experience of world is an Adhyasa over Brahman and it would continue till we attain realisation. That is, unless Maya, the cause of Adhyasa is removed, the 'Illusion' will continue despite verbal knowledge.

That the substratum of Adhyasa can be no other than Brahman is beyond doubt according to Shankara. It is clear that Adhyasa has a status limited to our knowledge situation. It need not be carried to his ontology; it pervades the field of epistemology and hence has no place beyond it.

Shankara's position is reflected in some aspects of phenomenism. Phenomenalists are of the opinion that somehow we lack the direct contact with the material objects. Sense data form the medium between things and their perception. Different people may have different perceptions of same thing at the same time. Or same person may have different perception of the same thing at different times. How are we to judge the true nature of the thing? Since sense-data in themselves, out of the context, are not at all informative as to the nature of the thing. The evaluation then lies in something outside the mere perception of sense-data. It may lie in further

perceptions of more sense-data or even in the inferential knowledge. Now, Shankara too believes that sublation of knowledge is a sure test of its being erroneous; the knowledge that sublates is superior to the one that is sublated in the sense that the former has potentiality of not being sublated. He too, believes that a piece of cognition at a particular spatio-temporal context is neutral. This is elaborately discussed under his theory of Aniravachaniya Khyati. Theory of Adhyasa is not different from this. Phenomenologists too are indifferent towards the ontological aspect of the statement. They are concerned with the proposition that describes the thing. It is the proposition that is true, false, or indifferent. There is no intrinsic difference between the perceptions that are veridical and those that are delusive. (H. H. Price, 'perception, page 31). Further experience alone could evaluate them as veridical or delusive. Hence in Shankara's philosophy too, the various experiences at all three levels of experience bear the label of being sublated, that is, of being in Adhyasa. (Gaudapada the believed Guru of Shankara) has meticulously pointed out that the difference between waking state and dream state is next to nothing. If, says Gaudapada, we are led to believe in the truth of our waking state, then such belief is comparable to a stranger who recalls the memory of his previous knowledge on reaching his destination, which was described to him previously but had somehow escaped his memory. We are such strangers who shall remember this knowledge of philosophy when we realise our true nature. Knowledge through authority has its revered place here).

Shankara, however, does not stop at the level of perception as the phenomenologists. For them it yet remains to be seen that what we immediately perceive is sense-datum or not, because the nature of sense-data is not materialistic. They have to postulate the abstract principle of sense-datum in order to explain the phenomena of illusions. This is not the case with Shankara because his concept of the ultimate remains unshuffled, unaffected by the phenomenon of Adhyasa. And there is no doubt whether the immediate object of our perception is true or false. It is true in itself (or we may say it is neutral) but false if sublated by subsequent perception or through any other method of knowledge.

A.J. Ayer in his essay on 'Argument from illusion' argues that

the truth of the proposition could be decided to the extent it promises the prediction of further proposition. Thus predictive value should be the criterion of deciding the nature of proposition. This criterion does not call for direct perception (sublation in Shankara's terminology).

In spite of the fact that Shankara steps outside perception his concept of Adhyasa is not faced with any linguistic rigidity; because, it is not the concept of 'ignorance' but error. Errors have the potentiality of being corrected, for errors are nothing but false, misplaced gap in knowledge continuity.

Adhyasa—Not An Ontological Phenomenon :

This is the only position that is logically admissible in Shankara's philosophy. All the noise about the 'paradox of ignorant Knower' how the ignorant can ever know, can the knower be basically ignorant, etc. is lost to the voice of just one point : What is the extent of our ignorance? (Or the extent of our knowledge for that matter, if we all think knowledge and ignorance to be correlative). Now, we cannot answer to the above question, as 'everything.' For then the very doubt we raise about 'Ignorant' knower' is meaningless.

Consistent with his theory of non-dualism which is his metaphysical position par excellence, the theory of Adhyasa can have place only in his epistemology. Apart from knower Adhyasa has no meaning. Extinction of subject is simultaneous and instantaneous with the extinction of Adhyasa. Adhyasa can not have an ontological status. Its status is only epistemological. It pervades all discursive reasoning, even the mystical revelation as long as 'I' as a knower is experienced. The knower is not merely a logical subject, in a knowledge situation. That could be eliminated, as was attempted by Russell, through his theory of description. Logical subject could be analysed so as to present it as a non-entity. But, these attempts too start with an initial assumption—If so and so——— is the case———. And then of course the flawless syntax could be fully followed and appreciated. His definition of Adhyasa bears testimony to it; that is it cannot be stretched to ontology.

Concept of Adhyasa was introduced in order to meet the impatience of empiricism. A patient study of Shankara's philosophy will lead us to believe that he was an implicit advocator of the doctrine of non—orgination. Shankara's nomenclature is however peculiar and unique to his philosophy. Any attempt at seeking parallel anywhere, should naturally disappoint us.



Akka Mahadevi - St. Mira of Karnatak

By

M. S. Deshpande, M. A.

Prelude : Bharat has been called the land of saints and sages. Much more is this remark applicable to Karnatak, the spring from which the different currents of philosophy have flowed and flooded the rest of Bharat and the whole world. The great Sri Sankar of monistic fame had his principal Math of Sringeri in Karnatak and begun his life's mission there. Sri Ramanuja first received help and encouragement from a Kannada king and spread his Qualified Monism in this land. Sri Madhvacarya, the champion of Dualism and Devotion, was entirely the product of this holy soil. In this way this sacred land of Krisna and Kaveri is Bharat in miniature, at least in the realm of spirituality.

Sri Basaveswar was another saint belonging to this eminent group of Acaryas. He is called Bhakti-Bhandari—the treasure devotion—in Kannada. He it was, who infused fresh life into Veera-saivism and made it a living faith. His inspiring personality attracted thousands of disciples who spread his new Gospel throughout the length and breadth of Karnatak. Kalyan the capital of Calukya kings which was the centre of Karnatak Culture then, became also the centre of spiritual revival, owing to the presence of this dynamic personality there. In their attempt to interpret the new message of their master to the Masses, the eminent disciples of Basava, successfully utilised His Vacanas—a new form of literature in Kannada. These Vacanas are pithy sayings, brilliant in their directness and simplicity - occasionally rising to the sublime grandeur even of the Upanisadic literature. They have brought light and hope to the Kannada masses and made their lives worth-living in all possible ways.

Brief Life-sketch:

Akka (Sister) Mahadevi is one of this inspired band of Basava's disciples. As is always the case with our historical personages, very little is known about Mahadevi's life. Tradition has handed over a few salient features of her early life and her Vacanas throw some light upon her later spiritual struggle and the heights reached and kept by her. We are told that she belonged to Udutadi, a town in the centre of Karnatak. She was born in a Veera-saiva family of well-to-do parents. She had an inborn devotion for God Siva. She was exquisitely beautiful. Her superb charm attracted greatly the then ruling king-Kousitak by name—who happened to be a Jain by caste. When the Prince invited her to his palace and expressed his desire to marry her, the parents of Mahadevi found themselves in a fix. They could not persuade themselves to give their daughter in marriage to a Jain Prince. Neither could they flatly refuse to do so. When Mahadevi found them in this difficult position she assured her parents that they need not be anxious about her. Through the grace of the Lord, she said, she would be able to steer clear of the rocks ahead and maintain the dignity of the family. The Lord would show her the way. She thus boldly went to the palace of the Prince alone and told the Prince that he should adopt Veersaivism if at all he aspired to marry her. Naturally the Prince declined to do so. Mahadevi then openly declared in the presence of all that she would rather be a life-long recluse than marry a man of different faith. This stern vow of life-long celibacy on the part of the fairest maiden in the Kingdom produced a profound influence on the Prince who, struck dumb by her spiritual fervour, could not dare try to enforce his desire and molest her.

Mahadevi immediately returned home, informed her parents of what had transpired in the Palace, expressed her decision to go to Kalyan and stay in the holy company of Sri Basava and the saranas. As the fame of Sri Basava, Sri Prabhudev and their Anubhava Mantap, had reached that place, it had prompted Mahadevi to take that decision. To avoid future trouble to her parents by the undue pressure of the Prince, she at once took leave of her parents and straight-away proceeded to Kalyan. On her arrival there, she was affectionately received by Sri Basaveswar who realises (e)

innate spiritual potentiality and blessed her. She then permanently resided in the holy company of her Master.

By her profound scholarship and burning fire of devotion she soon carved for herself an exalted position in the Anubhava Mantap—the unique Assembly of Saints there. It is interesting to note the high regard paid to her by her brother disciples. Says Channa-basava, the right hand man of Basava: “Real greatness is only to be seen in Mahadeviakka, who has lost all sense of duality and has merged herself in the Infinite.” Finally when dispute arose between the Jains and the Veersaivas which ultimately threatened the very existence of Veerasaivism, Mahadevi proceeded to Srishaila with Prabhudev and attained Samadhi there.

Her Deep Dispassion:

We have hitherto considered a few important incidents in Mahadevi's external life. Let us now take account of the inner life of her soul. With the help of what little literature is available we wish to describe her intense longing and supreme struggle for the attainment of the Lord and the superb vision and bliss she could enjoy after realisation through the grace of her Master.

Mahadevi endowed with innate love and devotion for Lord Siva, had developed from the beginning a great aversion for worldly life. In one of her Vacanas she says: “O Lord ! without realising Thee, I am dying in the meshes of my own self-willed desires, like a silk-worm perishing in the cocoon of silk spun out by it from its own body. Purge my mind , O God ! of all evil desires and show me Thy Abode.” “This evil of Samsara has been troubling me day and night. What shall I do my Lord ? What shall I do to ward off this constant harassment ? I cannot bear this mental torment any longer. I throw myself entirely at Thy Mercy. Slay me or save me ! Let Thy will be done.”

Her Intense Longing for the Lord:

In this way we find that Mahadevi had become thoroughly disgusted with the worldly life, and was constantly thinking of God

and God alone. "Does a peacock ever play on the barren plain? she asks, "and not on the mountains? Can a swan ever think of loving a dirty streamlet by abandoning a crystal lake? Will a cuckoo ever pour forth its flood of divine rapture anywhere except in a full-blossomed mango tree? Can a bee ever visit a flower without any fragrance? Can my mind be ever attracted by anything else but Thee, my Lord?" Mahadevi thus pines to have a glimpse at the lotus feet of God. "Just as elephant separated from its kith and kin, continuously thinks of its forest home, just as a caged parrot constantly remembers its brethren outside, so do I ever think of Thee. Call me 'dear child' and show me Thy Beauty" "I am pining for Thee, day and night, My Lord! The dart of Thy Love has been driven deep into my bosom and consequently I have forgotten hunger, thirst and sleep". Maddened by such an intense love for God, she began to request everyone she met to show her the Pathway to her Lord in this manner:

"Bees, Cuckoos, Moonlight! I have one request for you. Have you seen my Lord? If so will you kindly show Him to me?"

Her Challenge to God:

This extreme intensity of grief had made her bold enough to throw such a challenge to the Lord: "Don't harass me, my Lord, because I am helpless. But mind, I am not a woman to be easily terrified by any amount of pain Thou wouldst inflict. I would live on dry leaves and sleep on the bed of arrows. Pure am I, my Lord! as I have consecrated my body and mind to Thee." Moreover, she asks: "Will the sandal give up its fragrance even though it is cut to pieces and rubbed down? Will gold ever be darkened even when it is burnt in the fire? Will the sugarcane abandon its sweetness although it is cut to pieces, made to pass through the press and boiled in the fiery furnace? Don't reveal my past sins to me my Lord. I will never desist from seeking Thy shelter even if Thou wouldst kill me." It appears that God was trying her patience too much. Mahadevi also proved a match for Him. "Thou mayest hear me or not my Lord!" she says, "I cannot but sing Thy glory. Thou mayest love me or not, I cannot but worship Thee. Thou mayest grace me with Thy presence or not, I cannot but think o

embracing Thee. Thou mayest look at me or not, I cannot help casting my loving glance at Thee and sing Thy praise in delight. I shall worship Thee alone my Lord ; and enjoy Divine delight by Thy worship. ”

Splendid Vision of God :

When matters came to such a pass, God could not tarry any longer. Through His grace, she had soon the Vision of God. “I had a Vision” she breaks out in rapture, “I had a splendid vision of the Lord. He had shining golden hair, with a brilliant crown studded with jewels. A set of pearl-white teeth adorned his beautiful lips that were illumined with a sweet smile. The dazzling lustre of His eyes illumined the seven worlds. At this sight the famine of my eyes has vanished altogether today. Now that I have seen my Lord Playing with His Primæval Śakti, by identifying Himself with her, I consider my life to have borne fruit.” This vision brought about drastic change in her entire outlook on life. “The forest appeared to her to be full of Wish-tress ; the shrubs were all elixers capable of restoring life; all the stones assumed to form touch-stones; every place was a place of pilgrimage; the whole world became full of havenly ambrosia and every pebble she came across was a heavenly jewel. She saw the mountain very much dear to her Lord-Canna Mallikarjuna and entered the forest of Kadali - Plantain trees. ”

Final Identity with the Lord:

In this way she went on having one spiritual experience after another and ultimately realised her identity with the Absolute. “Can the ghee mixed in milk remain separate from it ?” she asks, “ Who can differ-entiate heat from the brillianc of Sun? O Lord of Infinite Glory! my scales fell off my eyes as I realised my identity with Thee!” Again she asks, “ Whom shall I worship when my body has become Thine? Whom shall I remember when my mind has merged in Thee? Whom shall I know when my consciounes has been lost in Thee? Losing myself entirely in Thee, I have completely forgotten Thee with Thee”

Conlusion:

There are many Vacanas of Mahadevi worthy to be considered

but this short article cannot provide any room for them all. Hence only a few have been selected here. The brevity, sweetness and suggestiveness of the original Vacanas in Kannada, are simply inimitable. The English rendering given here presents merely a faint echo of the original. Still it can give the reader an insight into the unique psychology of God-intoxication of this blessed Saint. Readers knowing Kannada can enjoy the charm of the original Vacanas very well



A Philosophical Zero*

By

K. S . Arjunwadkar M.A., Poona.

0.1 The text of the Bhagavad Gītā/Gitā (G) as a part of the Mahā-bhārata can reasonably be regarded to have grown through centuries. Many an ancient work in Sanskrit (sk) share this biological characteristic, viz growth, with other forms of life. Religious works in ancient India were believed to be a common wealth, and none saw anything wrong in inserting his own composition in older works in the manner of a 'soldier's contribution' so as to appear as coming from the pen of an ancient celebrity. After all, he believed he was bringing completeness to the work of the old authority. Was it not something he should be thanked, instead of be hanged, for? This fact often resulted in repetitions, contradictions, digressions and the like creeping into these works; thus obliging academicians of generations after generations by providing an unlimited scope for interpretative activity: The G is a living example of this phenomenon fairly common in the tradition of Sk literature. A study of the view of the G regarding an issue, thus, has its own limitations and weak points; it is based upon the collection and arrangement of material scattered over a considerable area and upon a presumption that the source of the material has a homogeneous and consistent approach towards its subject.

* Originally entitled 'The Concept of Action in the Bhagavad Gītā,' this paper was read before SACPAN (South Asia Colloquium of the Pacific Northwest) in the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Bc, Canada on March 16, 1974 during the author's stay there as a visiting Profesor of Sanskrit, and revised thereafter. Figures in brackets represent chapters and verses in the text.

0.2 How far is this presumption correct? one can reasonably hold the view that the G as we have it today, at least from the times of the great Saṅkara, has, for all practical purposes, a consistent and unified, if not systematic, teaching, message to offer to an aspirant of spiritual development if we do not insist on reading everything in the G in the light of the context of the battle on the Kurukṣetra which, viz. the context, serves the purpose of an inquirer better by staying mostly out of sight-like the tapes in the Watergate affair. While thus offering a message, the G no doubt inherits the whole of the Upanisadic thought and is in fact adored itself by the tradition as a series of Upaniṣads(cf. 'Bhagavad-gītāsu Upaniṣatsu...in the colophon of each of its 18 chapters). The G is not at all in conflict with the Upaniṣads in regarding Mokṣa as the highest goal, realization of the Ultimate Reality as the only way to reach the goal, worldly life shaped by one's own merit and demerit and constituted of innumerable births intermitted by deaths as something to escape from, perishability of the elemental world and imperishability of the self, ultimate unity of the Individual Soul with the Universal Soul, and so on. The G joins hands too with the Upaniṣads even in denouncing ritual ('Puṣpitā Vāk' 2.41) as a thing leading away from Mokṣa except when performed in a non-attached manner, with no claims to the merit arising out of it, regarding it as something not one's own—in much the same way as the custodian of a bank treats funds he is called upon to handle. Here is an issue in which the G thinks it can contribute its own to the stock of the philosophical thought it inherited from the Upaniṣads by analysing the complex we call an action and thereby pinpointing the reason that would make this approach logically viable.

1.1. It is apparently puzzling—almost absurd—that one can do an act and be not responsible for it, so that one is not involved in its fruit or consequences. Independently of the G, we can postulate such a position and illustrate it with events of day-to-day life. The judge sentences a criminal to death and the executioner puts him to death; but neither of the two is regarded or sued as a murderer. This can be justified on ethical grounds. When such a position is possible—actually prevailing—in common, practical thought, there is no reason why it should not find a place in the philosophical thought. Arjuna fears his involvement in the bloody war would ruin

his spiritual prospects and bring about his downfall--in fact lead him to hell. Kṛṣṇa argues that Arjuna can fight his relatives and elders and kill them and yet not incur sin. The G in the course of its discourse offers a tentative justification on religio-ethical grounds--that the battle could be viewed as Arjuna's duty as a warrior and as such would fetch him merit instead of sin and lead him to heaven.

1.2 This brings us to the patterns of action recommended for the four classes in ancient Indian society. The G mostly follows what earlier or contemporary religious treatises have to say about this issue. Every class--the Brāhmanaṣ, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Sūdras--has a prescribed set of duties which are professed to have been based on the consideration of basic qualities associated with these classes. Where do these qualities come from ? The G points out Prakṛti / Svabhāva as its source (3.33, 18.41, 59, 60). What the G means by this term in the present context is not as clear as it should be, for Śaṅkara, under 18.41 has offered alternative explanations. The terms may mean the Prakṛti constituted of the three guṇas, or the mode of disposition shaped and influenced by one's acts in one's past lives. Even if we accept the first alternative and take 18.41 to mean that the duties of the four classes are decided on the basis of the three guṇas--Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, we have to turn to the acts of past births (occurring in the second alternative) for a full explanation of the phenomenon, unless we suppose an arbitrary, predetermined distribution of the guṇas in pure forms or in different combinations as the basis of the four classes. We thus come to the conclusion that the acts of a soul during past lives/births, which ultimately spring from the primeval guṇas, shape or determine his disposition according to which he is born in a suitable class. The G appears to presume that the classes are determined by birth; and one cannot, and should not, give up duties prescribed for one's class howsoever inferior they may appear when compared with those of another class (3. 35, 18.47, 48) . One must not, says the G, discard one's own duty (sva-dharma) in preference for another's; for all actions are inherently imperfect (18.48). The G assures that no one would ever incur sin by following the pattern of duty prescribed for his class (18.47) . One should, if called upon, face a glorious death while doing his duty than embrace another's that would certainly endanger his fate (3.35). These observations have a direct bearing on Arjuna's

temptation to give up battle and beg alms for sustenance (2.5) Kṛṣṇa obviously did not like Arjuna to be a Hippy! The G in fact believes that in spite of one's momentary inclination to give up one's duty and opt for another's, the inherent qualities of the class gone deep into one's disposition would force one ultimately to do one's own duty. Talks of changing one's path of duty at will, then, remain but boastings (3.5, 18.59). Nature asserts!

2.0 This religio-ethical approach has its own limitations. It obviously cannot satisfy one—not necessarily Arjuna—who aspires to break through the religio-ethical considerations of merit and demerit, heaven and hell, and would accept nothing short of Mokṣa (a pure metaphysical, non-religio-ethical concept) as his goal. For a final solution of the problem, therefore, the G had to turn to psychology and metaphysics.

2.1 Treating the problem psychologically, the G attempts a study of the factors that go to make an action. Before an action is physically performed, much preparation goes in on the psychological level to make the action possible. The G clearly distinguishes between these two aspects of an action (18.18), and we may refer to them as performance (Karma) and motivation (codanā) respectively. Considering both these aspects together, the G enumerates five factors that combine to bring an action into existence (18.14): the stage (meaning body), the performer (i.e. the soul having a motivation, doing an act with a desire to profit by its material, worldly result), organs of sense and action, movements made by them, and the destiny shaped by one's own past acts influencing the course of one's future acts (daiva). Of these, body and organs and their movements may be said to represent the physical aspect of an action. Of the remaining two representing the psychological aspect, the performer may be said to function roughly on the conscious level and the destiny on the unconscious/subconscious one-- if we choose to express the old idea in familiar terms. The G details the performer elsewhere while throwing light on the nature of the transmigratory soul (15.7-9): but what is more pertinent in the present context is the G view that it is possible, and advisable too, to negate the psychological aspect of the action, disown all responsibility for the action and escape its fruits or results. How does one become

responsible for an action?—By doing it consciously with a desire for its fruits. If, then, one gives up the desire for the fruits it would be logical to hold that one is not responsible for fruits. Turning back to the analogy, the judge passing a death sentence or the executioner bringing the order in force are not murderers as they do not intend to profit by putting the criminal to death. In other words, it is the involvement (ahamkāra) of the performer in the action that makes him responsible for the action and its fruits. In the absence of such an involvement, the action remains on the formal or physical level and does not 'bind' the performer,—that is to say: the action has come into existence but has not been done by the performer. The G has thus discovered a philosophical zero,—the non-involvement — multiplying by which it can reduce any number of actions to nil.

2.2 Once the composition of action is made clear, the G goes a step ahead to say that complete renunciation of action is possible, if attempted, only on the mental level (18.11). It is sheerly impossible to renounce all action on the physical level; for action in the broadest sense comprises of even such functions as breathing, seeing, hearing and so on: 'Paśyañ Śṛṇvan...' (5.8-9). This sort of actions is designated by the G at one place as 'Sārīraṁ Karma' (4.21). can one ever hope to renounce all that—unless, of course, one ceases to live (18.11)? Willy nilly, one continuously goes on doing these actions throughout one's life. They can never be renounced. Whenever one talks of renunciation of actions, one means duties of a man—social, religious and the like, without considering the extent to which the term 'action' can apply; and, except at a few places where the term is understood in the widest sense for the sake of argument, the G too presumably means the same thing when it talks of doing action in a non-attached manner or renouncing it (18.2).

3.1 Back to the point of the position taken by the G that one can do action and dodge its results. Such a position, if based on mere belief or convention or just dialectical acrobatics, would not be convincing. The G is aware of it; and hence goes to the root to find a basis for it in metaphysics. It is not just a matter of belief that one can regard one's action as not done by oneself; it is a fact that the soul appearing to do everything does not really do anything. It is the body and the organs and the mind that do the action; and it would be unfair to hold that the soul is responsible for it, when we know that the soul is

in reality quite different from the complex constituted of the body and the organs and the mind. The complex, springing as it does from the elements or further back from the Prakṛti constituted of the three guṇas, is subject to change—growth and decay—and is perishable. The soul is unchanging and imperishable. The soul changes bodies when old, as one changes clothes when torn. ('To die—to unclothe': no problem. The G has made the most dreaded thing in the world so simple!) The soul does not partake of any characteristics of the elemental world. He does neither kill nor is he killed. All that we may call 'an action' is an act of the Prakṛti, not of the Ātman. The poor soul, confusing his identity with the Prakṛti, gets 'hanged' by mistake, not knowing he is not guilty! And the cunning Prakṛti, moving incognito--like Howard Hughes shutting himself off in posh hotels--has been reaping, as it were, rich dividends for an infinite time!

3. 2. Establishing itself on a firm metaphysical foundation, the G tackles the problem of action very boldly. Since it is the involvement in the action—and that too by mistake—that subjects the performer to its consequences, an action done without such an involvement is really no action—at all. Conversely, even the renunciation of an action accompanied by the involvement of the renouncer is really not a renunciation but an action. It is on the basis of this consideration that the G, inheriting the Upaniṣadic tradition in all its essential peculiarities, confounds the reader with a word-puzzle, adjudging as the wisest, one who detects inaction in action and action in inaction (4. 18) ! Speaking in terms of classification of human trends and activities on the basis of the three guṇas, the sāttvika variety of doing action boils down to the sāttvika variety of the renunciation thereof (18. 9, 23). We thus arrive at a strange equation quite in keeping with the G style—doing is equal to not doing! The G denounces renunciation of action through mistaken concepts about it (viz that renunciation means discarding actions physically) or for fear of physical exertion respectively as tāmasa and rājasa (18. 7, 8). It may not be out of place here to point out that the G is not against physical renunciation as such provided it is accompanied by mental renunciation too which we may term 'a perfect renunciation'; and this can be substantiated by numerous passages from the text. What the G warns against is pseudo-renunciation characterised by

physical renunciation and mental involvement, which defeats its purpose, viz. getting rid of the fruit resulting from the action. The G emphasises the fact that the roots of the binding nature of action lie on the mental, and not the physical, level; and if the mental aspect is taken care of, no amount of physical action would harm spiritually (cp, 'Stone walls do not a prison make'), and if the mental aspect is neglected, no amount of physical renunciation, would help. It is precisely to guard spiritual aspirants (like Arjuna, for instance) against the second possibility, of pseudo-renunciation and not to denounce a perfect renunciation (as opted for by Yājñavalkya, Saṁkara and such others), that the G strongly recommends the first alternative widely known as the 'Karmayoga'. Karmayoga as conceived by the G is a means of jñāna or realization which is the *only* direct means of Mokṣa as is amply testified by numerous passages in the G. Besides Karmayoga, the G treats of several other ways leading to realization like Bhakti and Dhyāna. They are all yogas or means finally converging into realization. It is on account of a detailed and coordinated treatment of these several Yogas that the G came to be regarded as the Yogaśāstra (cf. the colophon).

4. A word about the uses and forms of the Karmayoga, or action done in a non-attached manner. Firstly, Karmayoga can pave the way for perfect renunciation if one is inclined to go that way (5.6). It can, besides, purge the mind of passions (5.11), and make it thus fit for receiving the light of knowledge. Leaders of the society (ṣreṣṭhas) can, by practising the Karmayoga, set an example for the ordinary men who would otherwise fall a prey to pseudo-renunciation in an attempt to make a misconceived imitation. This is what the G calls action for the Loka-saṁgraha and justifies it on the ground that the common people follow the example of the leaders (3.21). One may perform one's duties even as the worship of God, and dedicating them to Him can escape their fruits (9. 27, 18. 46). It will thus be clear that, while anxious to keep the regular, worldly fruit of action at an arm's length, the Karmayoga is not a motiveless action as it serves a definite purpose on the path of spiritual progress.

5. From all that the G says about the way actions should be done, one cannot miss the fact that it is the aspirant of Mokṣa

for whom the G has a message. For those ignorant people who do actions prescribed for them with a desire for their fruit, the G has nothing to offer except pity (3. 25, 2. 41-46). And as to those who indulge in prohibited actions breeding sins and springing from evil nature ('Āsurī Sampad' 16. 7...as against 'Daivī Sampad' 16. 1 ...), the G has nothing but the strongest words of denouncement (16. 19). This once again strengthens the position taken earlier that the G as we have it today in its fully grown form is no more a message of Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna in the face of a battle about to commence, but a guide meant for aspirants of Mokṣa at large. This position alone would save a considerable part—the meat-of the G from being irrelevant.

SVADHARMA

By

Dr. S. R. Talghatti M. A, Ph. D.

Svadharmā is one of the key-concepts of *Hindu* social and moral philosophy. One is, however, prone to be satisfied merely by its superfluous understanding. I shall try here to discuss the essential nature of this important concept as I understand it. This, I hope, will help, at least to avoid misunderstanding of it.

Svadharmā literally means 'one's own *dharma*'. *Dharma* itself means different things in different contexts. In the context of *Svadharmā*, however, it broadly means '*Kartavya*' or 'duty' or that which one ought to do. *Svadharmā* then means 'one's own duty'. Now, what is this 'one's own'? One answer to this is to be given in terms of one's station in social life. We live in a society occupying a certain status or position, having certain station, and playing certain role or roles. There are certain duties prescribed pertaining to our stations and roles. The duties pertaining to my station and role in the society constitute my '*Svadharmā*'. Bradley's doctrine of 'my station and its duties' well represents this aspect of *svadharmā* which is socially determined. In Bradley's thought this may be all that there is to it. But, so far as the concept of *Svadharmā* is concerned, it is only an aspect, though an important one, of it. This we may call the social aspect of *Svadharmā*. It presupposes an organised and stratified society where one has a definite station, and a role to play. It may be that one plays

many such roles. It is required, in such cases, by the doctrine of *Svadharmā* that one discharges one's duties pertaining to them all equally sincerely. This is possible, it is obvious, only when the roles are not conflicting. Thus, generally speaking the social aspect of *Svadharmā* is nothing but the duties pertaining to the station one has in social life and/or the role/roles one has to play, irrespective of the nature of social organisation.

In the *Hindu* thought, however, a particular kind of social organization and stratification forms the powerful background of the discussion of *Svadharmā*, and it is what is called the '*varṇa vyavasthā*.' The *Hindu* social thought recognizes four main stratas of society or four *varṇas*, viz. *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*. The *svadharmas* are stated in terms of the duties of these four *varṇas*. For a *vaiśya*, the duties prescribed for the *vaiśya varṇa* constitute the *svadharmā* and so on. But we must remember that the concept of *svadharmā* can be, and, in fact, is independent of any one particular social organization like that of *varṇas*, and is applicable to any organization whatsoever. Having said this, it will certainly be helpful, in understanding the deeper significance of the concept of *Svadharmā*, to know how *varṇas* arise and what is the propriety of specific duties being prescribed for them. It will perhaps explain why it is said that one must never give up one's own duty, come what may.

The whole discussion of '*Svadharmā*' as such is to be found in the *Bhagavadgītā* only, though the *Varṇas* and their duties etc. are discussed in almost all the books dealing with *Hindu* social and moral philosophy. Thus, it may be said that '*Svadharmā*' is the distinctive contribution of the *Gītā* to *Hindu* social-moral philosophy. The *Gītā* mentions two principles which determine the *varṇas*-viz.-*guṇa* and *karma*. It should be noted that there is no mention of 'birth' as a determinant of *varṇa* anywhere. To me, *guṇa* refers to personal qualifications, abilities and temperament or aptitude, while *karma* refers to the actual conduct of life in which *guṇa* is expressed. *Karma* might have also been stated as the explanatory principle of the *guṇa*-on the basis of the '*karma* theory'. But it makes no difference to the principle

itself, which is basically the whole psycho-physical, intellectual-moral make-up of human personality. To borrow psychological terminology, the determinants of *varnas* are nothing but the personality-traits. I may put it the other way round and say that the *varnas* represent four types of personality, each type fitted to perform a certain group of allied duties in a society. Thus, *Svadharmā*, on this account, means those duties for which one is *naturally* fitted. In other words, though the social aspect of *Svadharmā* i. e. *varṇa dharma* appears to be socially determined, it is not really so; it is determined by one's own 'personality' or 'Sva'. This brings out the psychological significance of the concept of *Svadharmā*. In this connection also it is to be noted that 'Svadharmā' is applicable to any kind of social stratification or organization and is not confined to 'varṇa-vyavasthā' only. In fact, the 'varṇa-vyavasthā' itself is not confined only to *Hindu* society, but is to be found in any society in this form or that. Moreover, these basic *varnas* or personality-types can be further sub-divided with the help of psychology, to be made useful for the purpose of social organization. This shows that *Svadharmā* primarily refers to *varṇa-dharma*, or one's station and its duties, one's *varṇa* or station being determined by one's personality make-up; that is, *varnas* are to be understood in terms of the duties mentioned for them.

Varna is one principle of social organization. Besides it, the *Hindu* social philosophers had also found out a principle for the organization of individual life itself. I think that what is called, 'Āśrama-vyavasthā', is to be found only in the *Hindu* social philosophy. Since *āśramas* pertain to individual human life, it goes without saying that it is applicable to all individuals whether *Hindu* or not. Of course they are to be properly interpreted to suit modern life. But I think, with the exception of 'samnyasa', the other three *āśramas* are fairly well suited to the present times. The *āśrama-dharmas* pertain to the best possible conduct of these *āśramas* or stages of life-viz. *Brahmacarya* (student) *Gṛahastha* (householder), *Vānaprastha* (retired), and *Samnyasa* (renounced). The concept of *Svadharmā* can be conceived broadly to include 'my stage of life and its duties' i. e. *āśrama dharmas*. Besides, there

are innumerable roles men are required to play in a society which carry with them their respective duties. The most important of these is the *rājādharmā* or the duties of the rulers. *Svadharmā*, by extension, may include them in its fold. If we take 'samnyāsa' as standing for the attitude of non-attachment which necessarily accompanies 'impartiality' in judgments, then it is an essential element in a 'just' personality. As such, it should inform the whole of individual life. In fact 'samnyāsa' means much more than this, viz. 'identification' of oneself with all the creatures in the world. This makes not only a 'just', but a 'loving', 'kindly', 'benevolent' personality which is so much desirable socially as well as individually.

There is one group of duties, perhaps, the most important group, called *sāmānya dharmas*. They may be called the moral duties proper, and are to be discharged by one and all irrespective of *varṇa* and *aśrama*. Hence, they form a permanent part of *sva-dharma*, whatever may be its other constitutive duties. For example, *Ahiṃsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (Truth), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacarya* (celibacy) and *Aparīgraha* (non-hoarding) are said to be the *yamas* which are *sāmānya dharmas*.

It will be noticed that no strict distinction is made, in this context, between 'duty' and 'virtue'. Under '*dharma*' both can be, and mostly are, included. This is not because of any absence of clarity in thinking, but because of the peculiar nature of the concept of '*dharma*' in general, and its relation to '*mokṣa*'. I shall not, however, go into that as it is not required in the present context.

The concept of *Svadharmā*, thus, has three aspects, viz. social, psychological and moral, '*Sva-dharma*' being the complex of one's own duties. These duties are overtly socially determined, but according to the psychological make-up of one's personality. Moral duties and virtues form the common element of '*svadharmā*'. Though particular duties arise in a given social order or structure or organization, the concept of '*svadharmā*' itself is not necessarily bound to any one particular social order like '*varṇas*'. It is because of this universality, that '*sva-dharma*', has acquired an important place in the vocabulary of

social and moral philosophy of India. It is on this background that the emphasis laid on the observance of *svadharmā* in the *Gītā*, can be properly understood. *Gītā*, for example, says, "It is good (even) to die, doing *svadharmā*; the '*para-dharma*' (other's duties) is dangerous." (*Gita* 3.35). This can be understood quite easily by imagining a person doing firstly the things for which he is not fitted at all, and secondly, the things which are not prescribed (socially or morally) for him. The result of his doing them will be nothing but a mess of the work, and the disturbance in the social order. Thus, from both social and individual points of view, it is 'good' that one does 'one's own duty' rather than 'another's.' [The concept of '*Varṇa Saṅkara*' (or '*Karma Saṅkara*') also can be better understood if viewed in this light.] The practical dictum would be: 'do not try to do things for which you are not fitted'.

The concept of *Sva-dharma* is incomplete without that of '*niṣkāmatā*'. It is this principle that brings all the doers of duties on the same level, whatever may be the differences in their capacities and duties. It must, therefore, be taken to be a part of the concept of *svadharmā* itself. But what is '*niṣkāmatā*'? It is absence of desire for the fruits of '*svadharmā*'. The other basically similar concept used in the context is '*anāsakti*' or non-attachment. This again pertains to the fruits or results of *svadharmā*. Desire or attachment for fruits is the fault in *svadharmā*.¹ This, however, does not mean that you have not to take any interest in doing your duties. You must do them with full interest, sincerity and capacity.² What one can really command is 'action' or doing duties; one can never command the fruits thereof. (*Gītā* 2.47) You take care of *Svadharmā* and the fruits will take care of themselves. Here we have the harmony of what are called '*pravṛtti*' and '*nivṛtti*'; *pravṛtti* for *svadharmā* and *nivṛtti* from 'desire for fruits'. Not that you will not get fruits; only you do not think of them while

1 cf. *Jñāneśvari* (2. 224, 225)

Ibid, 267 and 18. 200.

doing *svadharmā*. Thus, doing *svadharmā* without the desire for its fruits is the secret of '*karma yoga*' or the skill of action. This

is the skill which turns 'action' into 'inaction'. The concept of 'bondage' and 'freedom' (*Bandha* and *Mokṣa*) are involved here. The action which does not 'bind' is really 'inaction' (*Akarma*). And what binds is not *karma* but the egocentric thought that 'I am the doer' and 'the desire for the fruits of action'. As *Jñaneśvara* beautifully puts it :

“Being drunk with doership and tasting of the fruits of action—these two are named as the binding of *karma*”. (*Jñaneśvarī* 18.205).

Thus, the concept of *svadharma* has this fourth aspect viz. '*niṣkāmatā*' or '*anāsakti*', the other three being, as we have seen, the social, the individual-psychological, and the moral. As such, '*svadharma*' stands apart from Bradley's notion of 'my station and its duties' which is only one aspect of it.

The importance of the concept of '*Svadharma*' cannot be overemphasised. We have already seen that it is a key-concept in Indian social and moral philosophy. It is also related to the concepts of '*karmayoga*', '*bandha*', '*mokṣa*', '*pravṛtti*' and '*nivṛtti*'. If we consider what *Jñaneśvara* says about it, we shall see that there is one more important concept in Indian Philosophy that can be explained in terms of *svadharma*, viz. '*yajña*'. *Jñaneśvara* says—

“What is *svadharma* know the same to be '*nitya-yajña*' or 'continuous sacrifice'.” (3.81). Or again—

“Performance of *Svadharma* is continuous performance of sacrifice (*akhaṇḍa yajña-yājana*) (3.83).

In this concept are united both the individual and the social ideals. 'Duties' are related to the social ideal of social stability, organization and order; while, the attitude towards doing these duties is related to the individual ideal of '*niḥśreyas*'. As such, the whole of morality is covered by it.

I have already pointed out that the concept of '*svadharma*' is not necessarily related to the specific social order named, '*varṇaśrama-vyavastha*', though it is worked out on that background. This means that it is a universal principle. Once we understand its basic feature, we should be able to apply it to any form of social organization with

necessary modifications. What those modifications will be, depends on what form of social organization is it to which we want to apply it. In fact there is no question of applying *svadharna* externally to a social organization; it is inherent in any sound and healthy organization. This is so because a social organisation cannot be sound or be sustained without this principle of '*Svadharna*'.



A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION OF RELIGION

by
Shri K. B. Dabade, M. A.
Udipi

“Despite knowledge and time-tested techniques, many everyday activities are subject to failure—not the failure that results from lack of skill or knowledge, but a failure that is inexplicable, unpredictable, and therefore mysterious., every society that we know develops certain patterns of behaving designed to guard, by one means or another against, the unexpected, and better to control man’s relationships to the Universe in which he lives. It is this area of culture that we shall call religion.” (Beals and Hoijer).

Religion had been regarded as a product of civilization until Tylor gave convincing proof that primitive societies have their own versions of religious activity, not very different from that of civilized societies. Ever since Tylor’s views were published no ethnographer has reported any primitive society without religious beliefs and practices. Religion is universal in time and space in human society. Unless we understand it thoroughly we shall fail to understand society. Consequently the present purpose is to offer a scientific explanation of religion. “scientific explanation consists in discovering, deducing, and assimilating the laws of phenomena” (Carveth Read). The task of explaining the facts of religion is certainly not easy. In this connection K. Davis has expressed his views in the following manner.

No societal phenomenon is more resistant than religion to scientific explanation. The emotional bias springs from the fact that

religion by its very nature involves ultimate values, making it almost impossible to view with a disinterested attitude. Investigator, whoever he may be, is irresistibly drawn into holding either that religion is a thoroughly destructive force which deceives the mind, promotes ignorance and delays the progress or that there is one true religion (his own) which is highest and best. Even when the scholar's purpose is genuinely scientific, even when he avoids justifying religion, he nevertheless tends to fall into another error—a rationalistic approach. He tends to assume that his fellows, in their religious behaviour, are trying to fit means to ends in the same logical manner that he as a scientist would employ. This rationalistic explanation works fairly well with reference to technological and economic behaviour, because in such behaviour the element of rationality is maximized; but with respect to religion which involves transcendental ends, strong sentiments and symbolic instruments it is fallacious. It attributes the existence of religion simply to ignorance and error and assumes that when these are eliminated there will emerge the completely rational (i. e, completely non-religious) man. Some upholders of this view, when finally disillusioned by the continued non-appearance of the rational man, have fallen back upon a biological interpretation; they hold that religion is an expression of instinctive emotions. Such a solution is as false as the other. Simply because religious behaviour is non-rational the conclusion does not follow that it must be instinctive. The very nonrationality of religious behaviour is the thing that gives religion its vitality in human life. Non-rationality, may, however, mean sub-rationality (below reason), irrationality (not endowed with reason), super-rationality (beyond reason). Religion is super-rational rather than sub-rational, irrational and rational (based on reason) as it is concerned with supersensuous experience.

To illustrate the rational bias a review of evolutionary theories of religion—animism, animatism and naturism will suffice.

Animism

Edward. B. Tylor said that although the origin of religion appears to be multiple yet there is only one idea underlying it viz. belief in soul (anima); hence the name animism for this theory, His conjectural argument ran as follows.

Primitive man had certain experiences. In his dreams he engaged in various types of activities. He met his dead ancestors in dreams and had hallucinatory experiences about them and other beings while he was awake; he heard the echoes of his own voice; he saw his own reflections in ponds, pools and rivers and he failed to disentangle himself from his shadow. What had really happened which had suddenly put an end to a person's actions, verbal and non-verbal? He looked the same but he was not the same. There must have been some unseen thing in him which must have escaped unseen, making him dead. It was thus that the belief in such an unseen thing, or power, which kept people alive when it was in them, and made them dead when it left their bodies, emerged. Such a thing, or power, is called 'soul'. But how was it that sleep, so very like death, was not death, and how was it that people had all these various experiences in dreams and while awake, heard echoes and saw shadows and reflections? Certainly, Tylor says, primitive man must have thought there must be two souls in a human being; a free soul which could go out of him and have experiences, and a body soul which if it left the body resulted in its death. The uncertainty whether the soul has left the body temporarily or permanently may be a reason, for the practice, of double funeral, a 'green' one and a 'dry' one found among some contemporary peoples of India like the Toda and the HO. The first, green funeral, takes place immediately after death and the second, dry funeral is often an occasion for the more important ceremony. Dry ceremony symbolizes the entry of the dead into the other world. He was compelled to assume that the soul became free and constituted a disembodied spirit. As the number of dead persons augmented with time, a population of spirit souls formed around the living population. These spirits were thought to have the needs, passions, and interests of men and concern themselves with their living companions of yesterday, either to aid or to injure them. Possessing extreme fluidity, they could enter into the body of the living and cause all sorts of disorders or else increase the body's strength and vitality. Thus the power of souls was increased by all that men attributed to them, and in the end the living found themselves the prisoners of this imaginary world which their own imagination had created. For if the spirits were the givers of health and sickness, of good and evil, it was wise to conciliate

and appease them when they were irritated. Hence arose offerings, prayers, sacrifices, and ancestor worship. The ancestor worship was the earliest form of worship and tombs, the earliest temples. It is a kind of polytheism. Tylor believed that in course of time there was evolutionary development in religious beliefs and forms and the progress was from polytheism towards monotheism.

Tylor said that early man's limited intelligence could not distinguish animate from inanimate objects but endowed all things, even inanimate objects, with human characteristics and consequently with souls. Whereas the souls of men were thought to govern the world of men, the souls of other things were thought to govern the external world - the flow of rivers, the movement of stars, the germination of plants, the reproduction of animals etc. He implored their assistance with offerings and prayers. Thus a completely animistic view of the world came into being.

Animatism

The noted British anthropologist Robert Ranulph Marett referred to the belief in mana as animatism. Mana is Melanesian term for impersonal power. The idea of impersonal power is by its very nature a simpler concept than that of spirit and hence should be regarded as more primitive and as antedating the latter. Manaism is a kind of belief in a generalized and impersonal force, influence or power that exists invisibly throughout the universe and that may be possessed to a greater or lesser degree by gods, men, the forces of nature (such as the rain or thunder) and natural objects (such as sticks and stones). It is never embodied as such in a supreme god or deity. Gods may possess greater or lesser amounts of power, but they are never the embodiments of power. The power is amoral-neither good nor evil-so it accounts equally for god and demon, priest and sorcerer, the outstandingly good man and the successful scoundrel. Mana is beyond the ordinary power of men and outside the common processes of nature. Codrington illustrates this point. If a man has been successful in fighting, it has not been his natural strength of arm, quickness of eye or readiness of resource that has won success; he has got certainly a mana of spirit. If a man's pigs multiply and his gardens are productive it is not because he is industrious and looks after his property but because of the stones full of mana for pigs and yams that he possesses.

In Polynesia the concept of mana works similarly to justify and rationalize a complex social system whereby individuals are ranked according to their births and achievements. Mana accounts for social position and for successful achievement. But it also accounts for failure. Mana, in parts of Polynesia, is obtained by inheritance; the child takes mana from both his parents and so has more than either.

Another function of mana and illustrative of its power is that of taboo. One who possesses mana may lay a taboo or prohibition, upon a bit of property and so forbid all others (of lesser mana) to touch or use it for fear of supernatural punishment.

Naturism

Max Muller and other students of Sanskrit accepted in general Tylor's theory of the soul's origin except that they placed more emphasis on death as the source rather than dreams. They believed, however, that this development was only secondary in importance. The true source of religion they sought in another direction—the influence of nature on man. Max Muller said that earliest form of religion must have been the worship of objects of nature; and evidence in support of such a view has come in from archaeological excavations conducted in Egypt and elsewhere. It is maintained that an attitude of awe or love and reverence towards objects of nature is born as a result of a 'diseased' mind which invests lifeless things with life and all the power that is associated with life. Religion arises only when these natural forces are no longer represented in abstract form but are transformed into personal agents: Spiritual beings or gods. This result was brought about by man's linguistic confusion. Such linguistic errors as the sun rises and sets, or thunder sends rain, or that trees bear flowers and fruit, give rise to belief in some power inherent in the sun, thunder, trees etc. It originally referred to human acts and when applied to external nature it gave the names of human acts to natural objects. A new world composed of spiritual beings was created out of nothing and felt to be the cause of physical events.

Criticism –

These evolutionary theories, now generally outmoded in scientific circles but still prevalent in popular accounts are susceptible to the test of criticism.

It has been complained that Tylor had no field experience. We can raise the question of whether or not known primitive men do confuse the waking state with dreaming state or animate with inanimate nature. The answer is they do not. Animism is neither universal nor prior to other types. It overemphasized one aspect of primitive religion viz; the belief in soul or spirits. Tylor's evolutionary sequence leading from polytheism to monotheism found no proof and therefore not many adherents.

Manaism is open, to some extent, to the main criticism against Tylor's Animism viz. , that it invests the primitive with an aptitude for thinking and rationalization which he does not actually possess. Marett's claim that animatism preceded animism, however, has found few adherents. Anthropologists tend to hold that neither is derived from the other.

So far as it is maintained that objects of nature are worshipped no difficulty arises; evidence in support of such a practice is heavy. But the overriding claim to such worship being the earliest form of religion or explanation given to them is not convincing. Muller's belief that the application of humanistic language to inanimate objects created animism is hardly a satisfactory theory of religious origin; it assumes that when religion appeared language and society were already developed whereas a different analysis suggests that religion, language and society are all inextricably related and must have developed simultaneously and not serially. There is no proof to show that various conceptions follow linguistic expressions. On the contrary linguistic expressions may follow certain already existent ideas. The theory of naturism seems to be more a reflection of our own culture than that of early man.

The merit and usefulness of these various theories emerges when they are taken together as each of them expresses some essential truth regarding primitive religion.

However, unacceptable to-day is the idea that social institutions are explained by an account of their origin. The objection is not

due solely to the impossibility of recovering traces of the earliest social beginnings. Certainly, since institutions are not tangible like stones and can not be dug up, any evidence concerning their origins must be indirect and inconclusive. But what really makes the evolutionary theories so naive is their lack of scientific sociology. The evolutionists put the cart before the horse, they tried to understand present day institutions about which they could secure data in terms of remote beginnings about which they could secure no data. What they needed was a thorough knowledge of functional-structural operation of real societies before they speculated about the beginnings of society.

The evolutionary school not only indulged in a fruitless search for origins but also in a rationalistic mode of explanation. Religious beliefs are obviously nonrational. Logical conclusion from the evolutionary theory is that religion will ultimately disappear being replaced by science. But surely the role of religion in human affairs can not be determined solely on the basis of scientific accuracy or inaccuracy of religious beliefs. Unless we understand the personal and social importance of non-rational belief we fail utterly to understand religion.

Traditional evolutionary theory is individualistic. All that is required is a single individual sleeping, dreaming, looking at nature and speculating. It takes no account of the fact that religion is something held in common by group of people that it is traditional and institutional, that it is a part of culture. It omits the phenomena of collective ritual and worship.

These outmoded theories of religion appeared too evolutionary, rationalistic and individualistic to explain the facts of religion. They concentrated too heavily on belief and did not pay enough attention to ritual and emotion. They needed correction by application of sociological point of view.

The Functional Theory Of Religion

The functional-structural type of sociological analysis is developed by William Robertson Smith, Emile Durkheim, A. R. Radcliffe

Brown, Bronislaw Malinowski and recently by Max Weber and Talcott Parsons. In contrast to the evolutionists these scholars did not explain social institutions in terms of their historical origins but in terms of the part they play in satisfying societal needs.

According to Malinowski religion has the function of bringing about the readjustment between man and the super-natural in upset states of existence. It is a device to secure mental and psychic stability in an individual's life. Radcliffe Brown takes a different stand. He says that ultimately the survival of the group is more important than that of the individual and if the latter has to make sacrifices it is in his own interest to do so, because without social survival individual survival is not possible. Their viewpoints appear opposed but they are not. They have to be taken as complementary. The individual is as important to society as society to the individual.

The classical work, 'Varieties of religious experience' (1902) by William James points to the existence of specific and various reservoirs of consciousness-like energies with which we can make specific contacts in times of trouble, touched by something fundamental in the minds of religionists and at least provided them with apologetic material not in conflict with science and scientific method.

The functions of religion however cannot be thoroughly grasped, until its structural principles are understood. In this connection there are several distinctions that must be considered. These are the distinctions between the sacred and the profane, between empirical and superempirical, between belief and ritual, between religion and magic.

(a) Sacred and Profane

If we are to understand the source of sacred we must turn not to the objects themselves but to the meanings they symbolize. The sacred things are symbols and their significance lies in what they symbolize rather than what they are. Data collected from numerous primitive societies all over the world reveal that primitives generally distinguish between two component elements in the

supernatural field; there is a sacred part and a profane part. The sacred part according to Durkheim consists of what has been termed, religion and the profane part of magic and primitive science. Malinowski, however, has classified religion and magic as the sacred part and science as the profane part. K. Davis says that since it is not always clear whether the unholy is included in the sacred or the profane a three-fold distinction—holy, ordinary and unholy seems preferable.

(b) Empirical and Superempirical

Life organization of an individual is possible because of ultimate goals of religion. So long as one's goals relate to this world, frustration is possible. In that case another avenue is open to him. These are goals that transcend the world of actual experience. The greater his disappointment in this life, the greater his faith in the next. Religion gives release from sorrow and fear. It gives the individual a sense of identity with the distant and the limitless future. It expands his ego by making his spirit significant for the universe and the universe significant for him. The superempirical world is so elastic, so, susceptible of manipulation by the imagination that the disordered mind can seize upon it.

Religious experience gives rise to a feeling not only of submission but also of exaltation. This is what is meant by the experience of the Divine. Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade has discussed the point in the last chapter of his book 'The Bhagvadgita as a philosophy of God - realization'. Man is a citizen of two worlds, one of them is the kingdom of God and the other is a world of sensibility. As a member of the kingdom of Ends man is exalted, as a member of sensibility he is humbled. That is how Kant describes the experience as sublime.

(c) Belief And Ritual.

Sacred is the heart of religion. What makes a thing holy however, is nothing inhering in the thing itself but simply an attitude inhering in the mind. Resting on this subjective attitude there are two different aspects of the holy viz; belief and ritual.

Religious belief is based upon faith rather than upon evidence.

It need not be true in any scientific sense, but its function does not depend upon its being true. It merely depends upon its being held. Religious belief is the cognitive aspect of religion. It refers in the first place to the superempirical world telling us what this world is like, what kind of creatures inhabit it and what their past history and present interests are; above all it tells us how this world is related to the one we actually live in. This means in the second place that religious belief tells us also what the nature of the sacred objects is and how these objects relate to the superempirical world.

Religious ritual is the active side of religion. It may best be defined as a prescribed way of performing religious acts. It can include any kind of behaviour known, such as the wearing of special clothing, the recitation of special formulas, and the immersion in certain rivers; it can include singing, dancing, weeping, bowing, crawling, starving, feasting, reading etc. A ceremony on the other hand involves a number of interconnected and related rituals at a given time.

(d) Religion and Magic.

The two approaches-religious and magical-seem to have always existed together with reference to supernatural realm and sometimes they are so near each other as almost blend into each. However, it is believed that the magical approach is primitive. Man must have resorted to application only after his ego-driven magical approach failed to produce results invariably. It must be noted that no sharp division can be drawn between magic and religion. Both depend upon belief in the existence of supernatural powers. Magic and religion step in as post-scientific techniques. Science is always tentative and partial. Magic and religion in probabilities give confidence in a way that science cannot. But for analytical purposes it is useful to distinguish between the two.

In magic there is coercion and in religion there is submission to supernatural power. In magic a definite end is being pursued and this end is immediate, practical and usually private. Religion is not used as a means but stands as an end in itself and it is public and communal. Secrecy surrounds the magician. Magic diverges most from

religion when it is used to accomplish aims not sanctioned by the group. It may be employed to acquire property illegally, to steal another man's wife, to commit murders etc. In such cases it has to be carried out in secret. The members of a group are apt to fear black magic. Both the magician and the priest mediate between this world and the other. The former is feared and the latter commands respect; the former is malevolent and the latter benevolent.

Conclusion

We have noted that religion is universal in Human society and non-rationality is the very essence of it. Emotional bias and rational bias are the two obstacles that come in the way while presenting scientific explanation. Outmoded theories of religion were too evolutionary, individualistic and rationalistic and concentrated mainly on belief. Modern scholars explain the facts of religion by developing functional-structural type of sociological analysis.

References

1. Human Society - Kingsley Davis.
2. An Introduction to Social Anthropology
- D. N. Majumdar
- T. R. Madan.
3. An Introduction to Anthropology
- Ralph L. Beals
- Harry Hoijer
4. The Bhagvadgita as a philosophy of God realization
- Dr. R. D. Ranade.
5. Sociology - Samuel Koenig.
6. Encyclopaedia-Britannica -Vol; XII 1768.



BHAGAVAD GITA, IN THE ETHICAL PLANE

By

Shri K. E. Parthasarathi B. A.

The Bhagavad-Gita, the Song Celestial which forms part of the Bhishma Parva of the Mahabharata, is considered to be 'the most beautiful' perhaps the only true philosophical song in any known tongue.' It is at once the smallest and the most comprehensive scripture of the world. If the hold which a work has on the mind of man is any clue to its importance, the Gita is the most influential work. Its keynote is the blending of the ethical, spiritual and religious aspects of life. It gives a deeper probe than any other scripture into the science and ethics of life and the mystery of existence. It has been a lamp of wisdom to all.

The circumstances under which the Lord Krishna delivered the Gita are too well known to need reiteration. Under the stress of psychological maladjustments, Arjuna went out of mental equilibrium and equipoise and was at a loss to act with discrimination warranted by the circumstances. Lord Krishna took upon himself the task of bringing Arjuna round and taught him the gospel of Gita touching on all aspects.

Sri Krishna points out: "He who disregards the ordinances of the Vedas, acts only under the impulse of desire. Such a man can never attain to perfection, happiness, or the highest goal. Therefore, the Vedas should be your authority in determining what you should do and what you should not do." (XVI: 23 & 24)

Ethical life is inherent in human nature guided by God. It is selective action. The common characteristic of actual action is

a sense of right and wrong. The actual life is a life of regulated activity.

Acharya Sankara insists on the importance of ethics as one of the fundamentals of spiritual life. Ethics is the science of conduct and its aim, the attainment of pleasure and good or *prēyas* and *srēyas*. The aim of all conduct is not only the attainment of pleasure and avoidance of pain but also the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The ethics of the Gita not only ensures acquisition of good conduct but also paves the way for the attainment of Brahman, which is the highest and greatest good on earth.

The Gita analyses voluntary action into five factors in the following sloka:-

adbisthanam tatha karta karanam ca pṛthagvidham
vividhas ca pṛthak cestah daivam caivatra panchmam.

(B. G. xviii. 14)

The first is the *adhistanam* or body since it is the locus of the *Jivatma* (soul) or the collocation of five elements. The second is the *karta* (actor) or *Jivatma* endowed with the properties of intelligence and action. The *Karana* (or instruments) constitute the cognitive and conative organs, the *Jnanendriyas* and *Karmendriyas*. *Cesta* (functions) refers to the varied activities of *prana* sustaining the body and the senses. The last and most important factor is *Daivam* or the supreme Self, who is the inner Self of the individual, the ultimate *Niyanta* (controller), the prime cause of all conduct and the end of all endeavour. In chapter XV.15 Krishna says, 'Sarvस्या Caham Hṛidi sannivishtah' 'I am seated in the hearts of all.'

The phenomenon of action can be accounted for thus. The *paramātmā* grants the body and its organs and also the powers inherent in them, all being dependent on Him, manifests His will in the shape of effort through the organs. The *Paramātmā* who is located inside him allows him to act by His silent sanction. In short, the soul is acting under delegated powers. 'The ruler of all has mounted all beings on the wheel of body and living in their hearts. He makes them go round and round with the help of attractive sense objects' (B. G. xviii-61)

The states of moral life outlined in the Gita are stages in

a continuous development which culminate in the realisation of the ultimate goal. Morality has its ultimate meaning in the faith that goodness is grounded in God and that He alone as *Purushottama* is the absolute good and the pattern of perfection.

The Gita stresses the purity of mind, the inner purity of motives and intentions. The sense organs should be controlled and withdrawn from the wordly objects and pleasures. The true sacrifice is the sacrifice of all actions, bodily, verbal and mental to God. One attains the eternal Brahman by sacrificing all actions to God and living on whatever he gets by His grace. The Gita traces the progress from the ethics of *Karma* to the metaphysical stages of *nishkāma karma* (duty for duty's sake), then through self-realisation or *ātmaavalokana* to the realisation of Purushottama. This ascent from sensibility to spirituality is the essential part of the ethics of the Gita.

The Gita enjoins that selfish desires ought to be sublimated. Altruistic desires ought to be cultivated. Narrow love for wife, sons and family should be curtailed. Universal love should be transcended. The good of all creatures (*sarvabhūta*) and welfare of humanity (*lokasangraha*) should be the ends of actions. Those who are engaged in doing good to humanity and sentient creatures attain God. One attains perfection by doing one's specific duties with detachment and worships God by dedicating them to him.

The ethics of Gita is the ethics of activism and perfectionism. It is not the ethics of inaction or renunciation of action. Renunciation of fruits of action to God is true renunciation or *sannyasa*. The life of action is better than renunciation (B. G. v-2)

The Kantian view of morality falls short of the synthetic ideal presented by the Gita. The Daivam or God plays a prominent part in the evolution of conduct. It is the synthesis between the human endeavour and the divine grace (*Kripa*) that invests the Gita theory of morality with a completeness which is not dominant in the other schools of ethics.

The Gita psychology of ethics is based on the distinction of the three *gunas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. No Jiva is exempt from the influence of the above three *gunas*. They are the basic springs of

action. No Jiva is exempt from the influence of above three gunas. The mingling of these three gunas in varying degrees of preponderance constitutes the driving force of human conduct and helps or hinders moral endeavour and spiritual progress.

A Jiva becomes free from sufferings due to birth, old age, and death, when he transcends the gunas. He remains an indifferent spectator of the functions of the gunas. He abides in the essential nature of his self, free from pleasure, pain and dishonour. He is free from love and hatred and equal to friend and foe. The Gita also points out that one who transcends the gunas, becomes fit for becoming one with the Absolute—*sa gunansamaityaitan brahma-bhuyaya kalpate* (xiv-26).

Krishna has dealt with at length the three-fold nature of man's choice due to the three gunas in regard to food, sacrifice, austerity and gifts. In fact, these three aspects of life are the pivotal points of the ethical life. The ethical life in its fullness includes our attitude to ourselves, to others and to the future. Chapter xvii of the Gita gives an elaborate analysis in this regard.

The true spirit of the ethical life is summed up in the words OM TAT SAT, which is the three-fold symbol of the Absolute. *Om* implies reverence for good and scriptures, *Tat* unselfishness and *Sat* permanence and goodness and auspiciousness and steadfastness and surrender to God. Hence the truly ethical life must be based on reverence, unselfishness and auspiciousness. Whatever is sacrificed or given or purchased or performed without faith is *asat*. It is of no account here or hereafter (xvii-28).

The duty of every man is determined psychologically by his *svabhāva* or his innate nature. His special vocation (*svakarma*) in life is determined by his innate nature. He ought to perform his specific duties for the sake of duty which fit in with his native abilities. He can attain his highest personal good thereby and contribute to the welfare of the world (*lokasangraha*). 'All work is worsnip.' '*Sreyan Svadharmo Vigunah paradharmāt svanushtitāt*' (iii-35). 'It is better to perform one's own specific duties than to perform another's.' One is bound to be a failure and a misfit in another's field of action. The Gita anticipates

Bradley's conception of 'my station and duties.' The Gita enjoins the performance of duties for the good of humanity and attainment of God, while Bradley enjoins the performance of duties appropriate to one's station in life for the realization of the soul.

The most distinctive contribution made by the Gita to ethical thought is the idea of *nishkāma karma*. It reconciles the dualism between human and divine freedom by the idea that one may attain mastery over his self in order that his self may be attuned to the will of God who is the real self of all beings. Every one is the son of God. The responsibility for evil and sin rests with the Jiva alone. God or Iswara is ever pure and perfect, though as the moral ruler. He meets out justice in accordance with one's past karma. By giving up *ahamkāra* (egotism) and absolute self-surrender to the redemptive grace of God and the self gift to him, who is the real Real Self, the *mumukshu* (the aspirant for *moksha* or liberation) become a *mukta* (free man). The sinner seeks God and is saved. God is the way and the goal. Thus the infinitesimal and infinite meet in ethical religion.

The Gita urges on the readers the highest ethical and spiritual truth viz. we are in God and God is in us and we must regard the joys and griefs of all as our own (v-29-32). We must love all because all of us have in us God as the supreme and transcendent Reality. The love of a fellow-being is based on his being non-different from us and our being non-different from him. To help or harm another is to help or harm ourselves. The world is one family and God is its Father, its Ruler and its Soul. The doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number which is the summum bonum of ethics can be satisfactorily explained by the above concept.

Krishna has defined *Sthitha-prajna* or a man of steady wisdom as one who casts away all the desires of the mind and rejoices in the full beauty and blessedness of the self (ii-55). He who is not cowed down by sorrow and who does not hunger and thirst after sense delights and who is free from attachment and fear and wrath is a man of meditation and steady wisdom. He who is unattached and who is not elated by pleasure or depressed by pain is the man of steady wisdom. When he withdraws his senses from the objects on every side, then his wisdom is firmly set.

The *Sthitha Prajna* is not only a moral philosopher but also an

exemplar in social life. Yogins like Janaka and Manu have taught by precept and practice that the *Mukta* lives for the welfare of others. Whatever a great man does, the same is done by others as well (ii-21). God is also ever active with the redemption of souls though He has nothing to gain for himself by such activity. It is therefore evident that spirituality and service are the twin aspects of ethical code of conduct.

The ideal of the *Sthitha-prajna* provides a broad vision of life and super-life and will solve many thorny problems and will result in harmony in society and the world. As the U. N. charter puts it, 'wars arise in the minds of men', it is the minds that have to be controlled. The tendencies such as lust for power, attachment to ideologies, desire for wealth etc. have to be curtailed. Further, when a man realises his oneness with humanity, then there will be no more quarrels over languages, religions, between different races etc. Man will realise that there is but one creator and sustainer of the universe. Each man will share the views of Thomas Paine "The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren and to do good is my religion."

Krishna speaking about the Eternal principle says ;-

yo yo yam tanum bhaktas sraddhyarchitumiccati

tasya tasyachalam sraddham tameva vidadhamyham (vii-21)

"Whatsoever the form a devotee worships with faith, it is I who make his faith permanent and unflinching." When a man realises the truth of this, there will be tolerance and love and no more quarrels or disputes. It may therefore be considered that the Gita inculcates universal religion and a religion of love.

In the ethical plane, the Gita aims at impressing on its readers the paramountcy of conduct. It shows that man is capable of attaining the highest stage of perfection when he breaks through the mass of ignorance enveloping him. It is a charter for success in life for every man who lives the Gita way of life. It is like a railway guide and every one must travel with it in the journey of life. A sanskrit verse sums up its greatness thus:

Gītā sugītā kartavyā kim anyais sāstravistaraih

It means that the Gita should be propagated. What is the use of other elaborate Sastras?



Shri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade



Born
JAMKHANDI
3-7-1886

Samadhi
NIMBAL
6-6-1957

GLIMPSES OF SHRI GURUDEV RANADE.

I

Passing Of Shri Gurudev Ranade.

Shri. Gurudeo Ranade, a Guru to a large number of aspirants both in the North and the South, attained Samadhi on 6-6-1957 at Nimbal in Bijapur District, thus creating a deep void in many of his followers.

I myself was all along under his spiritual guidance and came not only to revere him but like him as my father. His child-like simplicity, earnestness of purpose and the effective manner in which he conveyed spiritual truth to us was beyond imagination.

The feeling of great attachment was remarkable to all his Sadhakas. He made no distinction between any of his followers. He was always found dancing to the tune of the Maker, completely forgetful of worldly surroundings. He was one with divinity. Everyone found something new in his approach to Sadhaka's problems. Such a dynamic personality he was. Since July 1956 he was gradually retreating from the world. He saw particularly that Bhakti was spread as much as possible.

I had the good fortune of examining Shri Gurudeo Ranade just after his return from Allahabad, about 16-5-57. He paid a surprise visit to Sholapur. I was informed from Hutgi Rly station that he would reach Sholapur by about 5 P. M. I contacted all the disciples in Sholapur immediately and some of them told me that he had gone very weak. I then took my hospital ambulance and a wheel chair and reached Hutgi railway station in my car. Shri. Gurudeo was sitting in his I class compartment, absorbed in meditation. I entered the compartment and prostrated before him. He signalled me with his hand to sit down and meditate. After about 15 minutes he stood up and got down the train briskly and started walking. He entered my car and we reached my

buugalow. He said to me, "that is how the meditation gives a person dynamic energy." Some disciples were with me. We had tea and then I examined him. I found that he was having hacking cough. His lungs showed congestion particularly on right side. He was X-rayed. X-ray showed that he had old healed tuberculous lesions at both apices and a patch of hazyness in the right costophrenic angle. He himself said that he was able to visualise both his lungs without X-ray. It was apparently to verify the facts that he came to Sholapur. I gave him antibiotics and sedative tinctures, but he did not use them at all. He then returned to Nimbai by the night train. I again went to Nimbai after about 12 days with X-ray machine and got him X-rayed. We had to support him whilst taking X-ray. I clinically examined him and found that his lungs were clear which was confirmed by X-ray. He was also examined by eminent doctors, who came to the conclusion that his lungs were clearing.

Particularly during the last 3 days, he was completely detached from the world. He got himself examined by Dr. paripatyadar to confirm that he was free from disease and got his bowels cleaned by laxative.

Thus the revered Soul departed in a bliss of joy with complete control over his disease. Just before his departure his pulse was regular and breathing was normal. Thus Shri Gurudeo attained Samadhi on 6-6-1957 at night just as Kabir saying "I am giving away the body as clean and pure as given to me: Jhini Jhini bini chadaria" and Shri. Nimbargi Maharaja saying; "Appa Gururaya, Ninnadu Ninage oppitu." O God, I am returning to you the body as normal as it was given to me.

— Dr. P. D. Khanolkar. M. D.

II

Rambhau Ranade, the renowned philosopher-mystic.

Another of our popular professors was Shri Rambhau Ranade. He taught us Carlyle's 'Heroes'. The town Kolhapur was a common bond that had fostered between us a sense of reciprocal kinship. Shri Bapurao Ranade, his step-brother, was a teacher to all of us and Rambhau made frequent trips to Kolhapur to meet him. Rambhau was also the maternal uncle of Narahari Damle, one of our close circle. At every University examination, Rambhau used to rank first and make a rich

haul of prizes and scholarships. Naturally every one of his visits to the Damle's drew us thither in curiosity as well as admiration. Of course in the heart of hearts we were making mental notes all the while of the ideal scholar's style of walk and talk, his general turn out, his bearing, his fads and what not! Being with him, at least for a while, was a matter of self-gratulation for us. That year particularly Rambhau had secured the much coveted Chancellor's Gold Medal for philosophy at the M. A. examination. Fergusson College, therefore, held for us the dual attraction of Dr. Gune and Rambhau Ranade. Sharp of intellect, sweet in nature and unassuming in disposition he always impressed one at first sight. He was a personification of good nature. Physically however he looked somewhat frail. But his profound erudition more than compensated this shortcoming. He used to be dressed in a very simple style. A clean bright 'dhoti', a pair of typical red Poona slippers (जोडा), a loose none-too-fashionable shirt with thread buttons, a spacious tight collared shortish coat buttoned up straight, a fairly long muslin muffler (उपरजे) slung casually around the neck, a liberal saffron coloured paste mark on the yawning forehead, a headgear (pugree) typical of Poona perched at ease and indifferent on the crest, and a baggy dark gown rather shuffling about in careless defiance of all order—in such a uniform, if it could be called one, he used to enter the classroom walking unusually fast. Sometimes he carried a book or two extra in his hand while going to the class. The projection of his personality would easily profess the subject he taught—philosophy. From the moment he entered the classroom the stream of his eloquence flowed unfaltered till the bell tolled signifying the closure of the hour. The English he spoke was pitched low but delivered fast and was profound yet lucid. It was packed with meaning cast in classical mould, and somewhat ponderous yet within easy grasp of the student. It had about it the sanctity and majesty of the Ganges. Everytime the student felt unmistakably that, he had heard something novel and extraordinary, that he had made a successful sojourn into the realm of the unknowable and that it was a charmed moment that had yielded some rare acquisition, an experience bordering on the ecstatic. There was a special Ranade touch about everything of his—unfolding the depth of Carlyle's thoughts or his superbly fluent eloquence, the uncanny tact of making the student gravitate towards him, the magic touch inducing love of literature in the student, and the masterly way of re-establishing the ancient tie of the teacher and the taught which seemed to mock at the

heterodox spirit of modernity. The impression that he made on us then stands out in bold relief even now, after a lapse of fortyfive years.

The Upanishadic Sage :

Often Ranade asked the students to write essays and after going through them he returned them to the students with his own comments, suggestions and opinions, pointing out mistakes therein, if any. At times he also called them home for discussions over the subject matter of the essays. He had two spacious rooms constructed just beyond the Fergusson college Hostel; while his family residence was in Shaniwar Peth. Ranade often spent long studious hours in these rooms. We had nicknamed them as Carlyle Cottage. Students considered it a rare honour and privilege whenever they were summoned by Rambhau Ranade for discussions. By temperament Rambhau was a person of transparent candour. With a childlike innocence he used to mix with students shaking off typical aloofness, teachers are normally prone to maintain. This in turn imposed on the students a sense of embarrassment and awkwardness which compelled them to talk some garbled stuff, sitting under great constraint. At the cottage he looked a veritable skeleton of skin and bones flitting about in his 'dhoti' with its back strip amusingly shaggy and the bulging loops and falls in front helplessly dragging along and with his hair lock a-top the crown, jumping about in unintentional mischief. Looking at him one felt one was squatting before some archaic Rshi for a session of sermons. Rangarao Diwakar (who later became the Governor of Bihar) was one of his favourite pupils. Like him many others whose essays earned his appreciation received invitations to the cottage from him. Once I too had the good fortune to receive it.

What an essay to write!

He liked one of my essays immensely and so he sent for me. Damn it, 'I felt I had hit the jack pot!'. In the whole class and especially in our own Kolhapur circle my stock went high at rocket speed. when I reached the Carlyle Cottage I was greeted by him with his own words of esteem. "God bless you! what wonderful stuff you have written! writ large on his face as it were! Knocked out by this reception I sat before him a bundle of nerves. Relevant portion of my essay was once again read aloud, embroidered with comments of course. After all, I knew, my essay was not quite a miracle to merit all that. On second thoughts I realised how

the occasion was more a testimony to Rambhau's obliging nature, his magnanimous heart and an attitude of encouragement than anything else.

He is a genius indeed:

A pure guileless innocence was the main stuff of his mind. He viewed all people as essentially good. He had a firm faith in the warrantability of inherent heroship in everyman. And hence fancying that as 'the divine-element' ever present in man he used to address himself to this divine principle in all humility whenever it manifested itself in some person in some way or the other. Once he was invited for a dinner to the eighth club. Knowing my close relationship with him I too was invited for the dinner by my Kolhapur friend, Sada Padhye. The cook in the eighth club had a reputation for preparing excellent Dal-Soup (आमटी). It had a great standing demand from even other clubs on the campus. It was a treat. On learning of Rambhau being invited for food, the cook that day employed all the ingenuity at his disposal in the preparation of the item. Really it was an A-1 preparation on that day. After the food Rambhau sent for the cook, while cracking the betel nut. As he came up Rambhau made a few casual affectionate enquiries with him about the dish and in a remarkably frank, sincere fashion gave his appreciative confession, "He is a genius indeed!"

The Saint Of Nimbai :

About forty years later, on one occasion he recalled my essay for its outstanding quality. Rambhau Ranade and I were the referees for the award of Ph. D. to a student of mine for his thesis on "A critical survey of the Abhangas of saint Tukārām". The thesis had already won Rambhau's approbation. I was summoned to Nimbai for the verdict to be passed by us jointly. As Rambhau had made Nimbai his abode it had since become a shrine hallowed with sanctity. I was already very eager to go over there for two reasons. First, it would give me an opportunity to have a *dārshan* of my professor, my Guru. Second, my native place-Islampur, being also the native place of Rambhau's wife before marriage, I would also get an occasion to see her after a long time as I was in my childhood a play-mate of her- a nostalgic craving! I remembered, we used to play together in the courtyard of Mr. Vaidya, her father - a close friend of me though pretty senior to me. Rambhau had probably forgotten all about me by then. He practically considered the job a routine affair, part of his academic obligations. And so he took me to be just a co-referee until the

day we met. I arrived in Nimbai at about eight in the night. My host had already made careful arrangements to despatch one person to the station to receive me and have me lodged comfortably. About 10 o'clock at night Rambhau called on me at my room and as soon as he saw me he expressed his pleasant surprise saying, "Oh! Is that you Mr. Kulkarni! Well, I know, he is my student, a Fergussonian! I still remember very clearly that excellent essay of his. "I was dumbfounded. A strange mixture of joy, gratitude and several undiscernible sentiments filled me. After brief formalities he left. I was very happy to extend my stay there for two more days in the enchanting, beatific atmosphere charged with the holiness of the saint Rambhau Ranade. When I left I had the contentment of a fulfilled mission.

Look! Gentlemen! He is transported to Superconscious state:

Nimbai is a place about half a furlong away from the railway station. Rambhau chose this place because the Samadhi of his Guru is very near from here. He instituted here his 'Ashram' for the sake of contemplation and solitude. There aren't many houses situated in this locality, about seven or eight at the most. He has built a spacious house for himself, a prayer chamber, a few cells (ओऱ्या) for the convenience of disciples, an office room, a kitchen and a dining hall. H. H. the Rājāsāheb Patwardhan of Sangli is one of his disciples. The Rājāsāheb has constructed a special residence for himself there. At present his son, Yuvaraja camps there engaged in devotional service to him. Not fewer than fifteen or twenty of Rambhau's pupils would be in station there always. Strictly speaking, he commands a large group of disciples as well as followers who hold him in high reverence. Life in the Ashram there is exceedingly disciplined. Everyday in the morning light breakfast is served. At noon is served lunch, and then in the evening "Prasād" is distributed after evening prayers. Tea and items like it are forbidden. Disciples camping there have to make their own arrangement for tea separately, if required. The routine expenditure in the Ashram is made from the Trust's funds. At about 4 or 5 p.m. everyday a talk by some guest devotee is a normal feature. Twice everyday, once in the morning and once in the afternoon at prayer time, Rambhau makes his appearance for दर्शन to the assembled votaries. Both times he usually sits in the company of disciples. The prayer meeting is marked with singing of devotional songs or a studied talk or a symposium in Marathi or Kannada by men well versed in the language.

When I had gone there, I was called upon to give a talk on Vivek-sindhu (विवेक सिंधु). Besides me at that time were also present Dr. Christian of Aurangabad and Dr. Deshpande of the Archeological Dept. who had come to have his 'darshan' for the first time. Predictably strange was the reason for Dr. Christian's visit. Just a few days earlier, it was learnt, Rambhau had appeared in his dream vision, though the doctor had never seen even the ghost of anybody like Rambhau. The Doctor on arrival frankly admitted that he had seen Rambhau in his vision exactly in the same form as the one he now witnessed with the naked eye. A doctor's dilemma of several dimensions indeed! A reputed doctor of Aurangabad with a thumping practice was squatting here by the side of saint Rambhau baffled, tamed, disarmed and de-egotised. A little later Rambhau signalled for routine activity like seminar, song singing, questions and answers to start. Finally came the turn of the Doctor. He was given the option of prayers and the language of his own choice. It appeared he consented. But we had observed in him since morning that day a gradual surreptitious change in the state of his mind. The first Darshan of Rambhau had sparked off a chain of reactions in his psychic domain. The atmosphere of the prayer session only accelerated and augmented the process of explosion. The perfume sticks, the burning incense, steady oil lamps of flickerless flames, clanging of cymbals, tense minds straining at the knowledge of Brahma and its mystery envelope with a relentless pursuit in the course of deliberations—all this welded into a sort of alchemy for the susceptibility of the strange stranger or what, God alone knows! But the Doctor now suddenly burst into song singing. Scarcely had the first couple of words escaped his lips couched in their sound garb when, he switched on to a quaint rhythmic humming. What contortions and what with sobbings and yellings—it was all a grand mess as though he was seized by a ghost! And yet there was a method in the madness for the eyes that had the power to perceive. Eventually, the sitting posture of the Doctor's body succumbed to a flat-out stage. But that very moment Rambhau had offered his lap like a pillow to the falling body. He passed his hand on the Doctor's body in a fond caress. "Get thee calm doctor, be at peace" said Rambhau. Meanwhile Mr. Datar had slipped out, fetched some cold water and started gently stroking his face and crest with it. Strangely enough, before we could extricate ourselves from the impact of the fantastic the doctor had come to the assembly automatically dispersed without the least flutter. Some of us helped the doctor reach his room and rest in bed. Somehow in a mood of characteristic objectivity

notwithstanding all that, I recalled Chakradhara's Lilacharitra. The followers of Mahānubhāva (महानुभाव) cult have left it on record how they were used to attaining to a superconscious state in the magnetic field of Lord Chakradhara. Descriptions of this wild state are far and few between throughout the महानुभाव (Mahānubhāva) literature. The doctor's case was an exact replica of what I had only read about. Prof. Tulpule also could not help remarking, "Today, it was indeed an experience beyond all words. All these years I have been visiting Nimbāl, but this event was the first of its kind and a class by itself. It beats me completely." ❀

(the late)- Prof. K. P. Kulkarni

III

A Thousand Moons.

Shri Gurudeva was once invited for the annual function by 'Varakari Shikshana Samstha' at Alandi. Gurudeva travelled from Adhyatma Bhavan, his residence in Poona, to Alandi in a tonga. I accompanied him.

A few years later, Master Krishnarao, the renowned actor and singer of Maharashtra, came to see Shri Gurudeva at Poona. Shri Gurudeva asked him to sing some Bhajan. He sang the well-known Abhang of Shri jñāneśvara— "A thousand moons shine on your forehead—" (तुझिये निदळीं कोटि चंद्र प्रकाशे....).

Once, while referring to that Abhang at Nimbāl, Shri Gurudeva said to me, "Do you remember, Ganpatrao, that we had been in a tonga to Alandi for a lecture on the occasion of the annual function of the 'Varakari Shikshana Samstha'? "I very well remember," I replied. Shri Gurudeva said, "The experience contained in that Abhang was continuously appearing before my eyes since we started from Adhyatma Bhavan till we reached Alandi."

This was sometime in 1918, which shows how Shri Gurudeva had advanced spiritually even at that early age. Once Shri Gurudeva told me: "Only Jñāneśvara could compose such an Abhang; none else can." Many



have observed the fact that when Shri Gurudeva himself used to recite this Abhang, he used to be completely engrossed in it. It appears that, the image of Lord Krishna used to stand before his vision beckoning him

Once Shri Gurudeva asked me to explain that Abhang in an assembly. I was abashed to speak in the presence of Shri Gurudeva, who had an intuitive experience of that Abhang. But I had to speak. ❀

❀ (Courtesy: Satsang: Marathi
quarterly- Poona)

—Shri Kakasaheb Karkhanis.
Bijapur.



Critical And Constructive Aspects Of Prof. R. D. Ranade's Philosophy

B. R. Kulkarni. Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum. 6
Pp. xii 188. Rs. 12.

The late Prof. R. D. Ranade (1886-1957) who was a professor of Philosophy, a Vedantin and a sadhak of mysticism combined in himself such rare qualities of head and heart that he came to be known as "Gurudev". He devoted his whole career to unbare in his writings the mysteries of God-realisation with rare insight and to enunciate a philosophy commensurate with it, a philosophy wherein the best thoughts of Western philosophers could be synthesised with the Indian philosophy of mysticism grounded in the Vedanta system and mystical lore of saints like Jnaneshwar.

Prof. Ranade's approach was both critical and constructive. The present author who had the privilege of being a disciple of the professor, gives a clear, compact and connected picture of Gurudev's thought, as far as possible in the very words of Gurudev himself. — — —

The account is throughout illuminating and the style racy. It deserves study by all who are interested in the essence of Indian philosophy and religion."

(Dr.) K. Krishnamoorthy
(Deccan Herald : 19-10-1975)

तत्त्वज्ञान जगणारा महान तत्त्वज्ञ.

- श्री गुरुदेव रानडे : लेखक. प्रा. भा. र. मोडक व सौ. मोडक, प्रकाशक, जे व्ही. परळकर, गुरुदेव रानडे मंदिर, रानडे कालनी, बेळगांव, पृष्ठे ५२, मूल्य ३ रु.

निवाळचे थोर तत्त्वज्ञ गुरुदेव रानडे यांचे हे संक्षिप्त परंतु बहुमोल चरित्र लेखकद्वयांनी या पुस्तकांत सादर केले आहे. गुरुदेव रानडे यांचे जीवन पवित्र होते. ते प्रकांड पंडित होते. परंतु अत्यंत नम्र होते. जेजे त्यांना ठाऊक होते ते दुसऱ्याला शिकवण्यांत त्यांनी आपली बुद्धि व शक्ति खर्च केली. ईश्वराकडे जाण्याच्या मार्गावर त्यांनी ध्यान व मक्तीची शिकवण हजारोंना दिली. कॉलेज व कॉलेजब्राह्मेर त्यांचा मोठा शिष्यवर्ग होता. डॉ. राधाकृष्णन् यांनी त्यांच्यासंबंधी म्हटले होते ' आम्ही सर्वजण तत्त्वज्ञानाची भाषा बोलतो, रानडे तत्त्वज्ञान जगतात. ' लौकिक मोठेपणा, कीर्ति वगैरे फापट पसारा प्रस्तुत चरित्रांत नाही. त्यांच्या जीवनाचा थोडक्यात आढावा घेऊन त्यांची साधना, त्यांचे अष्टपैलू व्यक्तिमत्व, त्यांची वाङ्मय संपदा, सर्वांत महत्त्वाचे म्हणजे त्यांची पारमार्थिक अनुभूति नेमक्या व मोजक्या शब्दांत लेखकांनी सादर केली आहे. मुमुक्षु वाचकांना त्यात पुष्कळ शिकण्यास मिळेल. " ज्याला देवाचा अनुभव आला म्हणतो, परंतु समाजाची सेवा करित नाही त्याला स्वरा अनुभवच आला नाही (पान ४) या वचनांत गुरुदेवांची शिकवण दिसून येते.

रविवार सकाळ १६-२-१९७५

Books available from Gurudev Mandir Tiakwadi East Belgaum, 590006.

VRATAM AS A PATHWAY TO GOD

By
Dr. C. L. Prabhakar

Literature is an attempt to point out the activity of human mind at different planes of mental discipline. Rather also that activity indicates the endeavour of mind to channelise its behaviour into an order. Left for itself, the mind is highly deceptive and fickle. So long it is disciplined for a purpose, it helps the being to be normal. The other limbs of the body of a being, however, support for the control of mind.

Body and spirit are spoken of either individually or collectively. Body aids spirit in its progress. The progress of the spirit of a being is termed as spiritual progress which is a necessary condition for the realisation of one's self. Religion is an aid to lay down a pathway for an enterprise, where enterprise could be one connected with a sacred purpose. Every religion prescribes one or the other (object) as Supreme. It also instructs that by some means or the other that Supreme should be satiated and realised. The means adopted could, however, be understood as the pathway to God, for the present.

The pathway to God is twofold, one to gain materialistic desires and the other to gain happiness to the mind spiritually. Hindu scriptures have pointed out four *purusharthas* viz., *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha* and suggested that one is a link to the other in sequence, the ultimate, however, being liberation (*Moksha*) from the cycle of *sansara*. The aim of religion is to help man to reach the end of the four *purusharthas*. Religion concentrates on *Dharma* while philosophy on *moksha*. Therefore, religion and philosophy are inseparables by themselves although one feels them to be independent and separate. Religion which

pertains to the practical aspect of one's life, prescribed certain means like *Puja, Japa Pārāyana, Dhyana, Vrata* etc. The choice, however, was given to the *Sadhaka* who wishes to realise God. Rather those items are means to satisfy the Supreme such that Divine Grace shall help him in his pursuits. Regarding such means there is no limitation. After all those are dry aids to reach the Supreme. The chief result of any endeavour of merit should be one that would contribute to the peace of mind.

Vratam is so familiar a term among common people who live a life for religion and its values, that it has been understood in a number of ways. *Vrata* as a term and concept occurs in Veda. It is construed as a 'vow', 'sacrifice' and so on. In other words, *Vrata* is an activity of choice performed in order to please a deity under a given context. As a result, the '*Vratam*' implies a belief too that the devotee shall reap the fruits of such an activity. *Vrata* owns a lord for it i.e. *Vratapati*. *Vratin, Vrata* and *Vratapati* are the objects linked with each other, so that a desired result is warranted. In other words, it is an interaction between the *Vratin* and the *Vratapati* linked up by the '*Vrata*', the procedure which helps a concerned deity feel satisfied, as adopted by the sacrificer (*Vratin*). This procedure is as sacred as knowing the seer, deity and the metre of any Vedic Mantra. According to a Vedic injunction, if one utters a *Mantra* without the knowledge of these, he shall not be benefitted by the *Mantra*. *Vratam* could also be construed to mean 'Tapasya' which is again an activity in any form which is performed / directed towards Brahman. Yajurveda, interestingly enough, points out that a sacrificer would pray Agni to enable him to complete the *Vrata*, to observe which he has set himself and thus transcend the *anṛta* to *satya* (idam aham anṛtāt satyam upaimi). Here a clue is provided that the chief object of any *Vrata* is to reach *Satyam* (truth) which is identified with Brahman. Also that, originally, the beings are enveloped by *Anṛta* and that should be liberated from one's self through the means viz., *Vrata*. To observe *Sandhyopasana*, for example, the so called rite for a Brahmin every day, is a *Vrata*. It is believed that such a rite ensures immediate purity in body and mind which is a necessary condition to set himself into the pathway to God.

The ultimate analysis and purpose of *Vrata* and its performance would amount to suggest that *Vrata* shall bring out desirelessness in case the corresponding activity is accordingly modulated. But on ordinary

circumstances every 'Vrata', known in the Hinduism, is entailed with some object to be fulfilled. *Satyanarayana Vratam* is believed to bestow progeny upon the sacrificer when performed.

To speak concretely, there are a number of ways (routes) to reach a particular point (place). Likewise, religion too showed out various ways to reach God, also to get identified with God. Right from times immemorial, many established *medhavis* (seers) did lot of 'tapasya' to discover ways and means to reach him. What they adopted, they formally passed on by recording them in their works. *Mantra śāstra*, *Agamaśātra*, *Tantra śāstra* etc. point out a pathway by trodding which Supreme bliss shall be experienced. For example, *Tantra śāstra* talks of *Kundalini yoga* (serpent power) by adopting to which procedure, bliss is promised. *Kundalini yoga* explains the endeavour of union of *Sakti* and *Siva*. On ordinary plane, there are very many *Vratas* viz., *Satyanarayana Vratam*, *SriMadananta Padmanabha Vratam* etc., which are optional rites that would guarantee certain materialistic ends. The whole range of literature on Religion and the whole span of life of exalted and ranked people of religion stress one way or the other as a pathway and impress every one to rise higher and benefit himself.

At this stage let us question: could any pathway prescribed by another to reach God help one who has thirst and zeal to raise himself upto the higher planes of happiness? Is there at all a Pathway to God approved by God? It is difficult exactly to answer such questions. It is difficult because when one gets engrossed in such an enterprise, he shall forget himself. He finally becomes speechless. But for the sake of normal circumstances, everyone is urged to think of a pathway at his own level. In such a riddle 'vrata' designed by certain able minds could be a pathway. It, after all, helps to control the mind in a particular way. However, various rites and accessories involved in a *vrata* impel an order and discipline in the mind tending to a kind of satisfaction. For example, during the performance of a *Vrata*, the order of sixteen *upacaras* (*Sodasopacaras*) are of great meaning when followed in sequence.

Vratācarana has advantages only. It influences the mind. It provides ultimately a sort of mental satisfaction which is a necessary condition for peace of mind. The 'Vrata' commends physical activity, in a sense that worship with worship-material shall be in progress, and that engages

the body making it quite busy. Moreover in creation, not everyone is equal in respect of power of imagination and intelligence. One has to however, acquire and build it gradually. Some may take a full life time, and some more births. Here *punyaphala* that supports *samskara* comes into the plane of reasoning for such a situation.

Vrata is believed to help to discipline one's behaviour in a sense that the sacrificer shall report to perform the events of a *Vrata* in a Particular order as prescribed by a noted Brahmin of old. Religion makes one to believe that such an order has some magical effect also. *Vrata* involves '*Pūja Kalpa*' and a story discussing the origin and other details regarding the validity of such a *Vrata*. *Vrata* further promises the fulfilment of wants specially implied by the conduct of such a *Vrata*. In respect of performance of *Vrata* selective influence is effective. However, it is a matter of personal belief that whether or not one should be votary for that. How many vratas are there in the world? In the language of *Satapatha Brahmana*, one would say,—as many as there are the hair on the body, so many are the *Vratas*. But it is certain, that any *Vratam* when performed leaves the atmosphere, charged with the grace of the divinity for sometime and an opportunity thereby is created to all to spend time in the name of God. If the corresponding *Vratapati* is pleased with the *Vrata*, he shall do good only to the devotee. e. g. cf. *na me bhaktah pranaśyati*. So goes the promise of the *vratakaras* too.

Further in respect of *Vrata* - an activity as a matter of duty- it is worthwhile to turn to Sri Krishna's opinion in the Gita. *Vrata* may be understood as *Dharma* if people like to claim a place in religious circles and style themselves as religious. Then '*Vrata*', also understood as a form of worship of Deity, would be a pathway to God until some time. A pathway, however, is essential to such a class of people who seek the feet of Lord living under normal circumstances. Sri Krishna advised Arjuna, "Give up all Dharmas (*Vratas*); seek refuge in me, I shall liberate you." An interpretation to such a piece of advice of Sri Krishna could be that Lord Krishna suggested to give up all dharmas (*vratas*) and make total "surrender" to Him such that He shall shoulder the responsibility of protecting him and at the same time granting him liberation from all sins. '*Vrata*' in its final sense, therefore, could imply *total surrender* of oneself. "Total surrender" is a stage when one gives up everything of his, physical and spiritual, unto the lotus feet of the Lord Krishna, like Arjuna

who renounced his *śāstra* and fell flat on the feet of Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna indeed took the responsibility, in such a way that he was *Sārathi* for the whole war of Pandavas with Kurus. Moreover, Arjuna at the end of *Gitopadesa*, was urged and impelled voluntarily to utter words that *moha* was dispelled and he was a *Jnanin* and was prepared to fight with his own kith and kin mechanically. He declared *Karishye vacanam tava. vrata*, therefore, understood as a pathway to God (truth) should be coupled with the complete submission of his *antahkaranas*. Lalita Sahasraname¹ also suggests the total surrender of *antahkaranas* to the feet of Goddess and repeated practice to please her, shall form 'Vrata', to attract the *prasāda* of the Goddess. At a certain stage, *vrata* includes *Dhyana* and *abhyasa* (repetition). Seers, at all times, kept in view the conditions prerequisites for a pathway to God; and accordingly preserved the 'know how' in various forms at different dates of a year. For a Hindu and specially a Brahmin, many days in a year are invested with religious significance and a staunch follower of that considered all of them to be *vrata* under ordinary circumstances. For example,¹ *aṣṭami*, *ekadashi*, *puṇimā*, *amāvāsya* etc., spoke significance. Durga is worshipped² on *aṣṭami* and *amavasya*. Departed fathers (Pitṛ) are worshipped on *amavasya* etc. All these are regarded as *Vratas* only in a sense of a matter of duty. A devout man considered his life everyday as a course to make progress on the pathway directed to truth and its actual realisation. In conclusion it may be said that any measure adopted to please the Supreme, is a pathway for a particular individual. So long as conscience is active in one's self there could be every hope to better oneself and make progress on the road of spiritual success. Whatever the measure practised to lift himself from the mire of *samsara* and to please the choicest God, that turns to be a *Vrata* and hence a pathway.

... ya evam vidwan amṛta iha bhavati
nā nyah panthah vidyate ayanaya ...

... R. V.



-
1. "Goddess Lalita" by Dr. C. L. Prabhakar
(Bharatiya Vidya, Bombay, 1969)
 2. a) Goddess Durga (ibid)
b) Goddess: Durga and Lalita: A Contrast
(Triveni, July-Sept. 1974) by the same author.

GURUDEVA RANADE'S APPROACH TO THE GITA.

- Dr. B. R. Modak, M. A. Ph. D.

According to Gurudeva Ranade God-realisation is the supreme teaching of the Bhagavadgita. His book 'The Bhagavadgita as a philosophy of God realisation' is the out-come of his life-long profound study of Philosophy and Mysticism as well as of his own spiritual experiences.

The first part of the book deals with the relation of the Bhagavadgita to the ancient philosophical systems. The indebtedness of the Gita to the Upaniṣads is pointed out by quoting similar concepts from the Katha, Mundaka, Chandogya and Śvetasvatara upaniṣads. Particular attention is drawn to the realisational value of the Iṣa Upaniṣad. The relation of the Gita to saṁkhya and Yoga is then pointed out. The *trigunas* play no less an important part in the Bhagavadgita than in the later saṁkhya philosophy, having their physiological correspondence with the cerebral, cardiac and muscular functions. Further it is pointed out that the question of the priority or posterity of the Bhagavadgita to the Brahma-sutras is very difficult to solve.

The second part turns to the interpretation of the Gita by the great Ācāryas such as śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva and Vallabha. A mystical interpretation by Jnāneśvara, whom Dr. Ranade points out to be the best commentator on the Gita, is given at length. Jnāneśvara's greatest contribution to thought, namely, his doctrine of asymptotic approximation to Reality is a veritable land-mark in the history of the philosophy of mysticism.

The third part takes us through the labyrinth of modern interpretations. The views of Western Scholars like Garbe Holtzmann, Olden-

berg, Schrader and Otto regarding interpolations in the Gita are criticised. The interpretation of the Gita by R. G. Bhandarkar is a very mature product concerned with devotionism (Aikāntika Bhakti) in the Nārāyaṇīya section of the sāntiparva of the Mahabharata and its parallel in the Gita. The view of certain Western scholars like Lorinser, Weber, Lassen, Farquhar and Edgerton that the Gita is influenced by Christianity is very well refuted by Dr. Bhandarkar giving adequate inscriptional, historical and philological evidences.

Activism as propounded by Lokamanya B. G. Tilak is elucidated and *anāsakti* (detachment) is stated to be the connecting bond between Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi. The place of Jñāna, Bhakti and Yoga in relation to Karma is explained. Tilak admits the superiority of Realisation over service though he thinks that Karmayoga is the be-all and end-all of the teaching of the Gita.

According to Mahatma Gandhi *anāsakti* (detachment) is related to *ahimsa* (non-violence). In his view the Mahābhārata is more allegorical than historical. The implication of *avatāra* (incarnation) is explained and the characteristics of an ideal devotee and saint are stated.

That the three paths of Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti are in fact one is pointed out by Mrs. Annie Besant, Sri. K.M. Munshi and Aldous Huxley. Dr. Belvalkar says that 'trichotomy' does not represent the true teaching of the Gita; on the other hand it is 'triune unity' (ज्ञानमवित्कर्म समुच्चय).

The social teachings of the Bhagavadgita are emphasised by Dr. K. N. Katju and Sri. H. V. Divatia. Renowned scholars like Mr. W. D. P. Hill, Sri. C. Rajagopalachari and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan have given very brilliant estimates of the Gita. Dr. Otto points out to the complex of the feelings of mystery, wonder, power, terror, reverence as well as joy in respect of the Holy which is wholly transcendent. Man is only an instrument in the hands of God, who decides the future of every being according to his or her *Karma*.

The valuable contribution made by Sri. Aurobindo to philosophic thought—the ascending grades of consciousness, the idea of a superman and the ascent of matter into spirit—is discussed. Gurudeva Ranade gives his own view that *avatāra* is the descent of God's form before a devotee.

The clue to get out of the labyrinth is provided in the fourth part of the book. The antinomies of metaphysics are embedded in the nature of thought. Five such antinomies are resolved as follows : 1) The Question " Is God personal or impersonal " is resolved in the Super-personalism of God. 2) The claims of 'Activity and Passivity' are reconciled in emanationism. 3) 'Immanence and Transcendence' of God are resolved in All-pervasiveness. 4) 'Is the world real or unreal?' This question is solved by pointing out that the world is ephemeral. 5) 'Videha-mukti and Krama-mukti' are reconciled in Jivanmukti. Further the claims of action and renunciation are resolved by pointing out the limitations of activism.

The categorical imperative in the Gita, as in Kant, is " Duty for Duty's sake " with its three specifications - non-attachment, skill and the spirit of sacrifice. It is stated that purity of mind, grace from above and the tasting of ambrosia in the process of the performance of one's duties are the effects which the individual feels (p. 202.).

The two theories of ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चय and ज्ञानोत्तरकर्म are examined. Gurudeva makes it clear that we are free to do our actions as we like in the process of the attainment of the highest illumination (p. 207). God-devotion is said to be the central thread guiding through the list of virtues enumerated by the Gita. Naiṣkarmya means rising superior to the *Modus operandi* of Karmas and their effects through the principle of non-attachment (p. 216.).

The psychological, moral, social and mystical characteristics of a sthita-praṇja are described (PP. 220-222) and it is pointed out that Beatification is the crown of equanimity as it means a contact or identification with Brahman which is bliss. The problem of the nature of God as speculated in Sāmkhya, Yoga, Brahmasūtras and the Gita is detailed and God - realisation is pointed out to be super-sensuous and permanent or continuous Beatification.

There are different categories of God-seekers - those who are suffering, who have some desire to be fulfilled, who are repentent sinners, who are intellectual seekers of God and those who have attained spiritual illumination. The difficulties in the search of God are the river of spiritual experience remains hidden; it is very hard to meet a God-realised

Guru; it takes a vast amount of time and then there is always the element of chance.

Three methods of meditation are detailed as follows:- 1) The ideological method consists of meditation of God as पुरुषोत्तम, वैश्वानर, मायिन्, रस, तज्जलान्, ज्ञेय etc.

2) The moral method consists of meditation on virtues such as fearlessness (अमय), purity (शौच), self-control (आत्मविग्रह), equanimity (समत्वम्), non-violence (अहिंसा), bravery (शौर्यं), compassion (दया), humility (अमानित्वम्) and forbearance. (क्षमा).

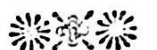
3) The mystical method has four aspects viz. the physiological element, the psychological element, the devotional element and the element of Grace.

The effects of God-vision are joy and peace, disgust for worldly things, sinlessness, origin of true devotion, warding off of all perils, solution of world-riddle, vision of equality and community with saints.

Cosmic vision of God (विश्वरूपदर्शन) is described as a wonderful manifestation having dazzling splendour and terror-striking form. There is in it a competition of the feelings of fear as well as joy, and there is a vision of the future indicating Divine determinism. It is a grand picture on the Divine Canvas.

The fifth part of the book brings us to the conclusion. It starts with a comparative study relating to the Sublime and the Divine. The Sublime in Western thought and in Indian spiritual literature, in the world of Nature and in metaphysics, in psychology of religion and in morality-all these are brought out with vivid descriptions. Gurudeva Ranade has shown how the ideas of the Sublime, the Moral and the Divine are connected together in the development of the doctrine of the Bhagavadgita.

While reading the masterly and brief analyses made by Gurudeva Ranade of the views of the earlier savants, one cannot but feel that each scholar has emphasized one or two aspects of the Gita Philosophy, which he considered to be of more importance. But the ultimate goal of all philosophy must be God-realization; and that is exactly what Gurudeva has rightly emphasized in his book on the Bhagavadgita.



NATURE AND DESTINY OF THE FINITE SOUL

(Visishtadvaita View) ❀

By

Dr. M. N. Narasimhan, M. A., Ph. D
Bangalore.

No subject has been more interesting and perhaps more perplexing to man than the study of man himself. It would certainly have been less human if man had not asked himself "What is man?, what is the soul etc.?" Everything else can be doubted and disbelieved but not the doubting subject himself. As John Laird observes 'the self shines by its own light. Every one knows what it is. Instead of finding or inventing problems in it, we should restrict ourselves to the task showing how other things may be explained in terms of it'.¹ The philosophy of the self has been proclaimed to be the "clue to the riddle of existence", "the window through which the human mind can peep into the mysteries of the universe." The schools of Hindu Philosophy have rightly, save the Carvaka, regarded it as 'the first subject matter', 'the first subject of approach', 'the theatre in which is enacted the drama of Nature', 'the medium through which the seeker after Truth tries to enter into the mysteries of Reality.'

In the domain of Indian philosophical thought which Prof. Max-Muller rightly terms a 'large Maasa lake'² from the very beginning itself the Finite Self has played a very important role. Its phenomenal nature, epistemological problems and noumenal status have been discussed through ages. The same has given birth to several schools. The Sarvadar-

❀ Dissertation Submitted to London University-1971

1. John Laird: Problems of the Self, (Shaw Lectures 1914) Page 4.
2. Maxmuller: Six systems of Indian Philosophy. Introduction.

shan Sangraha of Madhwa mentions nearly thirty of them. The different systems may lack the 'didactic eloquence with which Plato and Aristotle may expound their thought' but yet as Vijanabhikshu observes they present a common fund of what may be called 'National Philosophy.' To the galaxy of problems constituting it belongs the philosophy of Finite Self.

Vedanta, coming from the two words 'Veda' and 'anta', refers to the concluding portions of the Vedas. The Vedanta Suthras, also termed Sariraka Suthras, apart from being an aid to the memorising, aim at expressing in the fewest possible words the discursive teachings of the Upanishads. They purport to describe the philosophico-theological view point of the Upanishads. As Duessen observes the author of Vedanta Suthras investigates their teaching about God, the World, the soul in its conditions of wandering and of deliverance. But the extremely cryptic and tense nature of the Suthras has made them unintelligible without commentaries. The present Dissertation is an attempt to expound the Nature and Destiny of the Finite Soul from the stand point of the school of Vedanta known as Visishtadvaita, the chief exponent of which it Acharya Ramanuja.

Acharya Ramanuja is said to have been born at Sri Perumbattur about 26 miles west of Madras. He is known to have studied at Conjeevaram and resided at Srirangam, near Trichinopoly. In his editoria, Introduction to the Vedartha Sangraha by Ramanuja, pandit Rama Mishra Shastrin says that Ramanuja was a Dravida Brahmin of the family Harita. His father's name was Keshava and his mother's, Kantimati. The Guru of Ramanuja was his maternal uncle, Sailapurna. But for his philosophical knowledge, Ramanuja is indebted to the Guru's Guru (Parama Guru), Yamunacharya. He is reputed to be the author of nine works, namely:—

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Vedartha Sangraha | 2. Sribhashya |
| 3. Gitabhashya | 4. Vedantadsara |
| 5. Vedantadipa | 6. Nityarahana Vidhi |
| 7. Srirangagadya | 8. Saranagratigadya |
| 9. Srivaikunta Gadya. | |

As a follower of the Visistadvaitic tradition, Ramanuja subscribes to the view that in the philosophic triad, Mind, Matter and Spirit (Cit, Acit and

Isvara), Cit or the individual Self features first³. This, he says, is so not only from the point of sequence, but also from the point of their systematic exposition. Matter (acit) is inert and non-intelligent. It can know neither itself nor any other. It exists only for the other. Isvara is the Supreme Principle, Immanent and Transcendental. It is the supreme goal to be attained. Cit attempts to bridge the gulf between the two. Intelligent by nature, it uses the material to explore and unravel the mysteries of the Spiritual. Ramanuja therefore regards the study of the nature of the self as a necessary preliminary to the study of the other two categories of existence, namely, the material and the spiritual.

While expounding his philosophy of the Finite Self, the Acharya closely follows both weighty tradition and the rich intuitive experience of many early preceptors. He had to employ cogent logical reasoning to combat the rival schools and establish the reality of the Finite Self. His didactic skill and argumentative ability employed to accomplish the said goal are indeed commendable, nay as G. Thibaut observes 'not infrequently deserve to be called excellent even.'⁴

In the opening verse of his polemical work, Sri Bhashya, Ramanuja refers to several earlier predecessors like Tanka, Baruchi and Dramida. He acknowledges his gratitude particularly to Yamuna, also known as Alavandar, and says that he is presenting to others in his words, the nectar of the teaching of Parasara's son (Vyasa) guarded well by the teachers of the old but obscured by the conflict of manifold opinions.⁵ In the beginning of his other work Vedanta Sangraha also he alludes to Yamuna as having dispelled the delusion which was caused by the false interpreters of Vedanta doctrines. Yamuna to whom Ramanuja frequently refers, sums up the nature of the jiva in a verse of his work called Atmasiddhi.⁶ According to it the Finite Self is

1. different from the body, senses, mind and vital breath
(deha indriya mana pranadhibyah bhinnah),

3. Thattvatraya by Pillai Lokacharya - Introduction.

4. George Thibaut: S.B. East vol. 48 - Introduction.

5. Sribhashya of Ramanuja- 1-1-1

6. Atmasiddhi - edited by Prof. R. Ramanujachary of
Annamalai University.

2. sentient (ajadah),
3. eternal (nityah) and not momentary,
4. unproduced,
5. free from changes (nirvikarah),
6. is different from Brahman,
7. is not a product of Ahamkara,
8. is not mere consciousness but a conscious subject, (jnatr)
9. exists in sleep and liberation,
10. are many and not one
11. is atomic (anu)
12. is a doer (Karta)
13. a part of Barhman.

Following his teacher Yamuna, Ramanuja takes up first for critical examination the view point of the physical philosophy like the materialists and vitalists. He does so not because they are the first heterodox reaction against the Upanishads but because as Radhakrishnan observes 'they are as old as philosophy itself. They are the first answer to the question how far our unassisted reason helps us to answer the difficulties of philosophy'.⁷

Sadananda records in his work Vedantasara that Materialism developed principally under four schools. Each one of them had its own view about the nature of the Self. The first identified the Self with the gross body (known as the Deha atma vada), the second with the senses (known as the Indriyatma vada), the third with Prana (known as Prana-tmavada and the fourth with Mind (Manoatmavada). Ramanuja subjects each theory to a critical examination before rejecting them as philosophically unsound.

The Finite Self Is Different From The Gross Body.

According to the theory of the Dehatmavadin the Self is none other than the body itself. In statements like 'I go', 'I stand', 'I smell', the word 'I' refers to the body. 'Going', 'Standing' are not qualities of the Self but functions of the body. 'Long live', 'live for a hundred years' and similar blessings are also references to the body. In the Metaphysics of the Carvaka School 'Self' then is only another label or name for the body.

7. Radhakrishnan — Indian Philosophy Vol. I, Page 277.

Ramanuju rejects the said view as inconsistent. If the self is the same as body, then pleasure and pain and other sensations felt by the living one should also be felt by the dead one. But this is not so. Body is compounded of many parts. If each part is held to have a self, then there will be as many Selves as there are limbs. In that case coordination between them becomes difficult. Each limb may prefer to do its own function to the total neglect of others. Our body then becomes a house with too many masters. Such a house with too many masters or divided against itself cannot last long. Further if each limb has a self, the experience of one should not be felt by another. In expressions like 'my hand', 'my leg', the word 'my' is not equated with 'Leg' or 'head', but is used to point to the owner of those limbs who is distinct from the limbs. As prof: P. N. Srinivasachar remarks 'the I as the subject of the Self is contrasted by William James with the me' as the object self arising from the identification of the self with all its belongings. The latter is the sum total of all that a man can call his, including his body, his clothes, his house, and the whole range of other things which are called his property. But the Metaphysical 'I' is different from the empirical 'me' as it persists in its being even after it is stripped of all its possessions. The former is an economic or market value.⁸ Ramanuja, therefore, concludes that the self is different from the mere gross body.

The Finite Self Is Different From The Senses.

The second school refuted by Ramanuja is the theory that holds that the senses are the self. It is known as the Indriyatmavada. Dehatmavada could not explain satisfactorily why consciousness does not function during sleep though the body exists. During sleep the senses will be at rest. Then there will be no consciousness even if the body exists. The advocates of Indriyatmavada said that the said difficulty could be overcome if the senses are held to be the self.

Ramanuja points out that if the organs of sense are identical with the self, the problem is 'with what self?' As the senses are many in number, coordination between them becomes a serious issue. Supposing one sense is preferred say that of seeing or hearing. That would be to make the self either just a seeing agent or a hearing agent alone and deprive

8. P. N. Srinivasachari-Philosophy of the Visistadvaita. p. 279.

it of all other functions. But this is not true to experience. The hearing self is not different from the seeing self. Hearing, seeing are all the functions of one and the same self. Further, judgments like 'I touch the portrait I saw' become possible only if the different senses are underlined by a single master. Ramanuja points out that the senses are only instruments of action and not the actor himself. To identify them is like mistaking the pencil to be the same as the writer.

Sleep also shows the defective nature of the arguments of the Indriyatma vadin. When one says he slept well, if 'he' is the same as the senses, it follows the senses slept. When one wakes up from sleep one remembers one had good sleep. Such rememberance should not have been possible had there not existed something else during sleep other than the senses that enjoyed rest.

The Finite Self Is Different From Manas.

The third school regards Mind as the self. Even this is shown to be not correct. For Ramanuja experiences are of two kinds - internal and external. Pleasure and pain do not belong to the external organs of sense. Pleasure can neither be seen nor smelt. But yet it is a fact. Who should experience it if not the senses? It should be the task of the internal organ, namely, Manas. The Acharya quotes the Smṛti (Taijasaṅdriya.... ekadasam manasetra) to point out that even the Pramānas declare that Manas is a product of Satvikahamkara and so anitya. As it is just an instrument of experience, it cannot be identified with the experiencer of the sensations.

The Finite self Is Different From Prana.

Pranatmavada is the fourth school taken up for examination. The votaries of the said school argue that as nothing can happen without prana or life, it must be the self. Ramanuja draws attention to an incident narrated by the Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad. King Ajatasatru accompanied Balaki to a sleeping man and called him severally by names respond, he tike Brhan, Pandaravasaha, Soma, Rajan to rouse him. When he did not touched him with his hands and then the man woke up. The King pointed out that calling out the several names of prana did not wake him up. Prana would not keep quiet when called by its name. So, it is not the self.

Thus rejecting the claims of Materialism, Sensationalism, Pranaism and Mentalism, Ramanuja concludes that the self is different from the gross body, the senses, the vital breath and the mind.

The Finite Self Is Sentient

Having established the immaterial nature of the Finite being, the Acharya next examines another important issue whether individual is a nonsentient being. The advocates of the Jaina and Nyaya Schools of thought regard the jiva as a substantive being different from the gross body, the senses and the stream of consciousness. Cognition, Volition. etc. are its attributes. They hold that though the substrate of consciousness, the jiva is not itself always conscious. Ramanuja holds that such a view fails to give a consistent view of the different states of consciousness. Every one remembers his experiences from cradle to coffin. Such a thing would not be possible if consciousness is a kind of 'holiday visitor' that comes out and goes as fancy permits. Consciousness is not, as Radhakrishnan observes 'a kind of tertium quid, or mechanical glow produced when two dissimilar substances interact,' but an inseparable though distinguishable feature of the jiva. One may question why the jiva lies dormant in state of swoon. It is so for it will have severed all its relation with external objects and sense. It is not a void in sleep devoid of all experience. Only its experience is of different kind. It will be left to itself to enjoy its real nature in virgin form. While in samsara karma will have robbed the self of its of natural bliss. The meshes of matter veil it and entangle it in the cycle of births and deaths. But in deep sleep free from the conjuncting influences, the jiva enjoys bliss native to its virgin form. The bliss enjoyed during the waking state is conditioned by the object stimulating such joy but that which it enjoys in release is unconditioned and unlimited for it is not created by any thing external but is a reward in itself.

The Finite self Is Permanent and Not Momentary:

Ramanuja next takes up for discussion one of the most disputed issue, is the self a stream of fleeting momentary existences or really permanent. Early Buddhism regarded the self neither as 'being' nor as 'non-being' but essentially as 'becoming'. In the words of Radhakrishnan 'the self is just a label for the aggregate of certain fleeting physical and psychical factors. While the earlier followers of the Buddha accommodated at

least a fluid self, the later ones denied even that. The Acharya rejects the said view point of the schools of Buddhism. No perception is possible without a perceiving subject. Perception of change is no exception to this rule. If change is the last word of Buddhism, the percipient that becomes a part of the flux or river of change, makes even the perception of change impossible. Judgment on perceived things is possible when there is some synthesising agent between the act of perception and the formation of a judgment about it. An abiding subject to experience the different states of consciousness is the minimum requirement without which consistent knowledge becomes impossible. Not only that. Memory that implies the extension of the past to the present becomes impossible if the subject is held momentary. The study of similarity implies an identical perceiving consciousness. Neither cognition nor recognition are possible in the absence of the identity of the subject.

Consistent explanation of neither sleep nor of causal relation becomes possible if the Self is not subscribed to be permanent. Supposing the self is imagined to be a series of succeeding the other. It would mean a series of selves experienced the dream. This is not true experience for one person is able to give a complete and connected picture of the dream. Neither can anything be related as cause and effect if nothing is held to be permanent even for two consecutive seconds,

Not only the advocates of the momentary theory, even the Nihilists are not free from the searching examination of Ramanuja. The latter argues that a self-consistent Nihilist cannot remark 'Nothing exists' and himself exist at the same time, for he would be like one sawing off the branch on which he himself would be sitting.

[To be continued]

Book - Reviews

Some Concepts of Indian Culture : By N. A. Nikam. Published by The Registrar, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla. Pages - xiv - 74, Price Rs. 18/.

This is the third book by late Prof. Nikam which we have the pleasure of reviewing in these columns. It elucidates the 'Great Ideas of our ancient Seers' that have got a ring of Eternity and Universality about them. They have been briefly dealt with here and have been fully elaborated in his *Magnum Opus*- The Ten Principal Upanisads reviewed by us in the last issue of our Journal.

This is the second edition of the book. It contains two chapters with a brief Introduction and an Epilogue at the close. The first chapter deals with six Components of Indian Culture viz. i) The Pathetic Fallacy, ii) Dialectic and Myth, iii) Tradition-Memory and Hope, iv) Reason and Freedom v) Reality and Experience and vi) *Śruti* and *Darśana*. The second Chapter discusses nine Concepts of Indian Culture viz. i) *Yajna* : Sacrifice ii) *Satya* and *Dharma*, iii) The Law of *Karma*, iv) *Ahiṃsā* - Non-injury, v) *Māyā* and *Lila*, vi) *Avatāra* : Descent of the Divine vii) *Puruṣārtha*, viii) *Atman*: *Akṣara*. ix) *Karma-Yoga*.

On account of the 'Persistence' and 'Self-renewal' of Indian Culture all these are both ancient and modern, eternal and universal. Due to limited space at our disposal, we would briefly deal with only two Components and five Concepts and point out their salient features preferably in the words of the author.

First about the Components: i) The Pathetic Fallacy is the outcome of Personification of Nature by the *Vedic* Seers. These *Ṛṣis* were both Mystic-poets and Mystic philosophers. With their transcendental imagination they personified Nature, fervently prayed the Divine immanent in Nature and thus developed the Religion of Nature. With their keen, critical intellect they penetrated and discovered Divine Order - *Rta*, both in Nature and Man which later on was identified with Cosmic Order and Moral order. In this way they developed Religion of Man. ii) The *Ṛṣis* employed the method of 'Dialectic' to realise the Imperishable *Atman* or *Brahman* or the Absolute, and to transmit their experience to their well-qualified-pupils. They also created 'Myths' to smoothen the path of their pupils that would be entering from Darkness to Light, by removing their possible 'blindness'-'bewilderment'. The *Vedīs* identified God with Nature while the later *Vedānta* identified *Atman* with *Brahman* (P.8.) Thus "Indian Culture begins as Religion of Nature but becomes a Philosophy of Man, and the Philosophy of Man becomes the Philosophy of Meditation on the Imperishable in Man" (P.54)

Now about the Concepts: i) *Yajña* is a willing Sacrifice. (20) It is the Law behind Creation which is Act that flows from abundance. (21) *Yajña* is the Law by which man can build a heaven on earth (22). ii) The Law of *Karma* involves causal determinism along with freedom to choose and evolve. It is based on the reality of human freedom; it presupposes the notion of responsibility and does not state unalterable necessity but a model possibility. (27).

iii) What is *Māyā*, what is *Līlā*? In its original sense *Maya* is a power in Absolute Being which "limits" "measures" gives "form" to what is "formless". In its later usage *Māyā* means a power or act of "self-concealment"... "an appearance"; *Māyā* is "appearance" but not error, and "appearance" is what "must and yet cannot belong to Reality" *Māyā* is a presence which is self-concealment. *Līlā* means play and the joy of play wherever this is found But the two concepts are ultimately founded on an ultimate and apparently "irrational" act of "self-limitation" in the nature of the absoluteness of Being. Both the concepts do not resolve but indicate the profound mystery of Being. (40) Indian Culture delights in alternating between the concepts of *Māyā* and *Līlā*. (39).

iv) Indian thought conceives human Values or *Puruṣārtha* as four-fold, *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*; these comprehend "the whole man" (48). *Dharma* is a regulative principle which regulates the enjoyment of *Artha* and *Kāma*, *Dharma* is a means to a double end; it is a means to *Kāma*, to tight enjoyment and it is means to liberation, *Mokṣa*. (49). *Mokṣa* is a "freedom from" ignorance, bondage, error, evil and sin. . . . But the concept of *Mokṣa* does not bring anything new into existence . . . but reveals the true nature of man's being. . . . Being is Freedom. . . . Hence the goal of the philosophy of values in Indian Culture may be defined as a process of removing the "veil" that conceals man's nature from man. (51)

v) *Karma-yoga* is the way of finding God in the world. *Karma-yoga* is both action and renunciation; it is renunciation of the "fruits" of action. . . . *Karma-yoga* is ethics and religion, it is action and devotion; it is devotion that is also knowledge; it is a knowledge of and faith in God. (63).

However, "behind all of them is the idea the Imperishable – *Akṣara*. While the idea of the Imperishable is not limited to any one cultural tradition, the philosophy of Indian Culture appears to be "intoxicated" by and has a "passion" for it. The Imperishable is the object of its dialectic as well as its myths. . . . The Imperishable is both reality and value. It is the source of existence and the goal of action. The Imperishable is in Man, and in the quest of the Imperishable that which he chooses is his. (72)

In this slim volume the author has tried to show how our ancient concepts are relevant even in modern times. And we might say that he has succeeded in his attempt.

– M. S. Deshpande.

Nectar of Illumination

Teachings of Shree Nimbargi Maharaj, Translated by Suresh Gajendragadkar and Sucharita Bhagwat
Published by Mrs ; Sucharita Bhagwat. 65, Patil Estate, Shivajinagar, Poona. Pages : 106 : Rs. 3/-

The booklet under review is the translation into English of 60 vachanas constituting "Bodha Sudha" in Kannada of which Sri Nimbargi Maharaj is the author. The "Bodha Sudha" is a compilation of the nectar-like advices coming from the saint of Nimbargi, the Spiritual Paramaguru of Sri Gurudev Ranade. Because of his devotion and reverence to his Paramaguru Sri Gurudev undertook the task of systematic presentation of all the thoughts contained in the available vachanas by classifying them under four heads viz. i) Fundamentals of conduct ii) Renouncement of Vices iii) Acquiring of Virtues iv) Pathway to God. Sri Gurudev valued these vachanas most and regarded them as sacred scriptures as they came from a realised soul and were meant to give ethico - mystical foundation to the spiritually - minded sadhakas.

These vachanas as brought out in this booklet are to be read carefully, pondered over and followed. Though already available in Kannada, Marathi and Hindi these have been translated into English for the benefit of those who are not acquainted with those languages. This attempt made with a sense of devotion and service deserves all appreciation. Both orientals and occidentals can find the book interesting and instructive. The translation is quite lucid. The book serves its purpose very well.

The biographical sketch of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj given at the beginning of the book introduces the saintly personality to the readers. In the Appendix a summary of twelve songs of Sri Maharaj finds its right place. The songs summarised here speak of the mystical experiences of the saint.

The readers of this journal may remember that a similar attempt at free rendering of these vachanas in English was made earlier by one of the ardent devotees of Sri Gurudev, late Sri V. G. Jamkhandi. His translation under the caption "Words of Eternal Wisdom" were published in the past issues of this journal (1966, 1968 to 1970). The present translation, however, though done on the same lines, is an independent one.

The earnest sadhakas are sure to find the booklet immensely useful if only they overlook a few printing mistakes appearing here and there.

K. D. Tangod.

The Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion, Belgaum.

— A Short Report (26. 5. 1975 to 31. 10. 1975)

There was only one meeting of the board of trustees during this period. Shri N. S. Metrani, retd. District Judge and a disciple of Shri Gurudev, has been coopted as a trustee. Shri R. S. Bhide, a trustee, has been appointed Chairman of the Editorial Committee of Pathway to God.

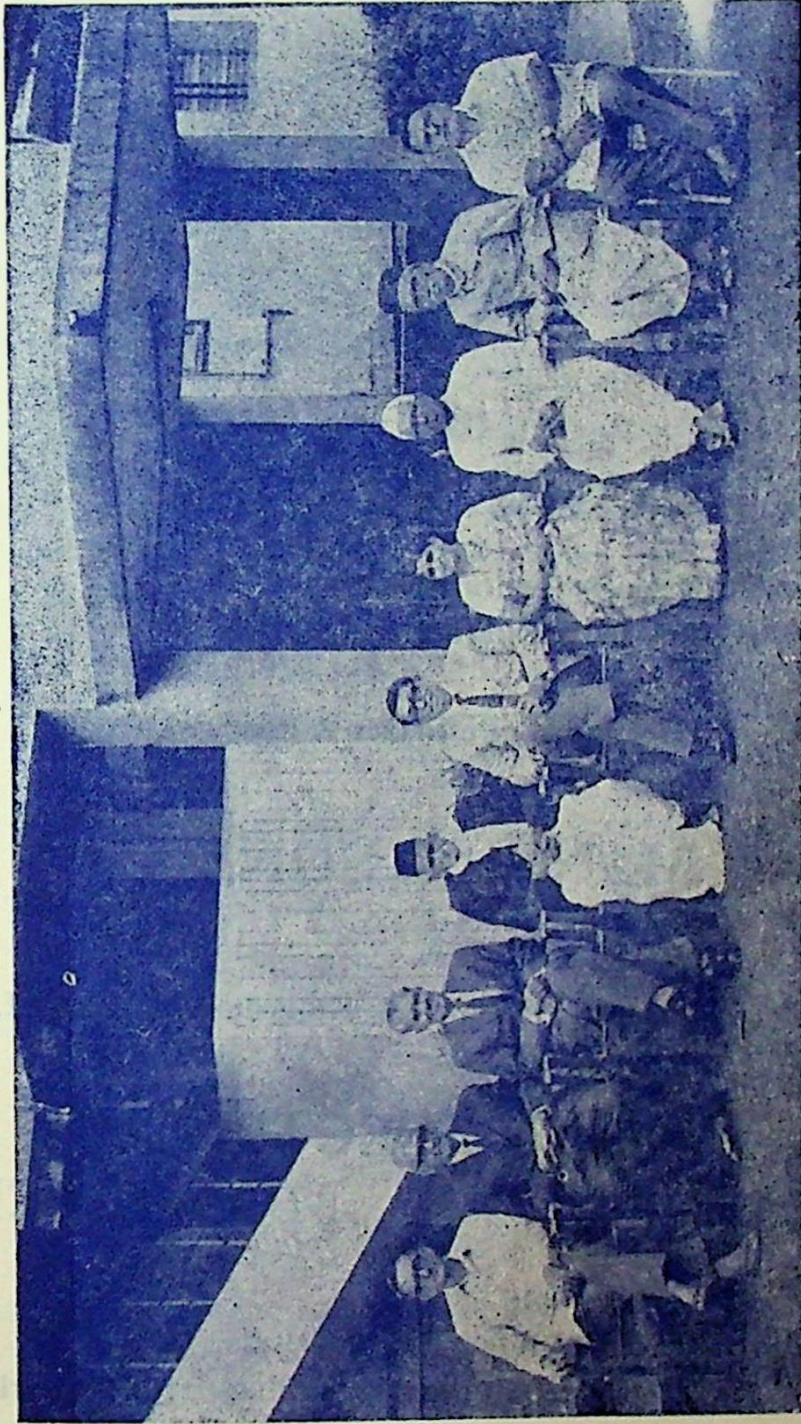
Shri Kakasaheb Karkhanis of Bijapur gave five talks on B. Gita—Chap. XII from 3rd June. The Punyatithi of Shri Gurudev was celebrated on 6th June, when he gave a special talk in the morning on अमानित्व (Humility). After Prayers and 'Arati', prasad was distributed. In the afternoon, that day we had a "Keertan" by Haribhakta Parayana Shri Digambarpant Parulekar, on "The Grace of Guru."

"Jnaneshwar Saptashati" was celebrated from 5th June to 13th June. There was community reading of Jnaneshwari (ज्ञानेश्वरी पारायण) in the morning every day, About a hundred persons, including a few ladies, took part in it. The life of Shri Jnaneshwar, written in Marathi by Shri R. N. Saraf was published on the 5th at the hands of Dr. D. R. Bendre, who specially came down from Dharwar for the purpose. Shri P. R. Dubhashi, I. A. S., Divisional Commissioner, Belgaum presided over the function. The introductory speech was delivered by Shri Ranajit Desai and it was followed by a short speech by Shri Kakasaheb Karkhanis. Thanks-giving was done by Shri D. B. Parulekar and the function ended with the singing of Shri Jnaneshwar's 'Pasayadana'. The printing cost of this book was borne by Shri D. B. Parulekar for which we are grateful to him.

Shri R. N. Saraf gave a talk on "The Greatness of the Guru" on 8th June and on the next day, Shri Dandge Shastri spoke on ज्ञानेश्वरीचें प्रयोजन. On the 10th, Vidya-Bushan Shri Vishwambhar Shastri Datar of Banaras delivered a very interesting and instructive talk on घर्म व नीति.

11 th June happened to be the Punya-tithi of Shri Sane Guruji. It was celebrated in the Mandir hall, when Shri Rama Apte (Advocate), Dr. A. G. Yalgi and Shri D. B. Parulekar spoke on the life and teachings of Shri Sane Guruji. Shri Baburao Thakur presided. The same day evening, there was 'Keertana' of H. B. P. Shri D. B. Parulekar.

Seminar on " Moral Trends Since Independence "
(17th to 19th Oct. 1975) Gurudev Mandir, Belgaum.



(1) Shri C. P. Bhishikar (2) Shri N. S. Meirani (3) Shri V. G. Kanetkar (4) Shri K. D. Sangoram (5) Shri P. R. Dubhashi (6) Mrs. P. G. Kamat (7) Shri V. B. Naik (8) Shri J. V. Parulekar (9) Shri K. P. Kulkarni (T)

Note : Names of participants in Italics. T. denotes trustee of the " Academy"

Shri V. V. Patankar gave a talk on the 12th June on कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते. The sapta-shati celebrations were closed on the 13th at about 11 A. M. with distribution of 'prasad'.

Shri Machindranath gave talks on 'Devi Bhagavat' for a week in August.

A programme on Yoga was organised in the hall when Shri Balasheb Patil presided over the function. The introductory speech was delivered by Dr. N. R. Kulkarni and Shri Hanmantrao Sawant spoke at length on 'Kundalini'. He was followed by Smt. Allis-Rakin, who is running 'Light of Yoga Society' in Cleveland, Ohio: U. S. A. She explained why the people of the West were now turning to spiritualism and expressed that the people of India were not right in turning to materialism of the West.

This year's symposium on "Moral Trends Since Independence" was held for 3 days from 17-10-1975. After the introductory speech by Shri K. D. Sangorgm, His Holiness Shri Shivabasav Swamiji of Naganur Math inaugurated the proceedings. Shri N. S. Metrani presided over the deliberations throughout. There were two sessions every day and the participants were introduced to the audience by Prof K. D. Tangod. Papers were then read as follows.

- 17th morning: 1. The Most Reverend Ignatius Lobo, Bishop of Belgaum.
 Afternoon: 2. Mrs. Shakuntala Kurtkoti, M. A.; Secretary, Gandhi Peace Foundation, Dharwar.
 3. Dr. Narain Mahishi, F. R. I. C. (London), Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.
- 18th morning: 4. Principal B. T. Bhalerao, M. A., Belgaum.
 5. Shri M. S. Deshpande, M. A., Athani.
 afternoon: 6. Shri V. G. Kanetkar, I. P. (retd), Poona.
 7. Prof. (Mrs.) P. G. Kamat, Panaji.
- 19th morning: 8. Shri P. R. , Dubhashi, I. A. S., Divisional Commissioner, Belgaum.
 9. Shri V. B. Naik, M. A. LL.B. ; Editor, Sandarshana, Bijapur.
 afternoon: 10. Shri C. P. Bhishikar, Editor, Tarun Bharat; Poona.
 11. Shri G. B. Pai. Belgaum.

Shri Pai expressed a desire to read a paper on the topic and was allowed to do so. Shri Metrani gave a short summary of all the papers with his comments and the proceedings ended with thanks-giving by Shri G. S. Kulkarni.

Prof, N. G. Damle will deliver Gurudev Ranade Memorial Lectures for 4 days from 17-11-1975 (Vaikunthachaturdasi) on "The Crowning Phase of Religion". There will be a 'Nama-saptah' also for 5 days from that day.

Smt. Padmatai Kulkarni, M. A. New-Delhi has agreed to deliver Gurudev Ranade Memorial Lectures of the next year on "The Philosophy of Juaneshwar".

(1) Shri R. V. Vaikunthè, M. A.LL. B., retd. Assistant Commissioner, Hubli
 (2) Shri S. M. Kadi, Assistant Commissioner, Davangere & (3) Shri R. D. Tendulkar, Dadar: Bcmbay have become life-members on paymnt of Rs 250/- each. Dr. P. D., Prabhavalkar, M. Sc. Ph. D, Ahmedabad and Shri Sham S. Abhyankar, Bombay have agreed to become life members and made part payment of the amount.

The follwing persons have been enrolled as life subscribers on payment of Rs 100/- each:

1. Shri V. R. Sondur, Income-tax Officer; Bombay.
2. Shri S. R. Narsapur, Dharwar.
3. Shri Kiran B. Dabade, M. A., Udipi.
4. Shri Nanubhai B. Amin, Baroda.
5. Shri A. T. Doari Raj, Hospet.
6. Smt. Pranesh Singhal, Pundri (Haryana)

Shri S. B. Kalamadi, Bijapur has agreed to become a life subscriber and paid a part of the amount for the purpose.

Donations were received from the following persons during this period:

1. Smt. Malati V. Vengurlekar, Anagol. ———Rs 5/-
2. Shri Narayan G. Naik, Tialakwadi. ——— Rs 5/-
3. Lt. Col. B. Y. Ghooi, Tilakwadi. ——— Rs 101/-, bringing his total to
Rs 403/-
4. Shri S. P. Garg, M. A. LL. B., Jaipur. ——— Rs 21/- + Rs 30/-
5. Shri G. M. Sonavadekar, Belganm. Rs 52/-
6. Shri Arvind M. Pole, Hiderabad. Rs 50/-
7. M/s Ashok Trading Co. Bijapur. Rs 40/-
8. Shri A. E. Kale, Retd. Dy. Collector, Belgaum. Rs 10/-

We are obliged to all these persons for their sympathetic help.

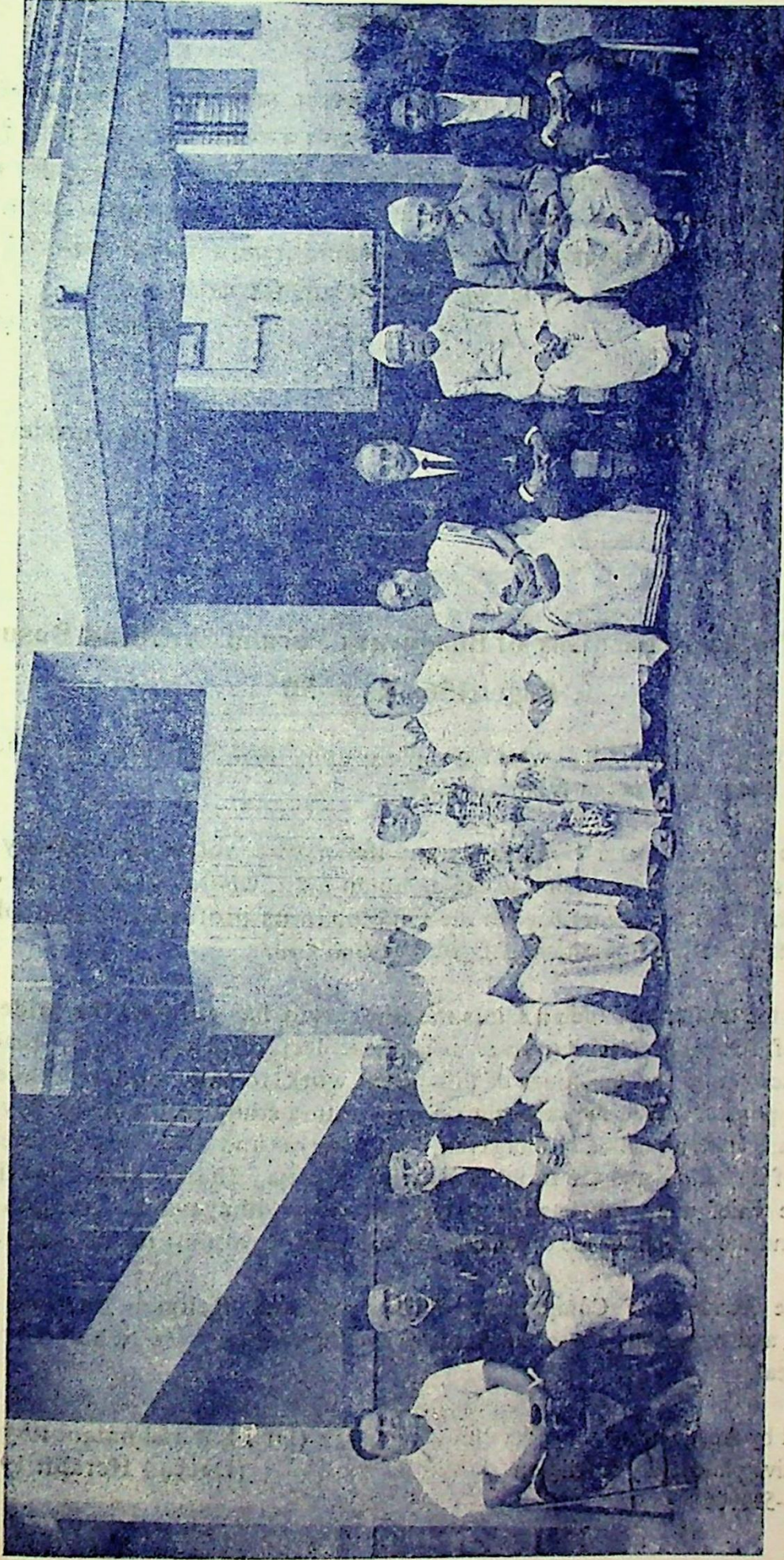
We are grateful to the following persons for their invaluable help in enrolling subscribers, life-members, life-subscribers and in collecting advertisements for Pathway to God

1. Shri V. B. Ramadurgkar, Bijapur.
2. Shri B. S. Dabade, Bijapur
3. Shri K. R. Kulkarni, Bagewadi.
4. Shri B. G. Tabib, Hubli.
5. Shri M. S. Dshepande, M. A. Athani.
6. Shri R. D. Tendulkar, Bomday.
7. Shri G. G. Devandixit, M. A., Dharwar,
8. Shri M. B. Kulkarni, Hubli.

We hope other persons, interested in this 'Academy', particularly the Nama-dharaks of Shri Gurudev, will come forward to render their best help to this public trust in one way or the other. A life subscriber gets Pathway to God free. The life-member gets all our publications including the journal free and is invited to attend some important functions in the Mandir. A donor (paying a donation of Rs 500/- or more) gets all the benefits of a life member and in addition, he gets a right to elect a trustee on the board of trustees.



Seminar on "Moral Trends Since Independence"
 (17th to 19th Oct. 1975) Gurudev Mandir, Belgaum.



(1) Shri K. R. Kulkarni (2) Shri J. V. Parulekar (3) Shri K. D. Sangoram (4) Shri N. S. Metrani (5) Shri Basavraj Swamiji (6) H. H. Shri Swamiji, Nagpur Mat (7) *The most Rev. Ignatius Lobo, Bishop of Belgaum* (8) *Mrs. Shakuntala kurtkoti* (9) *Principal B. T. Bhalerao* (10) *Shri V. B. Naik* (11) *Shri M. S. Deshpande* (12) Prof. K. D. Tanged.
 Note : Names of participants in Italics. T. denotes trustee of the "Academy".

कर्मयोग विवेचन

कर्मयोग : लेखक डॉक्टर रा. ह. दिवेकर पृष्ठे ५१ : २ रूपये

डॉ. दिवेकर १० वर्षांचे गाढे संस्कृत पंडीत आहेत. वेदांचा त्यांनी सूक्ष्म व चिकित्सापूर्वक अभ्यास केला आहे.--- सुरवातीपासून मनुष्याच्या कल्पना व कर्मयोग यांचा कसकसा विकास होत गेला, हे त्यांनी या व्याख्यानांत उत्तम रीतीने दाखविले आहे ---- सृष्टीत जे घडते ते कसे घडते हे अध्यात्म दृष्टीने सांगून कसे वागावे हे कर्मयोगशास्त्रांच्या दृष्टीने डॉ. दिवेकरनी सांगितले आहे - - - अध्यात्मशास्त्राचा अभ्यास करणारास हे पुस्तक अत्यंत उपयुक्त आहे. त्यात पाश्चात्य पंडितांच्या अयुर्वेदासंबंधी मताचे उत्कृष्ट खंडन केले आहे. प्रेत दहनपध्दति कशी व केव्हा सुरू झाली, याचे विवेचनही वाचकांचे माहितीत भर घालील.

- सकाळ- २-३- १९७५

Published by Academy of comparative Philosophy and Religion Gurudev Mandir Belgaum 590006.

Preface to the study of Bhagavata Purana. Arabind Basu

Pages 156- Rs 6-50

Among ancient Indian works on philosophy and Religion, the place of the Bhagavata Purana is indeed unique.

Unlike the esoteric Upanishads and the cryptic sutras of Badarayana, it is meant to serve as a guide -book to the common man, whatever his birth or status, even like the Gita. But it goes beyond the Gita too in its profusion of symbolic myths and legends as well as exposition of Lord Krishna's lilas.

In the tradition of Indian saints the Bhagavata has enjoyed the pride of place; Prof. Arabinda Basu has given us in these lectures a very lucid, readable and succinct account of the teachings of this great work to suit modern readers. ... He presents a popular and at the same time a penetrating study wherein the key-concepts of Brahman, Paramatman and Bhagavan, Yogamaya and Jiva become clear as also the goal of liberation and the triple Yogas of Karma, Jnana and Bhakti, leading to it. The chief point emphasised is the concept of Bhagavan's Avatara as Lord Krishna and the pre-eminence of Bhakti (or supreme devotion) in its several forms.

The Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion deserves praise for arranging and publishing these interesting and useful lectures which should be of wide appeal.

Published by Academy of
comparative philosophy & Religion
Belgaum-590006

(Dr.) K Krishnamoorthy,
(Deccan Herald: 19, 10. 75)

संसारमें रहना कैसे ?

— प्रा. टी. कृष्णमूर्ति, एम्. ए.

हमारा यह जन्म पूर्वजन्मका फल है। मानव जन्म तो हमें मिला है। यह हमारा पुण्य है क्यों कि मनुष्य जीवन अन्य प्राणियोंके जीवनसे अधिक महत्वपूर्ण माना जाता है। मानव रूपमें पैदा होकर इस संसार के बंधनसे मुक्त होने और परमात्मा की आराधना करने का प्रयत्न हम कर सकते हैं। मुक्ति मानव जीवन का अंतिम ध्येय है और उसे प्राप्त कर लेनेमें ही जीवन का साफल्य होता है। इस परमगति की प्राप्ति केवल मनुष्यको हो सकती है। इसलिये हमें मिले हुए अमोल वस्तुको अर्थात् मनुष्य जन्मको व्यर्थ न होने देना हमारा कर्तव्य है।

संसार सुख और दुःख इन दोनोंका मिश्रण होने पर भी उसमें दुःख का हिस्सा अधिक है। सुख के पीछे दुःख दौड आता है। हम सब सुख चाहते हैं। मगर सच्चा सुख क्या है और कैसे मिलेगा यह तो हम मालूम नहीं। भौतिक सुख को प्राप्त करने में हमारा सब समय और शक्ति का व्यय होता है। भौतिक सुख की विशेषता तो यह है कि वह क्षणिक और अशाश्वत है। आध्यात्मिक या पारमार्थिक सुख ही सच्चा सुख है और हमें उसे प्राप्त करना चाहिये। इस संसारमें रहते हुए पारमार्थिक सुख कैसे मिल सकता है ?

यह संसार दुःख से भरा हुआ है, बंधनकारक और नाशवान है, माया है। अंतिम सत्य तो इससे भिन्न है। भवसागरको सागर जैसे अपार माना जाता है। इस भवसागरके उस पार हमें अगर पहुंचना है तो हमें इसमें तैरना पड़ेगा। संसार के दुःखसे अपने को बचाने के लिये इससे भाग नहीं जाना। कर्नाटक के संत कवि पुरंदरदासजी कहते हैं कि इस संसार सागरमें हमें तैरना और तैर कर विजय प्राप्त करना जरूर है। उनके एक पद्यमें यह सूचित किया गया है कि हमें इस क्षणिक संसार में खेलनेवाले बालकों के जैसे, बाजार में खरीदने के लिये आए हुए पथिकों के जैसे और आंगनमें उपस्थित पंछी के जैसे रहना है। इससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि जिस तरह बालक खेल खतम होने के बाद कुछ समय में चले जाते हैं, पथिक लोग खरीदने के बाद अपने गांव चले जाते हैं और पक्षि क्षणभर आंगनमें नाचकर उड़ जाता है ठीक उसी तरह यहां हमारा वास्तव्य क्षणिक है। यह समझकर हमें शाश्वत सुखकी प्राप्ति के लिये कोशिश करनी है।

हमारे जीवन को सफल बनाने के लिये इस संसारमें कैसे रहना ? हर एक व्यक्ति को इसका उत्तर देना जरूर है। उसको जीवन कला को सीखना आवश्यक है। जिन लोगोंने इस कला को आत्मसात् किया है वे अपने अनुभवके आधार पर हमें यह उपदेश देते हैं कि इस संसार में हमें रहना है फिर भी इससे बंधित न होना जैसे पद्म पत्र ! पानीमें या पंकमें रहते हुए भी उससे पद्मत्र संबंध नहीं रखना ! इसी बातको गांधीजीने

अनासक्ति योग कहा है। गीता इसको कर्मयोग कहती है। हमारे जीवन कालमें हमें सब कुछ करना पड़ता है। कर्तव्य पालन तो हमारा धर्म है। आसक्ति न रखकर ये सब हमें करना है। कर्तव्य कर्म कुछ भी हो उसे फल की आशा छोड़कर करना है। हर एक काम का फल होता है। काम करते वक्त हमें उस के फल की या उद्देश की कल्पना जरूर होती है। काम करने पर भी अगर इच्छित फल नहीं प्राप्त हुआ तो हमें सुख या शांति नहीं मिलेगी। बल्कि दुःख और अशांति मिलेगी। इसलिये गीता का उपदेश है कि हमें कर्म करना है मगर वह निष्काम हो। ऐसा काम भगवान की सेवा मानकर करना। जैसे सेवक अपने यजमान का काम श्रद्धा के साथ करता है और फल को स्वतः नहीं भोगता हमें ईश्वर पर अपने कर्मोंका फल छोड़ना चाहिये। अखिर भगवान तो हमारा यजमान है न? फल अच्छा हो या बुरा वह है भगवानका। मुझे उससे खुशी या दुःख न हो। यही कर्मयोग का तत्व है। निष्काम कर्म या फल की अपेक्षा न रखते हुअे किये हुअे कर्मसे ही सच्चा सुख या मुक्ति मिलती है। यही इस संसार में रहनेकी कला है। यह कला हमें सीखनी है और आत्मसात् करनी है।

जीवन कला के बारेमें हम चर्चा कर सकते हैं, उपदेश देते हैं। फिर भी इसको अपने जीवनमें प्रयोग करना मुश्किल की बात है। इसका अर्थ यह नहीं कि यह असंभव या असाध्य है। सतत प्रयत्नसे यह साध्य होगा ही। यदि इस प्रयत्नमें हम यशस्वी हो तो हम जीवन्मुक्त या कर्मयोगी हो जायेंगे। जीवन्मुक्त को ही गीता स्थितप्रज्ञ मानती है। यह संसार के सभी द्वंदोंसे मुक्त होकर वह शाश्वत शांति का अमृतपान करता है। निष्काम कर्म के साथ साथ परमात्माका यथार्थ ज्ञान मिलाकर परमात्मा या भगवान की ओर भक्ति करना भी आवश्यक है। भगवानका सच्चा भक्त बननेसे इस संसार का बंधन टूटता है और सद्गति मिलती है। सच्चा भक्त भगवानसे यही प्रार्थना करता रहता है कि अपनी भक्ति दृढ़ हो और संसार के बंधन से छुटकारा मिले। वह अपने आपको पूर्णतः भगवान को अर्पण करता है। यह है सर्व समर्पण। भगवान भक्त की प्रार्थना को मानकर अनुग्रह करता है। भगवानसे अनुग्रहित भक्त बद्ध नहीं किन्तु मुक्त है। मुक्ति की प्राप्ति के लिये कर्मयोगी बननेसे हमारा जीवन सार्थक बनता है।



श्री ज्ञानेश्वर चरित्र

ले: रामचंद्र नारायण सराफ.

प्र:- अकॅडमी ऑफ कॅंपॅरेटिव्ह फिलासॉफी अॅन्ड रिलिजन, वेळगांव

पृष्ठे-८-१७८: आठ रूपये.

प्रस्तुत चरित्र अत्यंत भाविकतेनें श्री ज्ञानेशाना भगवान श्रीकृष्णाचे द्वितीयावतार मानून लिहिण्यांत आले आहे। तरीपण बुध्दीवादी वाटल अशी नीति-अनीतासंबंधीची चर्चा देखील ह्यांत आहेच। अर्थात् ही चर्चा विट्टलपंत, निवृत्तिनाथ व ज्ञानेश्वर यांच्या वागणुकीच्या संदर्भात केली असून त्यांचे वागणे कसें नीतीला घरून होते तेच एथे प्रतिपादिले आहे एकंदर निवेदन प्रासादिक, बोलकें व प्रत्ययकारी झालें आहे.

— जीवन विकास: आक्टोबर १९७५

गुरु बिनु भवनिधि तरै न कोई !

— यशोद

अठाइस वर्ष की आशादी के बाद भी भारत में राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सामाजिक और धार्मिक क्षेत्र में अराजकता, असफलता, निराशा और अंधश्रद्धा को देखकर मन बहुत ही उदास हो जाता है। म. गांधीजी का रामराज्य का सपना इतना क्यों टूट गया ?

कारण कई होंगे। लेकिन एक कारण यही भी हो सकता है कि भारत में 'गुरु' की कमी रही। गुरु शिष्य की जो एक महान परंपरा भारत में थी अब वह नहीं रही है। जीवन को समुन्नत और सफल बनाने के लिये क्या 'गुरु' सहायक हो सकता है? भारत के महान संत तुलसीदास ने तो यहाँ तक कहा था कि-

गुरु बिनु भवनिधि तरै न कोई

मनुष्य सचमुच मिट्टी का पुतला है। वह स्वयं कुछ नहीं जानता। वह किसी का आधार लेकर चलता है। किसी से कुछ समझ लेता है। किसी से कुछ सीखता है। भाग्य से सच्चा गुरु मिला तो उसका समुचित विकास होकर जीवन सफल होता है। इसलिये हिंदी के प्रसिद्ध संत कबीर ने कहा है

सतगुरु की महिमा अनंत, अनंत किया उपगार
लोचन अनंत उघाडिया अनंत दिखावण हार

“गुरु का गौरव अनन्त है। उन्होंने अनन्त उपकार किये हैं। मेरे अगणित ज्ञानचक्षुओंको खोलकर अनंत ब्रह्मांड का दर्शन कराया है।”

आज देश के लिये महान गुरु परंपरा की जरूरत है। गुरु का अर्थ ही है अन्धकार को दूर करनेवाला, दिव्य दृष्टि देनेवाला। आज मनुष्य अज्ञान और माया के चक्कर में पड़कर दिशाहीन भटक रहा है। भौतिक सुख के मृगजल के पीछे भागता हुआ यह जीव आंतरिक सुख से वंचित हो गया है। शारीरिक भोग में डूबा यह आदमी शाश्वत शांति और समाधान को गँवा बैठा है। सही गुरु का मार्गदर्शन न होने के कारण सुंदर जीवन नष्ट होता जा रहा है। इस बरवादी से बचने के लिये एक ही मार्ग है गुरु का साक्षात्कार।

आज हमें आदर्श गुरु की जरूरत है। लेकिन वही सही गुरु है जो अज्ञानांधकार का नाश करता है। जीवन का साक्षात्कार कराता है। शारीरिक, मानसिक तथा आध्यात्मिक विकास करके जीवन को सुंदरतम और सर्व समर्थ बनाता है। मनु का तो कहना है आचार्य शास्त्र के अर्थों का चयन करता है। (आचिनोति) धर्म का आचरण करता है। (आचरति) और उस धर्म को अन्यासे, शिष्य साधकोंसे आचरण करवाता है। (आचारयति) तभी वह आदर्श आचार्य अथवा गुरुकी योग्यता से युक्त होता है। ऐसा ही गुरु शिष्यों को असत्य से सत्य की ओर, तमसे ज्योति की ओर, मृत्यु से अमरत्व की ओर प्रवृत्त करता है। गुरु की महत्ता बताते हुए ब्रह्माण्ड पुराण में कहा गया है “श्री गुरु यह त्रिनेत्रहीन शिव, चतुर्भुजहीन विष्णु और चतुर्मुखहीन ब्रह्मा है।” इसलिये देहवारी मानव गुरु को इश्वरका मानव प्रतिनिधि कहा है। कुछ संतोंने तो भगवान से भी गुरु

को अधिक श्रेष्ठ माना है। कबीर गुरु का गौरव गान करते हुए कहते हैं -

गुरु गोविन्द दोड काके लागू पाव
गुरु बलिहारी अपने गोविन्द दियो बचाय।

“गुरु और गोविन्द दोनों मेरे सामने खड़े हो तो किसके पाव धरूँ ? गुरु ही सबसे बड़ा है जो गोविन्द का दर्शन कराता है” गोविन्द (ईश्वर) एक दुरुह तत्व है। उसे सुबोध बनानेकी क्षमता केवल गुरु में है। किसी भी दुर्बोध तत्व को जानने केलिये गुरु की सहायता आवश्यक है। नृत्यकला हो, संगीत कला हो, शिल्पकला हो चित्र कला हो, धर्म का ज्ञान कराना हो, तत्वज्ञान को समझाना हो, भक्ति या योग की साधनाहो, या विज्ञान का खरी परिचय कराना हो हमें गुरु का ही सही मार्गदर्शन चाहिये। वही तो हमें अज्ञातसे ज्ञात की ओर ले जाता है। स्थूल से सूक्ष्म का ज्ञान कराता है मर्त्य जीवन से मोक्ष का ओर ले जाता है। याने क्षुद्र जीवन से कर्तृत्व संपन्न जीवन का साक्षात्कार कराता है इसलिये संत धरनीदास ने कहा है -

“घरती सब दिन सुदिन है कब हूँ कुदिन है नाहि।
लाम चहूँदिसि चौगुनो जो गुरु सुमिरन हिय माहि।”

गुरु के स्मरण मात्र से धरनीदास को सब दुर्दिन सुदिन हो गये। और चारों ओर सफलता नजर आने लगी। दयावाई को तो अनुभव हुआ कि माया से भरे अंधे कुए से गुरुने ही उसका उद्धार किया और अपने ज्ञान से भवसागर में डूबती हुई दयावाई को बचाकर उसको उद्धार किया। निवृत्तिनाथजी के कारण महाराष्ट्र को ज्ञानेश्वरजी का ज्ञानदीप मिला और श्रीराम कृष्ण परमहंसजी के कारण भारत को विवेकानन्दजी का वरदान प्राप्त हुआ।

‘नामचितामणी’ में तो गुरु के कई प्रकार दिये हैं। उनके आधारपर गुरु में निम्न प्रकार के गुणोंका और कर्तृत्वशक्ति का होना अनिवार्य है। शिष्योंसे देशाटन करवाना, विभिन्न प्रकारकी साधना करवाना ज्ञानोपदेश देना, चंदन के समान अपने सागोप्य से शिष्योंके जीवन को सुगंधित बनाना, शिष्य को विवेक का पाठ पढाकर पिपीलिका मार्ग से आत्मसाक्षात्कार कराना, अनुग्रहके साथ ज्ञान देना, परीस के समान केवल स्पर्श मात्र से शिष्य के जीवन को शुद्ध सुवर्ण बनाने के लिये दिव्य ज्ञान देना, कच्छप जैसे अपनी निगाह से बच्चों की निगरानी करता है उसी के समान अपने शिष्य पर केवल अपनी कृपादृष्टि रख के शिष्य का उद्धार करना, चंद्र जैसे चंद्रमणि को द्रवित करता है उनी तरह अपने आंतर्गिक स्नेह से शिष्य का उद्धार करना, दर्पण के समान आत्मदर्शन से शिष्य को ब्रह्मज्ञान का दर्शन देना, छःयानिची पक्षी के समान जिसकी प्रतिछाया पडनेसे आदमी राजा बन जाता है अपने शिष्यपर केवल अपनी छाया से शिष्य को स्वानंद साम्राज्य का अनुभव कराना आदि सच्चे गुरु का महान कर्तृत्व है। ऐसा महान गुरु मिला तो व्यक्ति का उद्धार क्यों नहीं होगा ? लेकिन आजकल के दंभी, स्वार्थी और अर्थ के दास बने गुरु से किसीका भी उद्धार नहीं होगा ऐसे झूठे गुरुसे बचने के लिये श्री समर्थ रामदासजीने स्पष्ट चेतावनी दी है-

ऐसे गुरु अडक्याचे तीन
मिळाले तरी त्यजावे ॥

कारण ऐसे गुरु व्यक्ति के लिये जहर के समान है। देश के लिये विनाश का कारण है। दुर्भाग्य से आज हमारे भारत में ऐसे ही गुरु का बोलबाला अधिक है। इसलिये शिक्षाक्षेत्र में अव्यवस्था अधिक आ गई है। इसी कारण नयी पीढी ज्ञानहीन, शक्तिहीन और कर्तृत्वहीन तथा निकम्मी बनती जा रही है। भारत में रामराज्य निर्माण करने का हमारा सपना टूटता जा रहा है। आज हमें फिर वसिष्ठ, विश्वामित्र, सांदीपनी, भीष्माचार्य, गीतमबुद्ध शंकराचार्य, महावीर, श्री रामकृष्ण परमहंस अरविन्दो जैसे महान गुरुपरम्परा की जरूरत है। तभी यहाँ फिर

से श्रीराम, श्रीकृष्ण, अर्जुन, अशोक, छत्रपती शिवाजी, म. गांधी, रवीन्द्रनाथ टागोर, विवेकानंद, विनोबा जसे महान सुपुत्र भारत में निर्माण होंगे और तब कहीं केवल भारत का ही नहीं बल्कि दुनिया का भी उद्धार होगा जैसे महान कार्य के लिये हमें गुरु चाहिये जो—

शान्तोदान्तः कुलिनश्च विनीतः शुद्ध वंषवान्
 शुद्धाचारः सुप्रतिष्ठः शुचिर्दक्षः सुबुद्धिमान् ।
 अध्यात्मध्यान निष्ठश्च मंत्रतंत्र विशारदः
 निग्रहानुग्रहे शक्तो गुरुरित्यभिधीयते ॥

“ शांत, इंद्रियनिग्रही, कुलीन, विनीत, शुद्धभेष और शुद्ध आचार रखनेवाला प्रतिष्ठित, शची, दक्ष, सुबुद्धिमान अध्यात्म और ज्ञान में निष्ठा रखनेवाला, मंत्रतंत्र को जाननेवाला, अनुग्रह और शासन करनेवाला हो !”

आज हमें नर से नारायण तक ले पहुँचानेवाले गुरु की जरूरत है । हर क्षेत्र में हमें ऐसे गुरु मिले उनसे उचित ज्ञान मिला और हर आदमी कर्तव्यनिष्ठ बना तो रामराज्य का सपना साकार होने में देर नहीं लगेगी । हमारी सरकार को चाहिये कि ऐसी आदर्श गुरुपरंपरा निर्माण करने के लिये कोई योजना जल्द से जल्द कार्यान्वित करें। जिससे अनुशासन का पर्व ही नहीं अनुशासन का महानयुग निर्माण हो जाएगा और हर आदमी आसानी से यह भवनिधि तर जाएगा । तथास्तु!



संत तुलसीदास

— प्र. वा. म.

‘ मानस की चतुश्शती ’ मनाकर भारत वासियोंने जो रामचरित मानस का सम्मान किया है वह सम्मान विश्व के इतिहास में शायदही और किसी ग्रंथ को मिला होगा। रामचरित मानस भारत का ही नहीं विश्व का एक महान ग्रंथ बना है। इस महान ग्रंथ के निर्माता है महान संत तुलसीदास। जिस तुलसीदास को संत नामादासने कलिकाल का वाल्मीकि माना है और भाषा वैज्ञानिक एवं इतिहासतज्ञ ग्रियर्सन ने तुलसी को बुद्धदेव के बाद का सबसे बड़ा लोकनायक कह के उसका गौरव गान किया है। ऐसा यह महान तुलसी केवल संत या महाकवि ही नहीं बल्कि एक आदर्श लोकनायक तथा भारतीय संस्कृति का समर्थ गायक भी है।

यह हमारा दुर्भाग्य है कि ऐसे महान व्यक्ति का प्रामाणिक जीवन परिचय हमें प्राप्त नहीं है। न तुलसीने कभी अपने बारे में अधिक कहा न समाज ने कभी उसका जीवन परिचय सुरक्षित रखा। जो कुछ जानकारी प्राप्त है उससे इतना ही पता लगता है कि तुलसी का जन्म संवत् १५८९ (सन् १५३२) में ब्राम्हण कुल में राजापुर या सोरो गांव में हुआ। उनके पिता का नाम था आत्माराम दुबे और माँ का नाम था हुलसी। तुलसी का बचपन का नाम था रामबोला। उनका बचपन बड़े कष्ट से बीता। कहा जाता है कि तुलसी का जन्म अमुक्त मूलनक्षत्र में होने के कारण उसे अशुभ मानकर मां पिता ने बच्चे का त्याग किया। निकट संबंधियों ने भी उसे नहीं अपनाया। यह निराधार बालक दरदर भीख मांगकर बड़ा हुआ। सुख की आशा से विवाह किया लेकिन पत्नीने भी उसे त्याग दिया। मनशांति के लिये देशाटन किया, तीर्थयात्राएँ की लेकिन हर जगह अपमान ही सहना पडा। कोई उसे पागल कहता कोई बगुलाभगत् ! कोई उसे ढग कहता कोई घूर्त ! बेचारे तुलसी इस निंदा अपमान को शांति से पी जाते। प्रेम ममता से वंचित तुलसी जिदगीभर सदा प्रेम ममता से वंचित ही रहे। नरहरिदास को उन्होंने अपना गुरु माना। ‘ सूकर क्षेत्र ’ में उन्होंने कई बार गुरु से रामकथा सुनी। उसका मर्म समझ लिया। राम चर्चा सुनते रहे। सुनाते रहे। रामचरित्र से इतने प्रभावित हो गये कि उनको सारा विश्व सीताराममय दिखाई देने लगा। उनकी हालत ‘ सीताराममय सब जग जानी ’ जैसे हो गई। वे राम-भक्ति में लीन होकर गाने लगे—

अम्ह तू, हीं जीव, तू है ठाकुर, हीं चैरो।

तात, मातु गुरु सखा तू सब विधिहितु मेरो।

रामही उनके लिये जीवनदाता था। जीवनाधार था। जीवन उद्धारक था।

तुलसी के समय राजनैतिक और सामाजिक परिस्थिति भी बड़ी सोचनिय थी। हिंदुओंकी राजनैतिक सत्ता लगभग समाप्त हो चुकी थी। जो राजा थे वे मुगलोंके प्रभाव के नीचे दब गये थे। क्षत्रियोंका भी आत्माभिमान धीरे धीरे समाप्त हो रहा था। भोग विलासकी प्रवृत्ति बढ़ती जा रही थी। स्वाभिमान की प्रवृत्ति कम होती जा रही थी। सामान्य जनता में घोर निराशा छा रही थी। लोग-कल्याण कारी राज्य का अन्त हो चुका था। धर्म के नाम पर अनाचार और व्यभिचार बढ़ रहा था। नाना प्रकार के संप्रदाय के भूलभूलैया में जनता भटक रही थी। उचित मार्गदर्शन के अभावमें जनता दीन, दलित, आदर्शहीन निराश और कर्महीन बन

गयी थी। ऐसी दिशाहीन और अज्ञान अंधकार में फंसी जनता को दिशाज्ञान कराने का और आत्म प्रकाश दिखानेका महान कार्य संत तुलसीदासने किया। लोगोंमें राष्ट्रके प्रति प्रेम, धर्म के प्रति स्वाभिमान कर्तव्य के प्रति निष्ठा जगाने के लिये तुलसीदासने जानबूझकर मर्यादापुरषोत्तम राम का महान चरित्र लोगोंके सामने रखा। रामचरीत मानस की रचना केवल रचान्तःसुखाय नहीं थी, परहिताय भी थी। पिछले चार सौ बरसों से इसी राम चरित मानसने अवतक अनगिनत लोगोंको प्रेरणा, आत्मबल और साहस प्रदान किया है। सचमुच 'रामचरित मानस' भारतीय संस्कृति की महान गाथा है।

रामचरित मानस के साथ तुलसीने रामलला नहछु, वैराग्य संदीपिनी, दोहावली, कवितावली, बखै रामायण, पार्वती मंगल, जानकी मंगल, रामाज्ञा प्रश्न, गीतावली, श्रीकृष्ण गीतावली, विनयपत्रिका आदि अनेक ग्रंथोंकी रचना की। सभी ग्रंथ राम प्रशंसा से ही भरे पडे हैं। राम के लिये जितना भी कहा जाय तुलसी के लिये कम ही है। राम का गुण गौरव करते उनकी कलम कभी थकती ही नहीं। वाल्मीकि के राम से भी तुलसी का राम अधिक महान बन गया है। उनमें कहीं भी दोष नजर नहीं आता। तुलसी का यह राम मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम, धनुर्धारी, एकपत्नी व्रतधारी, आज्ञापालक, कर्तव्य निष्ठ, पाप पुञ्जहारी, सील सिधु, कृपासागर, करुणानिधान, सहजस्नेही, आनंदभवन, परमकृपालू, दानि सिरोमनि, प्रनत प्रतिपालक, ज्ञानकीनाथ, और रघुश्रेष्ठ है। इसलिये सबको तुलसी का कहना है—

‘तुलसीदास’ सब भाँति सकल सुख जो चाहसि मन मेरो।

तो भजुराम, काम सब पूरन करै कृपानिधि तेरो।

भवसागर से पार होने के लिये रामनाम ही एकमात्र साधन है।

रामनाम कलि कामतरु सकल सुमंगल कंद।

सुमिरत करतलसिद्धि सब पग पग परमानंद ॥

रामनाम कलियुग में कल्पतरु के समान है। सब सुमंगल का सार ह। रामनाम के स्मरण से सब सिद्धियाँ सहज ही प्राप्त होती हैं। और कदम पर परमानंद की प्राप्ति होती है।

तुलसी के अनुसार जीवन के उद्धार के लिये राम की भक्ति ही सहज सुंदर मार्ग है। भक्ति की भी तुलसीने सुंदर व्याख्या की है। केवल पूजापाठ, जपजाप्य या व्रतउपवास से भक्ति नहीं होती बल्कि तुलसी का कहना है—

प्रीति रामसों नीतिपथ चलिये राग रिस जीति।

तुलसी संतनके मते इहै भगति की रीति ॥

राम से प्रेम करना, राग (आसक्ति) और क्रोध को जीतना नीतिके पथ पर चलना यही संतोंके अनुसार भक्ति की रीति है।

इस कलिकाल में यह भक्ति की रीति अगर सब से अपनायी गई तो मानव का उद्धार क्यों नहीं होगा? तुलसी के इस वचन के पीछे उनका जीवन का गहरा अनुभव छिपा है। इसी अनुभव के बल पर तो उन्होंने कलिकाल के लोगों का कितना सार्थक वर्णन किया है। वे कहते हैं—

हृदयं कपट बरबेष धरि वचन कर्हाह गढि छोलि।

अब के लोग मयूर ज्यों क्यों मिलिए मन खोलि ॥

आजकल के (कलियुग के) लोग तो मोर के समान हैं, वे सुंदर वेष धारण करते हैं, बनाबना के मीठी बातें करते हैं, लेकिन उनके दिल में मात्र कपट भरा रहता है। ऐसे लोगोंसे दिल खोलकर कैसे मिलें ?

इस कलिकाल मे कलि के धर्म सब दंगयुक्त है । व्यवहार छल से भरे हैं । प्रेम स्वार्थ से भरा है और आचरण मनमाना है ।

दंभ सहित कलि धरम सब छल समेत व्यवहार ।

स्वारथ सहित ससेह सवरुचि अनुहरत अचार ॥

तुलसीने कलियुग की सारी यातनाएँ और यंत्रणाएँ सहीं । राम ही उनके लिए एक मात्र आधार था । राम ही उनके लिए ' पलक नयन इव सेवक त्राता ' था । आखिर संवत् १६८० में संत शिरोमणि तुलसीदास का शरीर रामतत्व में विलीन हो गया ।

तुलसीदास केवल महान संत ही नहीं थे बल्कि एक उच्चकोटि के महा कवि, आदर्श लोकनायक, सफल समाज सुधारक, उच्च आदर्श के संस्थापक, और भारतीय संस्कृतिके सर्व श्रेष्ठ प्रचारक थे । आज भी उनका ' राम चरित मानस ' महाकाव्य भारत को ही नहीं दुनिया को भी प्रेरणा दे सकता है ।



Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion : Belgaum.

PUBLICATIONS

1. Thus Spake Gurudev (Revised & Enlarged)	<i>M. S. Deshpande</i>	1—00
2. An Introduction to Vedic Study	<i>Dr. Sampurnanand</i>	1—50
3. Validity & Value of Religious Experience (Seminar Proceedings : 1968)		3—00
4. Problem of Evil (Seminar Proceedings : 1968)		3—00
5. The Doctrine of God (Seminar Proceedings : 1971)		5— 0
6. Religion in the Changing World (The Predicament of Man)	<i>Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao</i>	4—00
7. God Realisation; Sadhana & Effects Seminar Proceedings: 1971)		7—00
8. Haridasas of Karnatak	<i>Dr. G. Srinivasan</i>	1—50
9. Bhagwata Purana	<i>Prof. Aravind Basu</i>	6— 50
10. Critical and Constructive Aspects of Prof. R. D. Ranade's Philosophy	<i>Prof- B.R. Kulkarni</i>	12—00
11. Summum Bonum of Life [Seminar Proceedings]	(In Press)	
12. कर्मयोग	डॉ. ह. रा. दिवेकर	2—00
13. श्री गुरुदेव रानडे	प्रा. भा. र. मोडक व सौ. वसुधा मोडक	3—00
14. श्री ज्ञानेश्वर चरित्र	रामचंद्र नारायण सराफ	8—00

For Commission to Book-Sellers, Educational Institutions etc. Contact :-
Secretary, Gurudev Mandir, Tilakwadi East, Belgaum-590006

PATHWAY TO GOD

(JOURNAL)

Published twice a year in June & November

Annual Subscription

(Including Postage)

Bharat Rs. 5/-

Foreign Rs. 10/-