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PATHWAY TO GOD



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ACADEMY OF COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION, BELGAUM.

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PATHWAY TO GOD



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UNIVERSAL FRAGRANCE

The ultimate Scientific Ideas, Space, Time, Matter, Motion, Force, Consciousness, and Ego are all equally incomprehensible. (1) What are Space and Time? Two hypoth-



Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade

eses are current : they are objective; they are subjective. That they are objective is incomprehensible, because we can conceive them neither as entities, nor as attributes of entities, nor as non-entities. On the hypothesis of objectivity, Space and Time must be classed as things, but to represent them in thought as 'things' is incomprehensible. Nor can they be subjective 'forms of the intellect,' 'a priory laws of conscious mind.' Kant says (a) they are not objective realities, (b) but are subjective conditions. Against the first we may say that the direct testimony of consciousness is that Time and Space are not within, but without the mind. Against the second, we may say that if they are subjective conditions, we can't combine the thought of space with that of our own personality while it is impossible for them to be both the form of thought and the matter of thought. If they are objects of consciousness, how can they at the same time be the conditions of consciousness? It results therefore that Space and Time are wholly incomprehensible. *-(Gurudev in "Religion & Science")*

Readers' Write

For Pathway to God, April-June 2012 issue :

I was delighted to read Mahatma Gandhi's article '*Comparative Study of Religions*' from April-June, 2012 issue. It also shows Mahatma's transparency of thought towards all religions. I had read this article earlier, but was joyous to read it in Pathway.

- S. N. Kulkarni, Jamkhandi.

Shri. R. S. Patil's article on Ramana Maharshi with simple ways of meditation to attain realisation or Moksha makes interesting reading. I was wondering how the Sadhakas could attain high levels of spirituality by meditation, when ordinary person like me cannot do a ten minutes of *Japa*. Now I know it is possible.

- Aravind Nadgouda, Jayanagar, Bangalore.

Premonition and Intuition can be experienced by any person during his life. We have many instances of telepathy where distant persons get to know a thing without any formal communication. In his article, *Divine Glimpses as Prophecy to the times of crises* by Dr. Dabade, enlightens us further. His examples make the subject more clear. *- Pandurang Dehukar, Kolhapur.*

Shri. P. D. Dharwarkar elucidates how ethical standards set by sages still hold good in his article in Pathway's new issue.

- Ramlal Chindak, Nanded.

Editorial

Wishing you all Happy Deepawali.

We are happy to present this new issue of *Pathway to God*. Hope you will enjoy its enlightening contents.

In this issue, we have Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade's views on Space, Time, Matter, Motion, Force as ultimate scientific ideas in connection with man's basic inheritance of Consciousness and Ego. Prof. G. G. Joshi, writes about all time Hindi classic, "Ramacharit Manas" by Goswami Tulsidas; and the philosophy it contains. In depth study is presented by Dr. Ms. Filita Bharucha in her article, "Empirical Knowledge". We also have an article on well-known social reformer and philosopher, Late Shri. Pandurang Shastri Athavaleji who worked for the upliftment of the down-trodden and giving them a meaningful livelihood. He was not Ivory tower philosopher but a practical one -a true Karma Yogi.

Our regular contributor, Dr. K. B. Dabade comes up with the article on Motor Mystical Experiences by saints. Hemant K. Desai gives us more information on Maharashtrian saint Tukaram and his gospel.

For our new generation of young readers, writer Sakhee, in her simple language, assures readers that God is always with you. In our regular column of personal mystical experiences we have a write-up about Lokmanya Tilak. Dada J. P. Vaswani has given a Deepavali Message alongwith importance of festival of lights. Dr. Satish Kapoor, in his article "Bhagavadgita : A Song Celestial" gives us an idea of Universality of Bhagavadgita.

So, I hope this issue contains a varied fare and will cater to the satisfaction of all readers.

-Subramanya Bhat,
Trustee.

PHILOSOPHY OF RAMACHARIT MANAS

-Prof. G. G. Joshi

There is really no difference between Saguna and Nirguna aspects of Brahman, according to Vedas, Puranas and the opinions of sages and scholars. That which was first unmanifest, unborn, void of form and quality, later on became Saguna due to the devotion of Bhaktas.

RAMACHARIT MANAS is the immortal work of Goswami Tulsidas, the great poet of Hindi literature. Though the author has narrated the story of Valmiki-Ramayana, the work is not merely a history or a specimen of fine poetry, but is known for its numerous other qualities like, the discussion regarding the ideals of Indian man and woman-hood, family life, the highest knowledge, supreme devotion, duties of the king, the importance of renunciation, religion, philosophy and so on. In fact, it deserves to be called the cultural encyclopaedia of Hinduism. Of course, its primary aim is not the discussion of Indian philosophy, but Goswami's outlook towards Rama compelled him to discuss several aspects of Philosophy like the nature

of supreme being, the Jiva and its final aim of merging totally into the supreme divinity; the nature of the world, the means to be adopted for attaining the highest aim of life (i.e. Moksha) etc. If we collect his thoughts on these aspects, his clear outlook on life could be easily known and perhaps might enable us to present his philosophical thoughts in a systematic way.

The most important aspect of his philosophical discussion is his outlook on the nature of reality which has been one of the most controversial points of Indian Meta-physics. The credit of synthesising the Saguna and Nirguna aspects, of Brahman goes to him. He believes that Brahman is basically Nirguna but becomes Saguna for the sake of devotees. "There is really no difference between Saguna and Nirguna aspects of Brahman, according to Vedas, Puranas and the opinions of sages and scholars. That which was first unmanifest, unborn, void of form and quality, later on became Saguna due to the devotion of Bhaktas." In another context, the poet says that just as the lake looks charming due to lotuses only, the concept of Brahman also becomes more charming in its Saguna aspect. Here is really an attempt on the part of Goswamiji to reconcile the Nirgunatva propounded by the Vedas and the Sagunatva described in Puranas. In other words he clearly means to say that the Nirgunatva of Brahman

is the reality and Sagunatva being merely appearance. "One who is omnipresent, unborn, beyond any form or name, the same Lord for the sake of devotees, takes many roles and performs countless, extra-ordinary feats." Madhusudan Saraswati the great Advaitin also declares on similar lines, that inspite of the paramarthsatya being Nirguna, he likes for the sake of Upasana only the Saguna aspect in the form of Sri Krishna. While praying Rama in his Saguns form the poet clearly states that Nirgunatva indicated by the famous vedic quotaton 'Neti Neti' applies to him only. Thus Sagunatva and Nirgunatva of the Lord which have become matters of great controversy between the monist and dualists are reconciled beautifully by Goswamiji who is an Advaitin in principle but 'Rambhakta' in practice.

Regarding the nature of the world also, Goswamiji shows that he believes in its illusory nature like Adi Shankaracharya. Prior to the realisation of God the unreal appears to be real like the appearance of snake in the rope, and after realisation the illusory nature of the world is known, just as after awakening, the dream experience becomes illusory. In spite of this, man suffers from the happenings in this illusory world and does not stop worrying until realisation of the truth. To prove his point Goswamiji gives the example of a man lament

ing in dream over the cutting of his head, until he awakens and realises that it was all false. Finally Goswamiji advises people not to bother about the experiences of this world whether pleasant or full of sorrow, since they do not constitute Paramartha-Satya. "Just as there is no loss or gain when the king turns a begger or a poor-man secures 'Indra-pada' in dream, the wise person should consider the status of the world in the same manner."

The third important metaphysical point is the nature of the soul. Goswamiji being a follower of the path of devotion, one could expect him to be a Dvaitin, believing in the total difference between Jiva and Ishvara, under all circumstances; but that is not the case. He declares that the difference between Jiva and Ishvara, and the Nanatva (multiplicity) of Jiva are the results of Maya and only '*Bhagavadanugraha*' (grace of the Lord) can remove this illusion. In another context, he explains the status of Jiva and Ishvara under the influence of Maya i.e., in Vyavaharadasha as "That is Jivavastha when one does not know the nature of Maya. Ishvara and his own position; but Ishvaratva bestows the fruits of actions in the form of bondage and liberation to the 'Sansari-jeevas'. In paramarthavastha, the Jiva merges completely with Brahman and loses its individuality and defects, as could be seen"

from the following description. "Good people do not drink the liquor even when it is prepared with Ganga-water, but the same liquor loses the impurity and becomes sacred water when mixed with Ganga-pravah. Here it is clear enough that in the Mokshavastha, there remains no difference and hence the Jiva loses its identity.

The above discussion on the nature of the highest reality, status of the world as well as the individual soul, clearly, establishes the fact that Goswamji is basically an advaitin believing in the statement - 'Brahman Satya Jagat Mithya Jivo Brahmaiva naparha'. But his love for Sri Rama and liking for the Bhakti-marga has diluted the Advaita Sidhanta. It is this fact which is responsible to make his system even religiously attractive. According to Advaita Siddhanta Salvation is possible only through Jnana and Bhakti is a means to Jnana, but for Goswamiji Jnana being difficult to realise and practise, is inferior to Bhakti.

The path of knowledge is difficult to practise since there is no support to the mind in it. Even after hardships if one succeeds in this, he will not be liked by God. That is why the Vedas and Puranas advocate that Bhakti is the easiest and surest path for happiness in this as well as in the other world. Without Bhakti all other quali-

ties are tasteless like the condiments void of salt. The path of devotion has gained much popularity because as quoted above, there is some support for the mind in it. Firstly there is sagunatva of Brahman and temples and image worship bring peace of mind even to ordinary people in this path.

In the path of knowledge the reality has no form and it is very difficult to concentrate on a formless reality. But in the Upasana of Saguna-Brahman the moment the name of God is uttered as Rama, Krishna or Shiva, the form comes and stands before the mind. This is the real advantage of Bhaktimarg and there is no danger of the common man being misled. However, the Nishkama and Nirmala Bhakti is in a way 'Jnana' only but in a different form. While accepting Nirgunatva as Paramartha-satya, if Goswamiji could preach Bhakti, we can say that it is something comparable to 'Jnanottara Bhakti.' The affection of a married lady towards her parents can be said to be the most appropriate example of 'Jnanottara Bhakti'. Goswamiji; however, does not forget the truth taught in the Mahavakyas or Upanishads, in spite of his preference for Bhakti. "The eternal light of knowledge consists of 'Sohamasmi' meaning 'I am he' i.e. Brahman. The Moola-avidya will disappear only when this knowledge dawns."

Goswamiji states emphatically that only those who have faith in the words of Guru and Shastras, will attain salvation and without vairagya, Brahma-Vichara is not possible, and those who remain attached to the body and do not care for the soul are Avivekins. Brahmanubha is not possible without *Ahamkaranasha*.

He has a word of advice to those who hate one form of the God and love the other in the following statement of Sri Rama - "Those who love me and hate God Shiva will have to suffer 'Narakvasa for a Yuga'".

This is the same as the vedic statement which believes in one reality with many names and forms (Ekam sadvipra bahudha vadanti). For the upliftment of the man, good character is the basic necessity and God does not like a person who lacks good behaviour - according to Goswamiji. He declares at the end of his work in an extremely appealing way that "just as passionate man is mad after a woman and a greedy person thinks of nothing but money only; Lord, let me always remain attached to you".

Thus Goswami Tulsidasji has presented to us a philosophy in his Ramacharit Manas which though traditional is made more appealing and

at once fresh. He has neither neglected philosophy for the sake of religion nor ignored the ethics in the interest of the Metaphysics. His teachings appeal to the scholar as well as common man with equal force, and no one who shall have a chance to study his work could refuse to paint him as an extra-ordinary poet, philosopher, moralist, devotee and an excellent teacher.

- Prof. G. G. Joshi.

Each Soul is potentially Divine.

The goal is to manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal.

Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these-and be free.

This is the whole of religion, Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.



I do not believe in a Religion or God which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth.

-Swami Vivekanand

EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE

-Dr. (Ms.) Filita Bharucha

It seems to have a better view point in terms of the possibility approach, for I think even to have a possibility of an event whether it is totally physical or mental must allow some concession to some kind of empirical stand point.

Abstract : The main idea of this paper is to investigate the epistemology of empirical knowledge, in order to have foundational basis of my building up a Heterologic which is empirical and has a space - time framework. However we concentrate, in this paper on the project explication and ratification, in view of the two Approaches of Probability and Possibility in Heterologic.

Before I discuss the criteria of justification in the two concepts of explication and ratification, I mention the following :

In case the probability Approach, called by (P) the empirical knowledge should be taken as neutral with respect to the question of whether there is any other kind. This means that the physical or natural sciences should be neutral

in the empirical knowledge *regarding the justifications* of the two explication or ratification. We have that the Probability Approach is based on measurements, quantities etc. ... therefore they have to be neutral in the justification of any explication and ratification.

In the case of the '*Possibility Approach*' we are dealing with social sciences. In that case we have an epistemology without a knowing subject (*) concerned solely with propositions and their logical relations is in principle inadequate.'

However we have dealt this statement with the degrees of the truth-values related to human subjects in terms of infirmum and supermum in the '*Possibility Approach*' called as (P2) of my Heterologic, which I think it would not have an axiomatic basis. Since the *social sciences* would revalue in a least partially *subjective world*.

The controversy between '*mind and matter*' would relate to the two approaches of the possibility and probability.

In case of explication we require a 'good evidence' (in case of [p₁] possibility approach) or verification of physical experiments (in case of p₁ probability approach).

(*) Proper in an essay "Epistemology without a knowing subject" in *Objective Knowledge* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1972, 106-52.)

The explication of the concept or criteria of justification concerning human subjects is related either by belief and personal experience OR their connection in general features of physical experiments.

These approaches can be translated by me into possibility (p_2) and probability (p_1) in *Heterologic*.

The ratification of the criteria of *justification* is not a priori, but refers to several other beliefs. We must know that these have other assumed knowledge about human beings and their abilities and limitations.

We discuss the two concepts of explication and ratification separately. I mention the various schools, naturalism, Scientivism, descriptism, conventionalism, foundationalism, foundherentism in view of the possibilistic probability and approaches.

Explication

We discuss the concept of justification in case of human subjects and their beliefs and experience.

a) Probability Approach (p_1) :-

It is more appropriate to discuss the three Schools of naturalism, scientivism, and foundherentism in this approach.

In case of naturalism it is propounded to confine to natural sciences, but later evidence show the evolution of social sciences. In case of scientivism it is said to accomplish the traditional work of epistemology. However foundherentism provides a reasonable explication of the concept of justification, but there is much to further this concept of justification.

These schools can be said to be reasonable in the *macroscopic world* but in the macroscopic field it is difficult. This is so if we discuss Quantum Mechanics and question like the Heisenberg's principle.

b) Possibility Approach (p_2) :-

It is aptly relevant to discuss the Schools of descriptivism conventionalism, foundationalism in this Possibility approach.

We have the acceptance of the legitimacy of the traditional work in descriptivism. Whereas the justification of relevance of belief is a characteristic of coherentism. Foundationalism allows the relevance of experience to justification but

in an unnatural behaviour, however “weak Foundationalism allows basic beliefs to a certain extent but as basic observational facts only.

It seems to have a better view point in terms of the possibility approach, for I think even to have a *possibility of an event* whether it is totally physical or mental it must allow some concession to some kind of empirical stand point.

Ratification

The question of ratification deal with the problem i) satisfactory criteria ii) adequacy iii) Sound justification.

Criteria of *justification* cannot be realized as a priori, but as several *compartments of belief* which include assumed human subjects, their abilities and limitations.

These problems have to be dealt with the two approaches (i) Probability (ii) Possibility.

In the (p_1) probability approach we discuss “Naturalism” which deals with natural and physical sciences. In this problem of ratification it cannot be a priori, but have to rely on our empirical knowledge. It is distinguished from scientivism which confines to natural and physical sciences. In our case we accept only those sciences which deal with measurements and quantities.

In the (p₂) Possibility approach we discuss conventionalism. The school has two reasons (a) Imperialist (b) Relativist, where (a) conforms the criteria of justification i.e. national belief (b) changes in belief over time.

Obviously the *goal of inquiry* would be required in the degrees of the truth-values related to human subjects with respect to infirmum and supermum of the well-formed formula, in the Heterologic with a space-time frame.

For our discussion, we must have an explanatory account of how the things are in a space-time frame work. The ratification of criteria of justification must not be undertaken a priori, for it would be referred to as Founationalism.

- Dr. (Ms.) Filita Bharucha

The philosophy of Vedanta deals with man and with human possibilities. Man can create a heaven around him and he can create a hell also. That in depth study of man is the greatest contribution of Vedanta. It is a philosophy for you and me. It talks of perfect human freedm and equality with dignity, without respect to caste, creed or colour. It deals with man as man. That is the Universal vision of Vedanta, it is a truth discovered by sages and can be rediscovered by anybody.

- Swami Ranganathananda.

KARMAYOGI

Shri Pandurangshastri Athavale

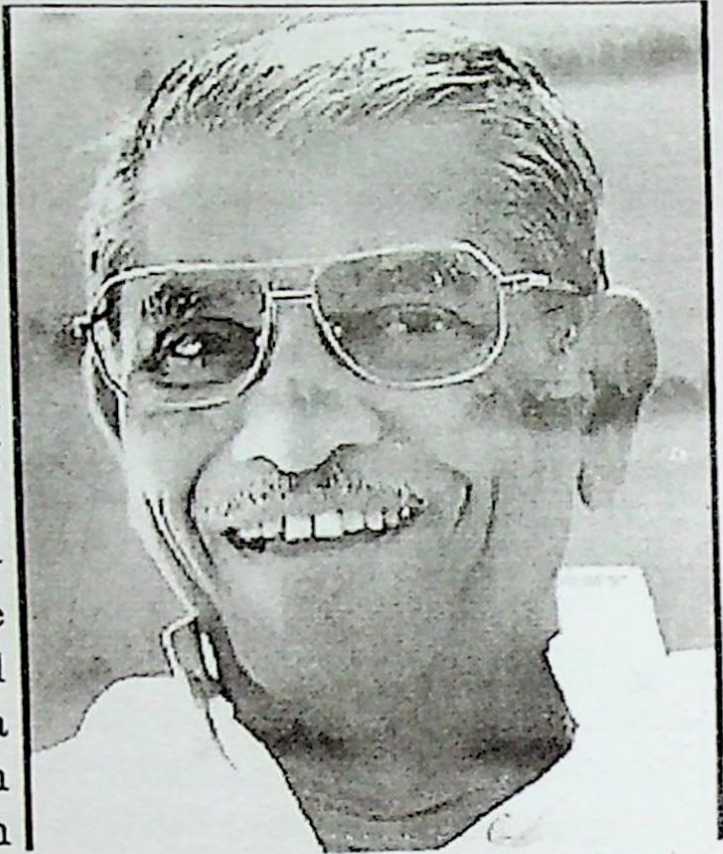
- A Swadhyayee, Belgaum.

Lord Krishna has given assurance that he dwells in all things for which the term used is "Indwelling God". Once man realises that he is not alone, but God is forever with him, and is witness of all his activities (Sarvasakshi), ups and downs in life, one gets supreme confidence. This confidence makes him active and gives him self respect. This is what 'Manushya Gaurav'.

25th October is the Smritidin of Shri Pandurangshastri Athavale, founder of "Swadhyaya" movement. He was popularly called as "Dada" by his followers. He was born on 19th October 1920 at Roha, in Raigad Dist. of Maharashtra. His birthday is widely celebrated as "Human Dignity Day" (*Manushya Gaurav*).

Dada's own personality and his Swadhyaya movement is the result of compassion he felt towards pain and hardship experienced by majority of the population everywhere in India. The main causes being, Casteism, inequality in everything, lack of confidence amongst general public. He strongly felt that people with lot of money or power and also intelligence alone are respected in the society, while more than

ninety percent of the population remains insignificant and without any kind of recognition. They are devoid of self respect. Seeing and experiencing these things, Dada asked himself, "Why these people should always be with a long face and in pitiable condition never coming out



Shri Pandurangshastri Athavale

of misery ? Why their future cannot be changed? Why they should remain in a sad state? I should be doing something to change their fortune forever."

He started his work with "Koli" (fishermen) community in Gujarath. Later the movement spread over to many parts of Gujarath and Maharashtra. It continued all over India and abroad even to places like Dubai.

He felt, it is irony that man, unaware of the God that resides in him; searches for God else where and does not find Him. To give society a new direction of self respect, he used the

path shown by Lord Krishna in Bhagavadgita. Lord Krishna has given assurance that he dwells in all things for which the term used is "Indwelling God". Once man realises that he is not alone, but God is forever with him, and is witness of all his activities (*Sarvasakshi*), ups and downs in life, one gets supreme confidence. This confidence makes him active and gives him self respect. This is what 'Manushya Gaurav'. This positive thinking gives him boost and ample strength not only to fight daily odds, but to overcome them; move ahead in life and to do something new.

This change in personality of an individual later changes face of the society, as witnessed wherever Swadhyaya movement operates. The society gets an orientation for better. Law can empower and to certain extent change the behaviour of men and society, but change in personality can only be brought about by an excellent mind (*Tejasvi Vichar*). How I should behave is my own prerogative. This thinking brought about what is called as "Swadh-yaya". People followed Pandurang Shastriji and soon it became a mass movement. People started earning their livelihood more decently and had a streak of philosophical thought to it. It was practical Karmayoga, and Pandurang Shastriji a Karmayogi. People who changed their own life, in turn further motivated the less privileged brethren. It was *Bhratrubhava* with *Bhakti*.

They improved life of the less fortunate through Swadhyaya, a term progressive in true sense. Today there are nearly 2 lakh Swadhyayis. Many of them regularly visit remote villages and make people aware of this brotherhood. They do not expect anything from the people in return, not even thanks. It is totally selfless service to humanity. This year alone, nearly 25,000 Swadhyayis from Maharashtra toured the state, spending their own 3 T's = Ticket, Tiffin & Time, without any kind of incentive. From 12th to 17th October 2012, they moved over all 8 districts of Vidharbha region of Maharashtra containing thousands of villages. This was for spreading Dada's message of Self-Reliance, culminating into Human Dignity of people. Dada has successfully implemented various programmes such as *Yogeshwar Krishi, Matsyagandha, Vrikshamandar, Amrutalayam, Shri Darshanam* etc. for Adhyatmic development. These projects are continuously run for everybody's benefit. Dada's work received worldwide recognition in the form of several International and National awards which include, Magsaysay, Templeton and civic honour of Padma Vibhushan etc. He never strived to get any award, but humbly received it as blessing of God. He breathed his last on 25th October, 2003, but his immortal work continues inspiring new young minds and hence he still lives !

-A Swadhyayee, Belgaum.

MOTOR MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES

-Prof. Dr. K. B. Dabade

The Saint of Umadi was present at Devar Nimbargi when his Sadguru (the SN) breathed his last and visualized a Divine Light leaving his Sadguru's body and merging itself in the infinite.

Motor mystical experiences have a unique place in Mysticism and they are treated quite frequently under the categories of amalgamated and supernal spiritual experiences and by outlining motor relationships of God to saints. Therefore, a comprehensive study of motor mystical experiences becomes possible when one can indicate how motor mystical experiences are very often interwoven with morphic, photic, colouric and other kinds of mystical experiences on the one hand, and how Divine Grace, motions and emotions engender multi-faceted motor relationships of God to devotees on the other. Put simply, the discussion in the present paper revolves around these two vital issues of motor mystical experiences keeping in mind that instances of these two issues and their different aspects may overlap considerably.

At the outset, I consider instances of motor mystical experiences that are basically blended with morphic mystical experiences. To be more precise, these instances are prototypes of inanimate objects and animate beings. The former includes instances of star, worm-like objects, marble, wheel, pearls and latter flowers, cotton (Kingdom of plants), ants, fire-fly, serpents, eagles, *Homo-Sapiens* (Kingdom of Animals). This kind of arrangement has been made only for sake of convenience and no deeper meaning should be attributed to it.

In her Kannada song Sai Sai Kuntidene Shivalingavva describes that assembly is lit up with stars moving in the all-pervading crimson dust (Ranade 1960 : 258).



Shri Shivalingavva

S. D. Jogalekar (1993 :37-38) relates two of his motor mystical experiences to his *Sadguru* (Spiritual Master) Gurudev R. D. Ranade (GR); infinite twirling wormlike whitish shining objects; (II) spherical marble-like object which appears to rotate about itself.

Some motorists do not know what to say about motion of a spiritual wheel. It moves and does not move; it is far and near; it is both inside and outside of man (*Vide* for details Deshpande 1963: 162).

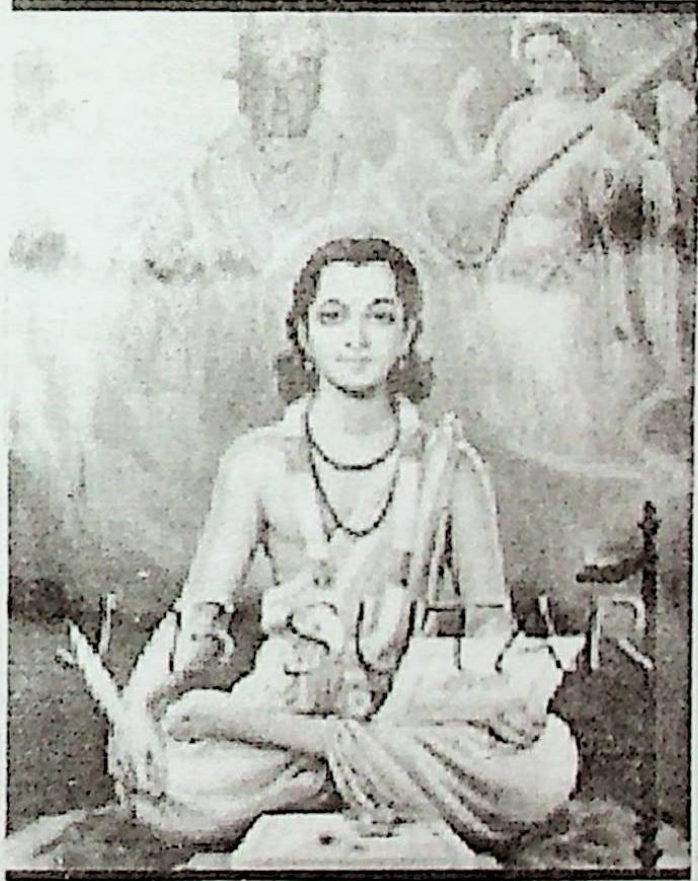
We are told by *Yari*.....that the mystic necessarily experiences a shower of pearls whether externally or internally: रिमझिम रिमझिम बरसे मोती (*Vide* for details Ranade 1997 : 245-46).

I turn, now, to a few instances of motor mystical experiences drawn from the Kingdoms of Plants and Animals.

1. Shivalingavva in her Kannada song *Yava Deshada Hooviddava* refers to the mystical experience of witnessing a profuse shower of exotic jasmines (*Vide* for details, Kulkarni 1977:25, 98-99).

In one of his abhangas Jnaneshwara describes that he "saw" in his spiritual vision, "Rolls of cotton move in the sky" ('कापसाचे गोळे फिरती पोळ्ळी') (Deshpande 1963 : 125).

Muktabai tells us that she "saw" an ant floating in the sky and that this ant was able to devour Sun (Ranade 1933/1988:49).



Sant Jnaneshwara

Like *Upanishadic* seers, GR was blessed with the spiritual experience of fire-fly (*Khadyota*). It is perhaps this experience that has prompted him to write a brilliant essay titled "Meditations on a Fire-Fly" (*Vide* for details Deshpande 1963 : 148, Ranade 1956 : 134-39). I reflect on GR's mystical experiences of moving, dancing, and nodding *Sheshas* (serpents).

One day GR began to move around the *Adhyatma Bhuvan*-Pune. Kakasaheb Karkhanis (KK) - GR's spiritual brother who was with him there asked him the reason for his circumambulation. GR replied: "Well, I 'saw' today the lustrous form of *Shesha* shining like anything. Hence, I followed him" (*Vide* Deshpande 1963 :163).

GR had the lustrous vision of a hooded Shesha (Studded with jewels) dancing on the funeral pyre of his pious mother. This vision assured him that his mother had attained the blessed state (*Vide* for details Deshpande 1963 : 161, Dabade 1997 : 41).

Once at Jamkhandi Yashwantrao Lele - a childhood friend of GR saw that GR was nodding his head in a state of meditation for a long time. When GR came out of the room Lele asked GR, "Ramu (GR), why were you nodding your head like that?"Thereupon, GR replied ".....Seven hooded cobra was in front of me. I was nodding

my head in the manner in which *Shesha* was nodding". Lele asked GR, "When you get such experiences, why don't we?" GR answered, "It is the fruit of spiritual efforts of several births." GR himself told some senior *Sadhakas* of *Nimbargi Sampradaya* (NS) that this Shesha used to move on his body (*Vide* for details Dabade 1997:40).

Before proceeding to deal with those motor mystical experiences that are predominantly mixed and mingled with anthropomorphic mystical experiences, it may be mentioned that GR "saw" in his divine vision the flight of eagles (Deshpande 1963 : 61).

2. Divine vision in the form of a child is experienced by Tukarama, GR, Shivalingavva, Gulal and some other great mystics.

Tukarama described the Form of God as that of a child that came crawling on all fours towards him (Ranade 1960 ; 268).

When the ceremony of waving light (Aarati) was going on at Rameshwara temple in Jamkhandi in 1956, GR "saw" that he was playing on the lap of God like a son playing on the lap of his father (*Vide* Dabade 2001 : 28).

Shivalingavva described that she prepared for a spiritual child a strong cradle of five colours

skillfully mixed. She touched the cradle with her own hand and gave it a swing to the empyrean. Gulal too expresses his experience almost in the same strain that the Self is a child in the cradle of Reality. The cradle is miraculous having no poles to support it, no ropes to attach it to the poles. The bells attached to it ring continuously and lull the Self to Samadhi. The spiritual teacher gives it a swing, and the cradle leaves the world altogether, and flees into the empyrean, the Self, the supreme object of love, becomes dissociated with the world and entirely transcendent (*Vide* for details Ranade 1960 : 272-73).

The substance of the abhanga in which Jnaneshwar describes his vision of Lord Krishna is as under :

“Your forehead shines with
The light of million moons
You have lotus-eyes and shining face
O Krishna! Move on! Nod not, my dear!
Speak on lovingly for hours and hours!
Lo! How He stands and swings His arms!
As if beckoning me to come to Him!
Is He not Vithal my Holy Father?”

3. This spiritual vision was also present before GR through his journey in a *Tonga* along with KK from Pune till they reached *Devachi Alandi* (*Vide* Dabade 2001 : 22-23).

Once, in 1917-18, when GR was absorbed in meditation at Pune, he heard the words (in Marathi), '*Bhirgu Ale, Bhirgu Ale*' ('Bhirgu arrives, Bhirgu arrives') and effigy drenched in clean and bright light frisked through from left to right (*Vide Dabade 2001 :24-25*).

GR once heard the words, "Jharatustra! Jharatustra!" and "saw" the prophet of the Parsis. At that time, it is pertinent to note that GR asked KK whether the prophet of the Parsis rode an old camel? (*Deshpande 1963 : 158*).

One day when GR was meditating at Sangli, he "saw" suddenly a vast expanse of light. In it a stately, tall figure of fair complexion, with a round flaming shining face and red eyes approached him. It had a black blanket on the shoulders and a yellow turban on its head. GR intuitively apprehended it to be the Saint of Nimbargi (The SN)/Nimbargi Maharaj and reverentially bowed down to it. As soon as he raised his head, the figure took off its turban and said (in Kannada), '*Ida Tago*' ('take this'), and placed the turban on the head of GR. It then lovingly looked at him for a couple of seconds and said again (in Kannada) '*In Ta*' ('return it'). At once GR said (in Kannada,) '*Tagolri Maharaj*' ('Take it Maharaj') and returned it. The figure took it and the vision vanished. GR was overjoyed to

have the vision of the SN and thought it to be an indication of his spiritual mission (Dabade 2001 : 25-26).

A brief account is given below of those motor mystical experiences that are intertwined conspicuously with photic, colouric and some other types of mystical experiences.

The Saint of Umadi was present at Devar Nimbargi when his *Sadguru* (the SN) breathed his last and visualized a Divine Light leaving his *Sadguru's* body and merging itself in the infinite (*Vide* Sangoram 1995 : 271).

Once in 1908, GR, Prof. Wodehouse and a few others were discussing Calyle's *Salator Resartus* in Prof. Wodehouse's bungalow-Pune. At that time, GR once casually peeped out of the window in front of him which was on the side of *Devachi Alandi*. Just then, he happened to "see" a huge column of light extending high up midway into the sky above. At once he automatically got up from his chair. And when he got up, all others also stood up automatically. All of them could also "see" the light for a couple of minutes or so. Thereafter, the light gradually became more and more faint and ultimately disappeared (*Vide* for details Deshpande 1963 : 161).

4. GR (1959 :275-76) suggestively points out his vision of flaming thunderbolt during the World War II as follows :

“...The course of war falls into two stages, one from 1939-1942 and the other from 1942-45. There is a clear indication that Hitler and Mussolini always won in the first stage, and that Montgomery and Eisenhower won continuously in the second.....Would not the necessity of mystic experience, however, require a pictorial representation of the changing fortunes on the heavenly canvas, in which God with an uplifted flaming thunderbolt might strike mercilessly at one side of the battle during the first period and at the other side in the reverse direction with the same upliftedthunderbolt in the second? A Divine Thunderbolt is probably the best weapon to annihilate the contending armies. It would have been extremely fortunate if one had been priviledged to see the changing fortunes of the war on the heavenly canvas, and to interpret the Will of God accordingly.”

GR once told at Allahabád that in 1940 and then after one and half years in 1942, he had continuous visions for one and half years. In the first , Germany was victorious and in the other, the Allies were victorious. These visions clearly indicate the working of God in these events (Deshpande 1963 : 157).

Regarding the mystical colours accompanied by some kind of motor mystical experiences, GR makes certain statements. If the colours are on the objects, according to GR, they are more stable. If there is an experience of changing colours, the objects should be seen as changing colours. The colours should not hang in the air. Again steadiness of God's vision follows the steadiness of the aspirant's mind. If our mind is steady, God's form is also steady. However, there is no single colour as a steady colour (Dabade 2005 : 48).

In one of his poems, Nagalinga observes that in the illimitable dense forest he 'saw' in his vision, a pitcher - overflowing with nectar; and the poet declares that he was leading a blissful life by enjoying it time and again (Ranade 1960 :251).

The poet (Beraturpati or Sadakshari) of the poem *Ide Anubhava Mantapavu* describes the spiritual assembly. We find in it an element of terror in the spiritual experiences of saints which refers to the submarine fire; the peels of thunder, the dazzling flash of lightening that stuns the sight, the over-flowing of the sea, the melting of mountains, the peak of gold being engulfed by the void - all these phenomena being associated with the deluge or final extin-

ction of the universe by conflagration. We must, however, note that even this element of terror hides in it the element of fascination and beatitude (*Vide* 1960 : 310).

The preceding discussion mirrors rather implicitly motor relationships of God to Saints and now I focus more explicitly on the same kind of relationship.

5. Nodding, dancing, exclaiming Lord's Name, traversing the mountain in spite of being a lame, floating and some other motions among devotees can take place without any deliberate efforts due to Divine grace and beatific joy.

Just as a serpent nods and probably nods frequently, while hearing the sound of a flute, so the disciple too may nod provided he hears the Divine Music (Ranade 1960 : 110-11).

Baba - the spiritual brother of GR and GR occasionally danced when they were in ecstatic state. In a deep state of Samadhi, it is to be remembered here that GR used toutter words Narayana, Narayana....with rhythm, melody and spontaneity.

According to Surdas, by God's grace even a lame man is able to cross the Himalayas (*Vide* for details Ranade 1997 : 236). Here one is remin-

ded of an incident that has taken place in the life of GR. Once, GR suffered from a severe problem of limping. He got rid of this problem in a fortnight not by undergoing a surgery as per medical advice but by applying saliva after whole day's meditation to the affected part as per his *Sadguru's* advice. (*Vide* Dabade 2009 : 11).

Regarding a floating mystical experience of a mystic, William James (1964 : 205) quotes the words of a mystic : "I wept and laughed alternately, I was as light as if walking in air. I felt as if I had gained greater peace and happiness than I had ever expected to experience".

During my fieldwork at Solapur in early 1990s I came across a lady disciple of Sri Prabhakar Maharaj Line who pointed out that while reading a holy book she had the experience of floating in the air as her body became extremely light and it was about to touch the tube light on the top of the wall of her residence (Dabade 1993 : 351, 1998 :151).

Mystical literature is replete with instances of how God responds to certain motions of His devotees.

Purandardasa says, "When the devotee sings the praises of God in a sleeping posture, God

sits up to listen to them; if he praises in a sitting posture, God stands up to listen to it; and if the devotee prays in a standing posture, God listens to him in a pleased and nodding pose; and if the devotee praises God while nodding himself, He throws open the doors of heaven, makes him the master of heavens, and allows him to ponder its treasures. In almost the same strain Jagannathadasa describes his supernal experience but for minor changes. "If the devotee himself begins to dance", says Jagannathadasa, "God would be entirely at his disposal. He would favour him and would bless him completely".



Sant Tukaram

Tukarama says, "If a devotee sings God's praises while sleeping God stands up before him...if he performs Kirtana in a sitting posture, God begins to nod. If the devotee stands up and repeats the name of God, God begins to dance in a variety of ways, if the devotee utters the name of God while walking

God presents Himself both behind and in front of the devotee.... Namadeva says, "God dances with His devotee, if the latter proclaims His name while standing and with devotion". Above all, there is the supernal experience of God not moving even when the devotee moves, circumambulates or encircles Him" (*Vide* for details Ranade 1960 : 267-69).

6. A mystic may experience that God moves and travels with him, whirls round him, runs after him, goes ahead of him or follows him, and even walks, speaks and eats with him, works with him. I elaborate different dimensions of this kind of experience of mystics with illustrations.

Tukarama says that God is constantly moving with him. According to him, if the saint travels, God also travels¹ (Ranade 1933/1985 : 348-49).

One understands from Tukarama that he "saw" God whirling round him in a circle. He also said that God was running after him. He was walking all along. Jnaneshwara "saw" that God went ahead of him, like a torch bearer, with a torch in His hand².

God followed Kabir as Kabir was walking alone. God called out, "Kabir, Kabir", but Kabir would not listen, and moved on (*Vide* for details Ranade

1997 : 427).

The experience of God as walking with oneself is stressed by Purandardasa, Sarvajna, Jagannathadasa and Tukarama, Charandasa and others. However, Charandasa goes one step ahead and says, "My God eats with me, speaks with me, and walks with me". Namadeva had that experience when God used to eat with him, speak with him. GR observes that as to whether God can speak with us, eat with us, or walk with us is a question, which we think, we had better leave to be decided between the Saint and God. It is only they who can speak about the veracity of the experience and other persons have got nothing to do with it. The saint, however, must remember that he may not be charged with hallucination or illusion and must be aware that he does not introduce poetry in the account of his realization (*Vide* Ranade 1997 : 246).

Irrespective of their caste and creed, God fulfils the desires of His devotees unasked. He has "...woven silken clothes with Kabira...has tilled the garden with Samavata, has carried away dead cattle with Chokha, has gathered cow dung with Janabai... has borne earthen pots with Gora" (*Vide* for details Ranade 1933/1988 : 336-38).

There are some recorded incidents in Mysticism

which reveal that the motions of the *Atman* or God are not related to the motions of the devotees. The devotees only apprehend probably an account of their emotions. G. R., therefore, feels that emotions of the devotees are higher than their motions and postures.

7. In the Upanishads, we are told how the Atman moves far away, though sitting at a particular place or sleeping. Tulasidasa tells us that God walks without feet. Kudaluresha tells us that not only God can walk without feet, but also He can grasp without hands (Vide Ranade 1969 : 268, Kulkarni 2007 :310).

Finally, I project God's subtle movement (Suluvu), which is a difficult thing to perceive by taking into account the views of Ramadasa, Mahipat (Kakhandki), and Horti Ramarao - the spiritual brother of GR. In some measure, previous discussion has thrown light on this subject; hence some kind of repetition is unavoidable.

Ramadasa points out, "If we try to catch hold of *Brahman*, we cannot catch it. If we wish to throw it away, we cannot throw it. *Brahman* is anywhere and everywhere. As we turn away from it, it presents itself before our face. By no means whatsoever we turn our back on it....Similarly, whenever one may go, one is inside *Brahman*....When we stand, or when we

run away, *Brahman* is with us....It fills the whole universe....It cannot be carried away by the flood even though it may appear on it....As we walk, we feel it at every step. When we take anything in hand, the *Brahman* stands between us and that object (*Vide* for details Ranade 1933/1988 : 212, 413).

Mahipati expounds that God comes in playing like a child, hiding, slightly revealing and playfully presenting Himself in full form....The form of God makes its slow appearance, then it concedes itself for a while, and disappears for while. So when these experiences have been attained Mahipati speaks of a peculiar phrase, which GR calls the 'paradise' of spiritual experience....If you try to see God. He will disappear, but if you turn your face away from Him. He will appear before in the same direction, towards which you turn your face. If you go to touch God, He will refuse to be touched. He will not bring to the notice of the aspirant His subtle movements..... This *Suluvu* is very familiar to those who have been living a life of devotion to God, when all of a sudden unheard of and unseen movements from God, bring about the result at which we have aimed all the time. You will not be able to see it, if you go to see it; you cannot reach it, if you try to grasp it. If you do not go to see it, it will manifest itself fully in its refulgent fundamental Form..... It remains in its own substratal glory; it refuses to be seen, or heard,

or touched, or its movements watched. Finally, Mahipati declares that this vision of God remains steady before the mystic, when he is in the company of saints (*Vide* for details Ranade 1960 : 270-71). Subtle movements of God can prevent devotees from falling prey to temptations. Horti Ramrao exclaims, "how would it be possible for me, Oh, my God, to do bad actions when I have merged myself with Thy subtle movements.....(*Vide* for details Ranade 1960 : 85-87).

In the end, I must confess that like a juvenile, I have picked up a handful of orificeless pebbles of motor mystical experiences that are assimilated with some other mystical experiences and those which entail motor relationship of Almighty to mystics on eternal sea-shore of Mysticism.

8. Notes :

1. GR used to ride cycle fast, and with the speed of the vehicle he could "see" to his great amusement *Vastu* (Spiritual object) (*Vide* Karkhanis 1977 : 121).

God is not merely a macrocosm but also a microcosm. It is the experience of mystics that the size of *Vastu* directly varies with the distance unlike worldly objects. To make the matter more intelligible, it may be stated that the size of *Vastu* enlarges with the distance, diminishes when the distance is reduced. For instance, Akka Mahadevi in one of her *Vachanas* declares, "You, Oh God, who have filled this whole universe, have come and settled upon the palm assuming a subtle form (*Vide* for details Jogalekar 1993 :95, Ranade 1960 : 163).

2. The saint of Umadi remained absolutely fearless whenever he visited valley all alone in darkness for meditation as God used to appear before him as a *Sipai* (guard/servant) (*Vide* for

details Deshpande 2002 : 16-17).

3. Narsappa Shapeti - the disciple of the SN used to speak about *Suluvu* (Vide Ranade 1960 : 85-87). *References :*

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THE GOSPEL OF SANT TUKARAM

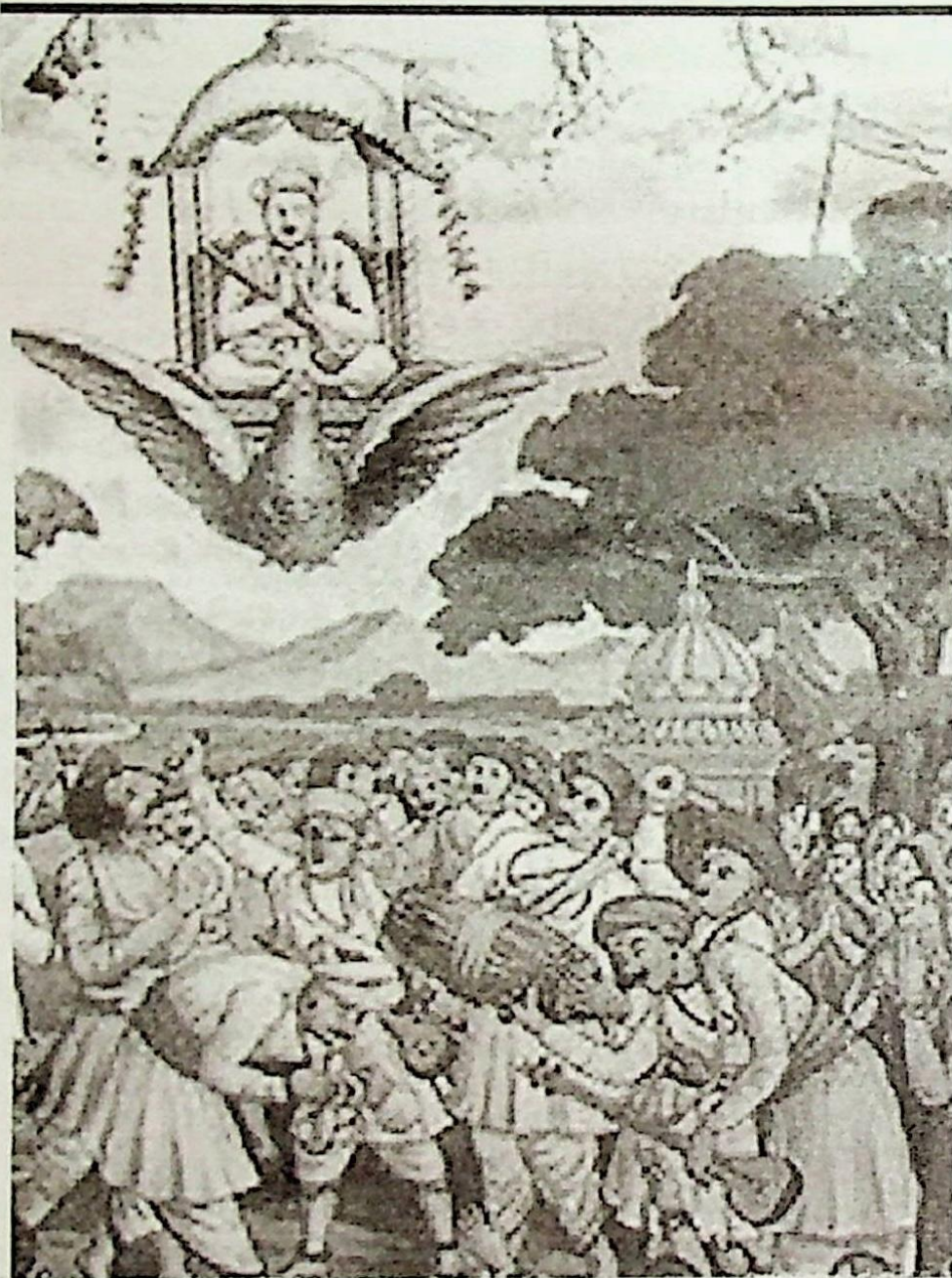
- Hemant K. Desai

Legend has it that Tuka, in the prime of his life, was taken to Vaikuntha (the mystical abode of Lord Vishnu) on the back of the heavenly bird, the Garuda-Vahini. It should be noted here that most of the saints and sages mentioned above have final resting places or samadhi-shrines where their mortal remains are interred.

Of the myriad saints and sages of the region of Maharashtra, Saint Tukaram occupies a very special place in hearts of devotees of the Bhakti marga (Khanolkar, 2000). Unlike many spiritual personages who live and die in obscurity, Tukaram was rather well-known during his lifetime and was a contemporary of the famous Maratha warrior-king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Saint Tukaram is part of an unbroken spiritual genealogy that begins with Saint Pundarik, of Pandharpur fame, and includes in its wake Saint Jnaneshwar (and his saintly siblings Nivrutti, Sopan and Muktabai), Gora Kumbhar, and Saint Eknath (among many others).

According to historians, in 42 years, the poet-saint Tukaram wrote 400 devotional songs (Abhangs) that are revered to this day as some

of the most inspired religious literature in the Marathi language. St. Tukaram was an integral part of the *Warkari* tradition of the Bhakti movement, which is well and alive today. The Warkaris whose presiding deity is Vitthala,



Farewell by Sant Tukaram (Tukoba)

Panduranga or Pandhari, believe that only one who considers those who suffer as his own, is fit to be called a sage. Further, they do not believe in social distinctions of caste and creed and that the way to Godhead is through the path of mindful worship and unwavering devotion.

Born in 1608¹, Saint Tukaram was the second son of Shri Bolhoba Ambile, a trader and money-lender of Dehu (in Pune district). As Tuka was coming of age and learning the family business (they were by caste Kunbhis or traders), a prolonged famine struck the region which claimed his young wife (Rukhmai Damekari) and infant child. He married again and his second spouse, Avali², was something of a termagent (Ajgaonkar, 1948) who used to get fed up of her husband's unusual generosity and kindness of heart, even to strangers in need.

Lovingly referred as 'Tukoba' by his followers, the saint also attracted a lot of jealousy amongst the orthodox inhabitants of the region who objected to his writing devotional songs. The objection of these high-caste priests was that he had no right to do so being born in the lower caste of a shudra. Although this persecution did not bother Tukaram personally, who had several direct perceptions of the divine force when he sang his kirtans, it led to his being forced to abandon volumes of his poetry in the river

Indrayani. This jealousy and caste prejudices are described thus by Khanolkar (2000, p. 147):

“Tuka held kirtans in Dehu, Poona and Lohegaon where people thronged in great numbers. They began to take notice of his saintliness and praised him, repeating his touching songs while they went about their business or daily chores. Women sang as they rotated the mill-stones to grind rice or wheat, others whilst they waited at wells to draw water and mesand while they following the furrows of the plough in the fields. The whole country sang with Tukaram in his desire to see the blessed feet of Krishna, their beloved Vithala. All this popularity enraged a certain learned Brahmin called Rameshwar Bhat. His jealousy of Tukaram’s fame could not be concealed and he (Bhat) tried to vilify him in several ways. He even accused him of stealing his poems... Bhat was a well-read pundit but he lacked the perception needed to realize what he was reading about and preaching to others. He branded Tuka’s abhangs as being against the Vedas and other scriptures and condemned them to be thrown into the river.”

Although Khanolkar reports that the incident left the poet-saint “a broken man”, the sage Tukaram did not despair as then many of his followers had committed most of his abhangs

to memory and that is the main reason that they live on till this day...

The biographer continues : “The Pandit [Rameshwar Bhat] did not demur from his purpose and continued to harass the devotee [Tukoba]. Instigated by him, some people went as far as to pour boiling water over Tukaram and his agony was intense.” In Ajgaonkar’s book on Sant Tukaram’s life, there is a slightly different, and more specific, version of this incident(Ajgaonkar, 1948). In Lohegaon, there lived a man by the name of Shivji Kasar whose wife was responsible not just for pouring boiling water on Tukaram, but actually poisoning him after inviting to her place for dinner. Ajgaonkar states (p. 74-75): “the transformation in Shivji’s life infuriated his wife who planned vengeance on Tukaram. The next time that Tukaram visited Lohegaon, she gave him a most pressing invitation to dinner. Under the pretext of giving him a ceremonial bath herself, she poured four big vessels of boiling water upon him! Not an inch of his body remained unscalded... On his [Tuka’s] part, he thought of nothing but Pandurang and the pain gradually subsided... After the ‘bath came the dinner. Shivji’s wife had mixed poison with the food but it proved ineffective. Her wickedness, however, turned upon herself, and leprosy affected her body right there and then!”

Several such miracles have been associated with the remarkable life of the devotee Tukaram. One report states that the poetry abandoned in the river, resurfaced unharmed days later! As Tukoba himself explains in one of his famous abhangs :

*When one's heart is pure, foes become friends
The tiger won't devour, the serpent won't bite,
Poison turns to nectar, and attack does good, a
wrong becomes right,
Pain becomes pleasure, the blazing fire cools
down,
One gets love from everybody, the same from
everyone,
He who experiences this is surely blessed with
the Grace of the Lord!*

Perhaps the most mysterious of the stories associated with Tukaram's rather brief life is that of his passing away. Legend has it that Tuka, in the prime of his life, was taken to Vaikuntha (the mystical abode of Lord Vishnu) on the back of the heavenly bird, the *Garud-Vahini*. It should be noted here that most of the saints and sages mentioned above have final resting places or *samadhi*-shrines where their mortal remains are interred. This is the custom with sadhus and saintly personages (as opposed to Hindu householders who generally are cremated rather than buried). There is no such final resting place for Saint Tukaram's remains. Various versions of his mortal end

are extant. One report says he took voluntary *sanjeevani-samadhi*, much like Saint Jnaneshwar, whereas yet others insist that his body disappeared into the heavenly regions on the back of a large eagle (Circa 1649). This account is so popular, that it appears in the south Indian classic *Bhakti Vijaya* (in Tamil) where it states that the Saint Tukaram took along a batch of a dozen or more devotees on the large bird's back with him!

Whatsoever may be the truth³ of the Saint's departure from this planet, what is definite is that the legend of the Saint Tukaram, and the beauty of his heavenly *bhajans*, will certainly live.

Footnotes :

1. As opposed to some other sources, Mrs. Khanolkar's essay gives his birth-year as 1598 and the year of his earthly departure as 1650, giving him a mortal life-span of fifty-two years.
2. In certain biographical sources (e.g. Ajgaonkar, 1948), his second wife is referred to as Jijai, and was reportedly the daughter of a Pune landlord named Appaji Gulve. Tukaram and Jijai had three sons (the last of whom was born posthumously). Tukaram's family tree is detailed by Ajgaonkar(1948).
3. Khanolkar describes Sant Tukaram's last moments in the most dramatic fashion in the following manner : "As an eye witness relates it, on the second day of the dark night of Phalgun, a Thursday in 1650, God came in person to carry Tuka away to *Vaikuntha* (heaven) in His heavenly chariot. Rameshwar Bhat says that Tuka left in a *Vimana* (Flying Chariot). Tuka's songs were transcribed to the very last as he described the giant eagle Garuda with ruffled feathers and piercing eyes, telling him : 'Do not fear! Do not fear! and rang with the praises of the Lord's beautiful form wrapped in yellow garments of light which illumined the whole campus... Tukaram took leave of all present

and called on his wife to join him on his exit from this world, but the bewildered lady asked in anguish where she would be able to fill her water-pots and who would take care of their buffalo! None thought that the following abhanga would be his last: "The Lord stands and waits...I must make haste. I leave, my friends..." Before the astonished devotees, Tukaram was lifted bodily from the banks of the Indrayani river and carried away into space from where he entirely disappeared! Rameshwar Bhat, Tuka's younger brother Kanhoba, and others, remained for three days on the river ghat singing kirtanas and fasting, praying to Tuka-buwa to give them a token of his presence wherever he was... On the third day, Tuka's cymbals and *asana* fell from the skies and the devotees sang in joy as the sound of "Vithala, Vithala, Panduranga", and "Rama-Krishna Hari" rang on for days on end as it goes on even now ear in celebration of the event."

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The Activism of the Gita advocates duty not for the sake of duty but for the sake of the Divine. Bhakti or God-devotion is the central virtue in the Gita. All other virtues are its emanations and vices, aberrations from it. The Super-moralism of the Gita requires the seeker to rise above the Gunas and the Karmas and become a Sthita-prajna-Equanimous Man, which is according to the Gita, the highest ideal realisable by man.

(Gurudev in Bhagavadgita as Philosophy of God Realisation)

DEEPAVALI MESSAGE

-Dada J. P. Vaswani

Every human being has a center of light within him. This light is veiled within many veils. The Deepavali returns, year after year, bearing the great message : Drop the veils and let the light shine.

Of Goethe, the great world-poet of the eighteenth century, it is said that when he lay on his death-bed, surrounded by his friends, he asked one of them to open the window of his room. As the windows were opened, the great poet exclaimed : "Light! More Light!"

The world today is passing through a period of darkness. That is why every day we hear reports of murders and suicides and thefts being committed in broad day light. The world needs light, more light!

Every human being has a center of light within him. This light is veiled within many veils. The Deepavali returns, year after year, bearing the great message : Drop the veils and let the light shine.

The man of light does not live for himself alone. He is not selfish or greedy. He has realized that



Dada J. P. Vaswani

life and all the bounties of life are given him to be shared with those that are in need. He prays the prayer which I call the "Deepavali prayer"

May I be a light to dwellers in the dark!

May I be the strength of the weak, the courage of the timid, and the patience of those who cry and suffer in this world of tragedy and tears!

May I be a friend of the friendless, the forsaken and the forlorn!

May I be to the poor, a treasure untold!

May I give food and drink to those that starve and go thirsty!

May I be a lamp that holds the light to those who have lost their way!

May I be to those who long to cross the *sansar sagar* a boat and a bridge!

The man of light prays this prayer and is careful to see that in deeds of daily living he bears witness to every word of this prayer. For him everyday becomes a Deepavali Day and every night he hears the mariner's song: "Nearer, my Lord, to Thee".

To Badarayana God is the only Reality, who is called Brahman. God is both Impersonal - Nirguna and Personal - Saguna. He is in a way transpersonal. God is ineffable and transcendent. As personal, He is immanent and Sat-Cit-Ananda. Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. God is full of Consciousness or Consciousness itself. He is full of Bliss or Bliss itself. The criteria for the proof of God are three-Reason, Revelation and Intuition or Anubhava of which Intuition occupies a supreme place..... God is immanent in the Universe as its inner Ruler - Antaryamin or as the Spirit that pervades it. He is also regarded as all-inclusive, both good and evil having a place within Him.

(Gurudev in "Vedanta as the Culmination of Indian Thought", P. 77 & p. 89)

SIMPLE PHILOSOPHY FOR YOUNGER GENERATION

GOD IS WITH YOU!

- Sakhee

We Indians are taught to pray God almighty before we start our work to give us success. We all do that way. We meet success as well as failures. Nobody gets only success hence we thank God when we get success. We should bear in mind that God is within us, and is present with us all the time.

Hellow Friends,

How's Life? Quite well I wish. How's work going on? I am sure you give your hundred percent to it. Because careers today are not easy, nor is the fierce competition. Firstly we have to work hard; secondly use our intelligence and accumen in right direction. This will result in individual's progress. We Indians are taught to pray God almighty before we start our work to give us success. We all do that way. We meet success as well as failures. Nobody gets only success hence we thank God when we get success. We should bear in mind that God is within us, and is present with us all the time. He is silent observer to all our acts. He helps those who dare and achieve. He guides us through somebody -may be a *guru* for instance. But we should be fortunate enough to get a *Sadguru*. Therefore what we can generally do is to rely on God for strength, guidance and other help, do our work ourselves. That is our *Dharma*.

I will tell you a story of a young man. He was a good boy. Sincere in his day-to-day work; completing his assignments properly. He was getting good results for his hard work and was happy. Once he did his job to best of his ability, but unfortunately met with failure. Failure disturbed him a lot. He could not concentrate. He could not sleep at his usual timing. Sheer exertion brought sleep to him. In the sleep also the mind worked continuously about his failure. He argued with himself, in spite of best of my efforts, why I am denied success? Finally he put the entire blame on God.

To his surprise, God appeared before him in all his splendour. There was sweet smile on God's face. He was looking at the boy in the same way as mother would look at her child. The boy thought, anyway The God is in front of me, why not ask Him directly? In his anguish, the boy said to God, "Oh, my God! See what you have done. I did my duty, with utmost care. I did not spare any efforts. I always prayed you before I would start the work. I am your faithful *Bhakta*. How could you let me down?"

God remained silent for a moment and then said, "I know you are my staunch *Bhakta* and I certainly care for you. I always follow you to see that you are out of trouble. If you want to see

the proof, look at the sand near your feet. You will find two sets of footmarks, one belonging to you and other of mine.”

The boy searched for the footprints. He could see two sets to a majority of the distance. But at some places, whenever he was in big trouble, he could see only one set.

Finding this, a thought came to his mind and he enquired God, “ What you say is correct Sir, but I find that whenever I was in trouble, you disappeared from the scene and I am finding only one set of footprints. How’s that?”

God smiled at the boy for his innocence. He replied, “My dear boy, those are My footprints and not yours. I had carried you on my back to save you, and that is why you are not finding your footprints. And for your failure, that was your destiny. Everyone has it; even I am not spared whenever I take an *Avatar* as human being. So don’t worry, it is part of life.”

The boy got the answer. His mind calmed down. Next morning he got up in a refreshed mood ready to face the life again.

We should be aware of *Antaratma* or Indwelling God. In philosophy they call it *Aham Brahmasmi* (Or I Am God).

Spiritual Experiences

PUBLICATION OF GEETA RAHASYA

Of Lokmanya Tilak.

-A disciple of Gurudev

Lokmanya Tilak wrote the "Geeta-Rahasya" in the prison of Mandale. When he came back to Pune, he made moves to publish the same and accordingly discussed the matter with his friends.

Tilak had said that Bhagwat Geeta begins with Karma-Yoga and ends with Karma-Yoga. This was objected to by the tradition-versed pundits of Pune. According to them real teaching of Geeta is renunciation as propounded by Adi Shankaracharya and not pravrittimarg through



Lokmanya Tilak



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Karma-Yoga as emphasised by Lokmanya Tilak. Hence they tried to persuade Tilak not to publish Geeta-Rahasya. Tilak was in a fix. Being a politician, he was not willing to antagonise a section of the society, and was thinking how to come out of situation. His friend Dadasaheb Khaparde had a suggestion that they should take the blessings of a saint for the publication. They presented a copy to Balkrishna Maharaj a disciple of Akkalkot Swami Samarth and asked for his blessings. He looked at the copy and said, "When Adi Shankaracharya himself has blessed the work by giving Swapna darshan to Tilak in Mandalay jail, why have you again come to me? I will keep this book in my poojasthan". Since Tilak himself didn't believe in dreams, he had not told the same to anybody and was surprised by the revelation by Balkrishna Maharaj. The way was thus cleared for the publication of Geeta-Rahasya.

"You all know how times are fast changing in India. According to the advent of the new age, we shall have to take account of our own Indian Philosophic Thought, and to see the place which it might occupy in the national life of India. Before we can collate Western thought with Indian thought, we shall utilize the knowledge that has been given to us by the great researches in various departments of philosophic thought in the West so as to support and broadcast the message which Indian philosophic thought gives to us, and through us to the world."

(in Philosophy of Spirit)

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THE BHAGAVADGITA : 'SONG CELESTIAL'

-Dr. Satish K. Kapoor

The scripture does not have dogmatic or sectarian content. It is an inexhaustible source of divine inspiration and a guide to holistic living. Its lucidity, poetic diction, philosophical profundity and ethical values, make it a religious classic of perennial worth.

The *Bhagavadgita*, commonly called the *Bible* of the Hindus, occurs in the *Bhishma-Parvan* of the *Mahabharata* and has eighteen chapters in dialogic form. It is the Song Divine chanted by the all-pervasive Vishnu himself in his incarnation as Lord Krishna to provide spiritual insight and inner strength to Arjuna at the battlefield of Kurukshetra (Haryana). What pours forth from its seven hundred verses is the elixir of spiritual wisdom which leads one from fear to courage, despair to hope and from ignorance to bliss. Along with the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma Sutras*, the *Yogavashishtha*, the *Ramayana* of sage Valmiki, the *Ramacharitamanas* of Goswami Tulsidasa (1496-1622), and the *Bhagavata Mahapurana*, the *Bhagavadgita* has contributed to the spiritual growth of people of India, and imbued them with the higher values of life.

To argue that the *Bhagavadgita* promotes extremism or social disharmony, as was done recently in a court in Siberia's Tomsk city, is a sheer travesty of facts. The scripture does not have dogmatic or sectarian content. It is an inexhaustible source of divine inspiration and a guide to holistic living. Its lucidity, poetic diction, philosophical profundity and ethical values, make it a religious classic of perennial worth. It helps one to transform love into devotion (Bhakti), worldly deeds into divine acts, understanding into enlightenment.

The *Bhagavadgita* embodies the spiritual heritage of India. It reconciles different schools and strands of thought. It has the life-affirming philosophy of the *Vedas*, the metaphysical formulations of the *Upanishads* and the *Aranyakas*, the ontological crux of the *Samkhya*, the logical realism of *Nyaya*, the meditateness of *Yoga* and the devotional disciplines of the *bhakti* tradition.

Metaphysical bipolarities such as monism and dualism, *Purusha* and *Prakriti* - spirit and matter, male and female principles, the Absolute Reality and the concept of personal God, harmonise in the *Bhagavadgita*, the true import being to help the seeker to realise God by any one of the three paths - *Jnana Yoga*, way of knowledge, *Karma Yoga*, way of action and *Bhakti Yoga*, way of devotion, which supplement and compliment one another.

The knower and the known, material and spiritual, intuition, bhakti and shakti, faith and reason, renunciation and work, action and contemplation amicably integrate in the 'Song of the Lord'. According to *Sri Aurobindo* (1872-1950) : *'The thought of the Gita is not pure Monism, nor Mayavada... nor is it qualified Monism... nor is it Sankhya... nor is it Vaishnava Theism. The Gita is not a weapon of dialectical warfare; it is a gate opening on the whole world of spiritual truth and experience and the view it gives us embraces all the provinces of that supreme region. It maps out, but it does not cut up or build walls or hedges to confine our vision'*.

The *Bhagavadgita* is a call to the human soul to wake up from its slumber and purge itself of accretions to be able to realise its immutable and eternal nature. It points to the spiritual dimension of one's being by projecting the individual self as a manifestation of the cosmic self, having affinity with all the objects of existence, and thus gives one the vision universal.

The ideal person of the *Bhagavadgita* is in tune with the cosmic order and is stable in mind (*sthitaprajna*). He adheres to the laws of his nature, remains detached while performing his duty (*svadharma*) and is unaffected by success or failure in his ventures. He raises the Self by the self, transcending the limited adjuncts of his ego. Having disciplined his mind he remains free from

fear, anger, lust, attachment and unwanted desires. He is not overindulgent, and remains cheerful in all circumstances. He takes refuge in the Supreme Lord alone and achieves liberation (*moksha*) while living. He becomes the reservoir of the Divine energy which he employs for the good of society, sometime sacrificing his personal interests.

The *Bhagavadgita* has been translated from Sanskrit into almost all the major languages of the world. From Alberuni's Arabic rendering of its contents in the 11th century to its Persian translations commissioned by emperors Zain-ul' Abidin (1420-70) and Akbar (1556-1605) and its Sufi interpretations by Shaikh 'Abdu'r Rahman Chisti (d. 1683) and Dara Shukoh (1628-58); from Charles Wilkins' first translation of the scripture into English (1785) to those of Demetrios Galanos into Greek (1809), Fredrich von Schlegel into Latin (1823), Wilhelm von Humboldt's into German (1826) and Christian Lassen into French (1846), there have been serious efforts to understand and explore the quintessential of the *Bhagavadgita* in its religious, intellectual, ethical, social and spiritual dimensions. Denominational interpretations of the scripture have been many and varied, each providing a different shade of meaning and focus.

Broadly speaking, the non-dualistic (*advaita*) interpretation of Adi Shankaracharya (788-820), the qualified non-dualistic approach (*vishishthadvaita*),

of Ramanuja (1017-1137) and the dualistic tenor (*dvaita*) of Madhvacharya (1197-1278), have provided the foundation to more than two thousand exegetical works which have further sprouted in the form of *varttikas* (explanatory texts), *Vimarshinis* (critical commentaries) and *Kavyas* (poetical works) in regional languages. Jnaneshvara's (Dnyandeo's) commentary on the *Bhagavadgita* (*Bhavartha Dipika*, popularly called the *Jnaneshvari*) in Marathi (1290), redacted and made authentic by Ekanatha (1548-99) in 9000 *ovi*-stanzas, brought about a spiritual revival in Western India, and continues to be the sacred text of the *Varkari* sect.

Eminent saints, scholars, mystics, yogis, psychologists, social scientists, reformers, politicians and administrators gained fresh perspectives from the Song Celestial and interpreted it accordingly. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) perceived in the *Bhagavadgita*, the philosophy of action; Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950), the philosophy of being; Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), the philosophy of human awakening; Swami Yogananda (1893-1952), the philosophy of synergistic kinship with god, and; Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), the philosophy of truthful living.

Vinoba Bhave (1895-1982) found in the *Bhagavadgita*, the philosophy of ethics; Swami Chidbhavananda (d. 1985), the philosophy of spiritual redemption; Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1904-2008), the philosophy of spiritual transcendence;

Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada (1896-1977), the philosophy of supreme love; Swami Prabhavananda (1893-1976) and Christopher Isherwood (1904-1986), the Triune philosophy of action (*karma*), knowledge (*jnana*) and devotion (*bhakti*); Swami Ramasukhdas (1903-2005), the philosophy of righteousness; Osho (1931-1990), the philosophy of integral living; Sri Sri Ravi Shankara (b.1956), the philosophy of life management, and so on. American Transcendentalists like Ralph W. Emerson, Henry David Threau and Walt Whitman were greatly influenced by the philosophy of the *Bhagavadagita*.

The *Bhagavadagita* continues to influence the course of human thought across the globe. Its age-old wisdom is being increasingly used for self discovery, self empowerment, and self management. It has been well said in the popular *Gita Dhyanam* (verse 4):

*sarvopanishado gavo dogdha gopala nandanah
partho vatsah sudhir bhokta dugdhani
gitamritam.*

All the Upanishads are the cows, the milker is Krishna, the cowherd boy, Partha (Arjuna) is the calf, men of purified intellect are the drinkers, the milk is the supreme nectar of the Gita.'

-Dr. Satish K. Kapoor,

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Solapur (Maharashtra).*

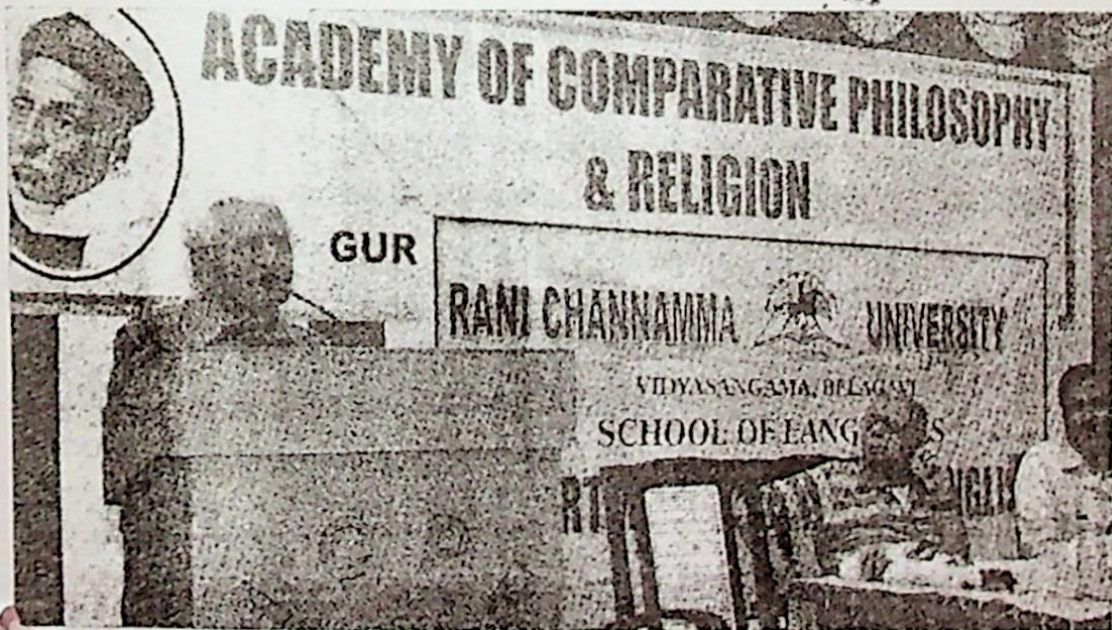


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Upto 30-12-2012



Dr. Basavraj Malashetti Speaking

Prof. Dr. R. D. Ranade Memorial Lecture Series was arranged at A.C.P.R. Auditorium from 30th November to 2nd December 2012. His Holiness Chandrasekhar Shivacharya Mahaswamiji, of Sri Guru Shanteshwar Mahasansthan, Hiremath, Hukkeri inaugurated the series. Dr. Basavraj Malashetti, Director, *Vachan Adhyayan Kendra*, Belgaum gave lectures daily from 6-00 to 7-30



Prof. S. Ramaswami, Bangalore, giving lecture

p.m. on the topic "*Janapaddalli Anubhaav*".

Dr. M. V. Jali, CEO, KLE's Dr. Prabhakar Kore Hospital & Medical Research Centre, made concluding remarks. It was a well attended function.

We thank the following Donors :

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Belgaum
31-12-2012

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FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME

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