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**Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion,  
Belgaum**

*( Founder : Sri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade )*

SILVER JUBILEE  
**SOUVENIR**

**Volume II**



आत्मा चाऽरे द्रष्टव्य ।  
**( Realise The Self )**

Editors

K. D. Sangoram  
M. S. Deshpande

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SILVER JUBILEE  
SOUVENIR

Volume II

Shri Gurudeva's Philosophy  
of  
God-realisation.

Editors

K. D. Sangoram

M. S. Deshpande

Academy of  
Comparative Philosophy & Religion  
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# PREFACE

This is the Second Volume of the Souvenir, being published in connection with the Silver Jubilee of our Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, founded by the great modern saint and philosopher Sri Gurudev Ranade in the year 1952. The first volume of the Souvenir consists of an account of the "Pillars of Sri Gurudeva's *sampradaya* and Heart-Homages to Sri Gurudev." The present volume concerns itself with the "Philosophy of God-realisation" advocated by Sri Gurudev Ranade. It contains some articles of Sri Gurudev Ranade as well as articles written by eminent philosophers, distinguished scholars and dedicated Sadhakas, dealing with important topics concerning Sri Gurudeva's philosophy of God-realisation, which is designated as Rational Mysticism.

## **Philosophy and God-realisation :**

Philosophy is a quest for the ultimate reality, called variously as Atman, Self, or God; It is as well a search for the highest value and meaning of life. Philosophy aims at an intellectual solution of the problem of God; whereas mysticism aims at a direct and practical approach to God. Philosophy concerns itself with mere determination of the nature of God; whereas mysticism looks for intuitive realisation of God; Philosophy tries only to formulate metaphysical theories regarding the conceptual nature of God; whereas mysticism devotes itself to the actual enjoyment of the bliss of God. Hence, according to Gurudev Ranade, "to come to grips with the attainment of God from the practical point of view is a far greater achievement than to determine the nature of God from the philosophical point of view, which would plunge us into a bog of intellectual warfare. The fundamental problem of mysticism is "how Reality can be actually reached."

Now, though the direct and immediate experience of Reality is more valuable than mere discursive knowledge about it, we



cannot at any rate belittle the value, utility and importance of philosophy, as it is based on strictly logical reasoning. It is true that mere logic-chopping will not lead us to a direct and personal encounter with God. But it is equally true that a thorough knowledge of philosophy will certainly serve as a barricade to mystical life by putting up a ring-fence all around, so as to prevent inroads of stray cattle like superstition, occultism, hallucinations and the like. But the utility of philosophy need not be limited to this type of work only. Knowledge of philosophy must lead us onwards to spiritual life and further, as a matter of course, confirm our faith in that kind of life. According to Sri Gurudev Ranade, "The function of philosophy is for consolidation and consummation of spiritual experience and it is only the acquisition of spiritual experience, which makes a man worthy of being the handiwork of God."

### **Philosophy of God-realisation :**

The philosophy of God-realisation teaches us that God-realisation is the highest value in life and that alone will make life sublime, divine and blissful. Its aim is to offer a philosophical justification for the life of mystical realisation of God. It claims that mysticism is a basically scientific doctrine, advocating a thoroughly rational approach to the problem of God-realisation. God-realisation is a process and not an event. In the course of this process, philosophising reason will no doubt be of immense use and assistance to aspirants with a rational bent of mind in getting themselves convinced regarding the supreme value of God-realisation and the prescribed means for its attainment. Even for the emotionally minded persons it would be of great help for keeping proper and necessary control over their emotions. But reason however, by itself is not so potent as to enable an aspirant to have a direct and face to face experience of God. Reason has its own limitations. Reality is supra-rational and is not accessible to conceptual understanding. Yet, reason can point to a way beyond itself. God-experience, being supersensuous in nature, involves the use and operation of the supreme faculty in man called "intuition." Intuition is a faculty in man which all possess but few use, "This faculty" according to Gurudev Ranade, "is

aroused in man by proper spiritual initiation and practice". It goes beyond reason and puts the aspirant in possession of things unknown to reason. "The faculty by means of which one can enter into spiritual life is intuition". It has got a physiological support, according to Gurudev Ranade, in what purports to be 'central initiation.' The intuitive experience is generated inside us in our intuitional process and not outside us as in the process of ordinary knowledge of external objects. It is in this way that philosophy of God-realisation gives to reason what is due to reason and to intuition what is due to intuition.

God and Self or Atman are not merely objects of faith; they are objects which can be mystically realised. From times immemorial saints, irrespective of caste, creed or country solemnly affirm that they did have the mystical experience of God: Some of them have also recorded their spiritual experiences and have also prescribed a specific spiritual *sadhana* and a definite way of life for the attainment of such experiences. As an initial qualification, certain amount of moral preparation is absolutely necessary. In moral preparation, *Bhakti* or devotion is the highest virtue which ought to get culminated in *Bhāva* (भाव) which will be referred to later on. Then there is the necessity of initiation by a Spiritual Teacher, who has realised his identity with Self or Atman. The initiation includes the imparting of the Name of God by the Spiritual Teacher to the aspirant and the Spiritual *Sadhana* consists of the mystical meditation on the Name of God imparted by the Spiritual Teacher: The Name of God is a symbol of God, which carries with it spiritual power and meditation on that Name is the process of identification with God. This meditation is to be continued from hour to hour and from day to day with concentrated effort till the end of life. But the fundamental requirement is *Bhāva* (भाव)—an earnest, one pointed devotion to God—an unfaltering, unbending and unending love of God. On the strength of this equipment the aspirant has to continue his journey persistently, getting occasionally glimpses of God in the form of spiritual experiences of light, sound, colour, flavour and others. And it is only through the grace of God that his persistent efforts are ultimately

rewarded with the beatific vision of Atman or God. In this way reason, intuition, human effort and God's grace have their respective places in the scheme of God-realisation. Further, to support all this process, there is the honest, and unchallengeable evidence of a galaxy of saints who have dedicated their lives to the contemplation of God and service of humanity. In view of all these considerations, this philosophy of God-realisation is aptly designated as "Rational Mysticism." In this context the attention of the thinkers in the realm of philosophy is sought to the following observations of Gurudev Ranade, which appear in his Preface to his book-Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, published in the year 1926. "It would be a problem for the philosophy of the Immediate Future to place mysticism on a truly philosophical basis. Rational mysticism, which has been hitherto regarded as a contradiction in terms, must now be a truism."

#### **God-experience-its validity :**

Now, as the goal of human life is not mere intellectual recognition of Reality but an intuitive experience of God, the question that naturally arises is "how to know that this particular experience is valid". All philosophers generally agree that there must be a criterion for recognising the validity of such knowledge or experience. According to Gurudev Ranade, "The validity of mystical experience must be judged by a criterion; and it would be the business of a study of contemporary philosophy to afford such a criterion. Of course, this criterion may change from philosopher to philosopher; but unless we are in sure possession of a criterion, we shall be without a compass and a rudder on the mystic sea."

The question of criterion for valid knowledge has been tackled both by the Indian philosophers as well as the philosophers in the Western countries. Amongst Indian philosophers, the *Naiyayikas* recognise four such criteria, namely, *Pratyaksha*, *Anumana*, *Upamana* and *Shabda*. Kumarila adds two more to this list, namely, *Arthāpatti* and *Anupalabdhi*. Gurudev Ranade takes a survey of the criticisms levelled against every one of these *Pramānas* or criteria, by the different schools of Indian



philosophy and agrees with the view that *Pratyaksha*, not in its ordinary sense, but *Pratyaksha* in the sense of "*Aparokshanubhuti*" or "*Anubhava*," i. e. intuitive experience attained in the state of "*Samrādhana*," the worshipful contemplation of God, is the only true criterion of the valid knowledge of Reality. As in this state there is a direct approach to Reality, there is, therefore, no necessity of an intermediate criterion at all. Thus, "*Anubhava*" is the only true criterion.

Amongst modern philosophers in the West, there are three schools of thought, each suggesting a different criteria of its own. The Realists emphasise, 'correspondence,' the Pragmatists desire 'satisfaction', and the Idealists require 'coherence'. Now, it is to be noted that a valid criterion must be such that, without it truth would not be known and with it truth would not be missed. In view of this test, all the three criteria are found deficient in one way or the other. Yet, every one of these criteria suggests an element which a true criterion must necessarily possess.

According to Gurudev Ranade, in mystical experience there is also an element of 'correspondence' between the internal perception and the external perception; and as an illustration in point he refers to a statement made by Kabir, wherein he says "भीतर रहा सो बाहिर देखै", which means that a Sadguru is able to see outside exactly what he sees inside. As regards 'satisfaction' it is specifically pointed out that the mystical experience confers upon the mystic beatification, which carries complete satisfaction in him, as a result of the beatific vision of God. Thus, the Pragmatist's criterion also has got a place in mystical experience; As regards 'coherence', it is pointed out that "epistemologically, absolute coherence is not knowable, as the knower will remain outside the coherent system; But if coherence rises to the level of transparent coherence, where the knower, knowledge and the known become one, then it is nothing else than "*Anubhava*". Thus, "*Anubhava*" remains the only criterion, which combines in itself elements of correspondence, utility or satisfaction and coherence, all in their purified form."

Again, the universality of mystical experience found among the mystics of the East and the West confers upon such

experience objectivity and necessity; and according to Gurudev Ranade, " the objectivity and necessity conferred by mystical experience is of a higher order than that of any other kind of human experience, just because it is " deiform ". It is this element of divinity in it that makes it so compelling and valid. "

### **Gurudev Ranade—a mystic philosopher :**

In Gurudev Ranade there is a unique combination of a full-fledged mystic and a profound philosopher. He was led by circumstances, ordained by the Divine, to make a living acquaintance with mysticism before he came to have an academic acquaintance of European and Indian philosophy. His philosophical thoughts are not of the nature of intellectual speculation. Direct experience was his sole dependable guide. What he experienced, what he felt, what he realised, that alone constituted his philosophy. The philosophical thoughts, which he put forth, were based upon the eternal truths of his own Atmanic experience. Here in the sensuous state one sees but dimly; yonder, in the ecstatic state the vision is clear. Hence, his thoughts sanctified by the touch of his spiritual experience, are of great value and utility and as such, they possess greater validity than the thoughts based on sheer ordinary human experience. All his philosophical theories naturally converge towards the realisation of the supreme goal of human life, namely, God-realisation. " A mystic may be a philosopher but is not necessarily so. His mystic experience is sufficient for his own elevation into Divinity; but if he philosophises he can raise the thinking humanity into Divine kingdom of Ends."

### **A God-Centred Philosophy :**

Gurudev Ranade's philosophy is based on the fundamental bedrock of spiritual experience. According to Gurudev Ranade God-realisation is the be-all and end-all of all existence and everything except the pursuit of God is vanity. With God-realisation at the centre, all his thoughts in every branch of philosophy—be it metaphysics, epistemology or ethics—converge, towards the attainment of the central object, namely, God. Here we wish to point out only a few of the salient features of his philosophical thoughts, just to indicate how his thoughts in

every branch of philosophy were dominated by the central theme of God-realisation.

### **Metaphysics :**

In metaphysics Gurudev Ranade maintains that, "the veracity and virility of any metaphysical theory is to be gauged by its power of making life divine and therefore worthwhile living." The ultimate Reality, according to him, is spiritual in nature; and Atman or God is the only ultimate substance beyond time, space and causality. Atman is neither personal nor impersonal but trans-personal, meaning thereby that personality has no place in the philosophy of God-realisation. Again, the ultimate Reality is identified with self-consciousness. Thus, self-consciousness itself constitutes the ultimate category of existence. But it is the Divine self-consciousness and not human self-consciousness, that constitutes the foundation and peak of all Thought and Existence. Further, it is pointed out that, "the mystical view of Reality alone will enable us to reconcile all intellectual dogmas that have infested the philosophies of the world". In the same way, it is only in mystic experience that each doctrine-dualism, quasi-dualism and monism-can have its own appointed place and level in the ladder of spiritual experience.

### **Epistemology :**

From the epistemological point of view, Atman or Self is the epistemological nucleus of all existence. Introspection is a psychological process, corresponding to self-consciousness as a metaphysical reality. Self-consciousness is possible only through the process of introspection. Here, a question arises as to how it is possible for the Self, who is the eternal knower, to know himself. The answer will be, that the empirical conditions of knowledge are inapplicable to the Self. The Self is endowed with the supreme power of dichotomising himself, i. e., the Self can divide himself into the knower and the known. In this act of pure self-contemplation the Self is most mysteriously both the subject and the object.

### **Ethics :**

As regards ethical thoughts of Gurudev Ranade, we are told that "just as morality to be ratiocinative must be firmly linked



to the intellect, similarly, for its consummation it must end in the mystical attitude, which alone is the goal and end of the life of man". Likewise, Atman or Self ought to be the highest object of desire; and when this desire is fulfilled through the beatific vision of the Atman, then for him there are no desires left to be fulfilled. Thus he may be considered to have realised the ideal of desirelessness. Similarly, ethical ideals of निस्त्रैगुण्य-  
nistraigunya (Transcendence of Gunas), नैष्कर्म्य-  
naishkarmya (actionlessness) and स्थितप्रज्ञ-sthitaprajna (man in eqnanimous state of mind) are all centred in the ideal of God-realisation.

### **God-realisation-Ethical summum Bonum**

Now, we are further told in the words of छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् (Chhandogya Upanishad) that "real happiness is the happiness that one enjoys in the vision of the Infinite and that every other kind of happiness is only so called and of really no value whatsoever, as contrasted with it." The bliss of Self-realisation is entirely of its own kind, "*Sui generis*." Hedonism is the ethical ideal of one School of Ethics. Beatification or the highest bliss is the highest and purest form of hedonism, which may be described as spiritual hedonism. Thus, the ethical summum Bonum consists in the mystical realisation of the triune unity of the Infinite, the I and the Ātman and the consequent enjoyment of the bliss of the Ātman.

### **Doctrine of Beatificism.**

Doctrine of Beatificism is a distinctive contribution of Gurudev Ranade to the ethico-metaphysical thought in the realm of philosophy. Beatification is an aspect or a necessary effect of God-realisation. The philosophy of beatification involves a sort of catalepsia, which signifies holding together of mystical experiences, one such experience being supported also by other kinds of mystical experiences. It is this sort of binding together and integration of supersensuous experiences that constitutes absolute beatification; and it is this beatification that constitutes the ultimate end, which is aimed at by all the mystics of the world. Thus, the bliss of God-experience itself is identified with Reality. In this context Gurudev Ranade

observes : " The identification of happiness with Reality, the axiological conception of bliss and the metaphysical conception of Brahman are the same. The enjoyment of ecstatic bliss inside ourselves is the same thing as becoming one with Brahman. If philosophers have prided themselves upon making Self-consciousness the pivot upon which all existence turns, why not make beatification itself the pivot and fulcrum of Reality ? If we have idealism in one, we have beatification in the other."

### **God - realisation - Aesthetic Summum Bonum :**

After the Ethical Summum Bonum, we shall now turn to the aesthetic Summum Bonum. According to Gurudev Ranade "The philosophy of the Bhagavadgita synthesises the moral, the sublime and the divine in a crowning Philosophy of Spirit. Here we will now consider about the conception of the sublime and then pass on to the divine later on.

Gurudev Ranade has emphasised the sublime mainly from the standpoint of the mystical experience of God: "Kant had seen the relation between the Sublime and the Divine" says Gurudev Ranade, "only as through a glass darkly, and hence he was not able to portray the conception of the sublime in its full lineaments." He also says that our intuition rises on the top of Pure Reason, Practical Reason and Judgment. So also, according to Dr. Otto his Idea of the Holy rises above the conception of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. It is a category '*sui generis*'. The Holy is the category of God. It is what he calls '*Mysterium Tremendum*'. In this connection Gurudev Ranade observes that Kant's idea of the Sublime, Otto's idea of the Holy and our own idea of Intuition stand on the same level".

Gurudev Ranade has illustrated the sublime from the mystical experiences of Kabir, Bhavataarak and Jnanesvar and has mentioned the cosmic vision as described in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavadgita "These experiences," he says, "will be enough to let us know the real nature of the sublime in mystical experience, the characteristics of the Holy and the intuitional method by which they have to be apprehended. We

quote below a passage from Jnaneshvar as it also contains a very important doctrine in Gurudeva's philosophy, namely, the doctrine of the " Vision of the Self by the Self ", the acme of mystical experiences, whereby the mystic realises his identity with the Divine :

" Arjuna saw himself along with God in God and God saw Himself along with Arjuna, and Sanjaya saw both of them together ... When one mirror is placed in front of another, which shall we say reflects which ? The difference between the original and the image vanishes and each will give an infinite number of reflections of the other. Supposing another Sun arose before the Sun, who is the illuminator and who is the illumined ? ..... So Krishna and Arjuna reached a state of unison: I myself, said Sanjaya, found my at-one-ment with them "

( Jnaneshvari XVIII 1592-1607 )

And again, " The most important point ", says Gurudev Ranade, " is the nature of the Infinitude that is portrayed in the manifestations of the sublime. The experience of the sublime seems to be almost transcendent and baffling even for the imagination to reach. Anaximander was not wrong when he regarded the Apeiron as his most fundamental category. In other works of mine I have already stressed this aspect of the element of Divinity in all cases of Infinitude as, for example, in the बेहद् ( Behadda ) of Kabir and निर्वैलु ( Nirvailu ) of Kannad saints. All these are enough to show that Gurudev Ranade identifies the sublime in spiritual experience with the Divine, in the way, as, he has identified the ethical Summum Bonum with the Divine;

#### **God-realisation-The spiritual Summum Bonum :**

We have already referred to Gurudev Ranade's ideas regarding the ethical Summum Bonum and the Aesthetic Summum Bonum. Now, it will be useful and instructive to know his thoughts concerning the spiritual Summum Bonum. The conception of spiritual Summum Bonum has been considered by him from three stand-points, namely (1) liberation,

(2) beatification and (3) Infinitude. As regards liberation there are two views. one is जीवन्मुक्ति ( liberation while living ) and the other is विदेहमुक्ति ( liberation when the saint has left the body ).

Now, what is this जीवन्मुक्ति ? It is that, when in the course of ecstatic contemplation the saint sees the mystical Form of God and experiences his union with the Divine. " That itself constitutes जीवन्मुक्ति. As a result of this God-vision, all his emotions and passions get dissolved in God and then there is no desire left in him to be fulfilled. Thus, there remains no possibility of the liberated saint entering upon the round of births and deaths again.

But even though, the state of desirelessness is only a negative conception, there is, however, that positive content of beatification behind it. Thus, the highest stage being one of intelligence and bliss ( चित् and आनंद ) the mystic definitely knows that he has undoubtedly realised the solution of the world-riddle. He becomes quite confident that he has reached the highest state of beatification and consequently would never be born again.

This state of desirelessness does not in any way signify a inactivity in the saint. There is in him that presence of blissful activity all along through out the process of his sport-like merger into the vast Infinite—the Incomprehensible Beyond. But it must be remembered that it may not be given to man to reach the very highest limit all at once; and yet, a man can always keep going nearer and nearer to the peak. " It would be perfectly legitimate for us " observes Gurudev Ranade, " to suppose that when the saint passes away his spirit merges with the Absolute Spirit. This would be a perfectly scientific conception. There might be limitations of body and mind so long as the saint subsists upon earth and hence, we can never fully identify the saint with God ". This is what Gurudev Ranade has described as " *Asymptotic Approximation* " to God. This doctrine of *Asymptotic Approximation* is a special feature of Gurudev Ranade's philosophy and it also runs through other



branches of his philosophy. However, when the saint has left off his body, there is nothing to prevent his spirit from merging into the Highest Spirit. From this point of view विदेह मुक्ति might be regarded as even a higher conception than जीवन्मुक्ति.”

### **God-realisation - The Supreme unifying principle binding all humanity :**

According to Gurudev Ranade, the philosopher's work is not done, when he has realised the peace of mind within himself. His supreme business is to bring about peace and harmony in the society, the state and the world at large. Likewise, it becomes the holy mission of the realised soul to point the way to the erring humanity and spread the gospel of God-realisation, whenever and wherever possible. There is an inexpressible joy in the partaking of bliss, not merely for oneself but in the company of those who have been recipients of a similar bliss. The supreme value of God-realisation for oneself is to create conditions for the realisation of God in and for others. To instil and defuse the influx of God in the society is the highest social work, which the saints spontaneously do. They lead humanity to a position of faith, moral purity and bliss. Their endeavour is to work for the “Spiritual unity of mankind” and consequent peace and goodwill upon earth, because such unity alone will be of an abiding and permanent nature. Such a fundamentally unifying principle cannot be found anywhere else except in the spiritual nature of man. God-realisation is the supreme unifying principle binding all humanity together. There is an element of universality in the spiritual experiences of the mystics, though they belong to different races, nations or religions. The humanity, at present is passing through one of the most critical periods of its existence; and an appeal to the spiritual nature of man is the greatest need of the day. In this connection, we wish to draw the attention of all the thinking men in the world to the message sent by Gurudev Ranade to the Philosophical Association of the Fergusson College in Poona, on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee Celebrations in the year 1941, and especially to the concluding portion of the message, which has got a significant value and importance even today. We



can do no better than to repeat it here in his own words. " The world is torn with dire conflicts today; There is no hope for humanity except on the basis of spiritual experience, whose power, when writ large upon the world, can assuage ascerbated feelings, reconcile warring interests and make humanity a true mirror of peace, the joy and the glory which is in God.

**Conclusion :**

Now, to conclude, we can do no better than to quote the short yet highly illuminating passages from Gurudev Ranade's works, summerising his doctrine that, all aspects of Summum Bonum or values merge in the philosophy of God-realisation or beatification. He concludes his book on Bhagavadgita with the following observations.

" One need now no longer ask ' what is the relation between the moral and the sublime ? Is the moral more divine than the sublime or the sublime more divine than the moral ?' It is enough for us to know that the Moral, the Sublime and the Divine, all merge in one consummate Philosophy of Spirit like that of the Bhagvadgita. "

Again, in his book on the Pathway to God in Kannad Literature Gurudev Ranade remarks.

" Beatification has got a philosophy of its own. I have a long cherished idea that I might be able to write a book on the philosophy of beatification. Beatification might be looked at from six points of view : from the metaphysical and epistemological, from the psychological and mystical and from the ethical and axiological. Whatever the point of view, it is beatification that constitutes the ultimate end and it is this that has been aimed at by all the mystics of the world. "

— K. D. Sangoram.



# Synthesis of Philosophy & Religion

**R. D. Ranade**

It can hardly be denied that the problem of supreme importance to mankind is the problem of the existence of God, and his relation to Man and Nature. Philosophy and Religion both concern themselves with the solution of this problem, but while Philosophy engages itself in the intellectual side of this solution, Religion concerns itself with the practical side. It may thus be seen that Philosophy and Religion, so far from contradicting each other, only support and supplement each other. The problem that they undertake to solve is identical, but the methods of approach are different. We may even say that Philosophy and Religion are related to each other as Form and Matter. While Philosophy supplies us with the logical framework for the solution of the supreme problem, Religion supplies us with the inset to be enclosed inside this framework. Philosophy without the content of Religion would be empty. Religion without the guidance of Philosophy would be shapeless and amorphous. It would thus be necessary to combine the dictates of Philosophy and Religion in the interest of the highest solution of the problem.

We must make clear, however, the meaning of Religion, for no term is liable to be more misunderstood. By Religion we mean the direct, first-hand relationship of Man and God and not any unsystematised and uncriticised methods of belief and practice. Thus we must distinguish Religion from its various "forms." If there is a uniqueness about the relationship of Man and God, such uniqueness must subsist wherever Man exists. Hence there is no meaning in saying that this uniqueness is exhibited in any one form of religion more than in any other. "Religion" thus stands at the top of all "religions." We may even say that it is immanent in its various forms. Religion is for all humanity; its manifestations are for different races and climes. Religion is a matter of eternity; its forms have only an existence

in time. Religion concerns itself with the essential; it forms with the accidental. Religion is the embodiment of the universal; its forms are individual manifestations of it. The relation of the One and the Many is nowhere better exhibited than in the relation of Religion and its various forms.

We have said that Religion, to deserve its high function, must be criticised and systematised religion. Herein comes in the aid which Philosophy can give to it. Religion has to steer itself clear of the Scylla and the Charybdis that surround it on both sides. For, on the one hand, there is the danger of Superstition, which is an unworthy view of God; on the other, there is Scepticism, which is a denial of God. True Religion has to steer itself clear of both these dangers, and it is only the helm of Philosophy which can steer it straight to a safe and happy heaven.

It would thus seem that a Philosophy of Religion would be the supremely engrossing object of our study. It would deal not with the merely logical frameworks of philosophy, nor with the details of ritual and practice as in religion. It must give a philosophical foundation to the human search after the Ultimate. It would consider the points of theology in the various forms of religion which might be of philosophical import, as much as it would discern in nature the foot-prints of God with the help of reason. Natural religion has been sundered too much in our day from a theological study of the different faiths. A true Philosophy of Religion would not find any antagonism between these studies, but try to fit in the empirical data afforded to it by the various forms of religion with a retiocinative and synoptic view of the Whole.

Such an attempt is almost the first of its kind in India. Our Universities have lent some support to the study of Philosophy in general; but not a single University has made any provision for a study of the different faiths, far less for a study of Philosophy of Religion which may be extracted out of this study, and which may at the same time be made compatible with a philosophic view of Reality. The attempt which the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda made a few years ago in this direction by founding an Institute for the study of Religions is in sore need of generalisa-

tion. We must combine a philosophic view of reality with an empirical study of faiths, so as to be able to find a reasoned justification for our religious aspirations and attainments.

The problem of finding the universal in the midst of particulars, the unchanging in the midst of change, has attracted the attention of every man of vision, whether he be Philosopher or Prince. Plato and Sankaracharya among Philosophers, Asoka and Akbar among Princes are illustrations of the way in which this universal vision has been sought. Plato is known for nothing so much as for his synoptic vision of the universal among the particulars. Sankaracharya spent a lifetime in seeking to know that by knowing which everything else comes to be known. Asoka, in one of his Rock Edicts, forbade the decrying of other peoples' faiths for in that way he said one was doing disservice to one's own faith, - and he taught the virtue of Concourse. Akbar sought after the universal vision by summoning a Council of Religion, for perchance in that way, he thought that "that lock whose key had been lost might be opened." There is a far cry from the days of Plato and Sankaracharya, or of Akbar and Asoka to the present day. Knowledge has taken immense strides with the growth of time. Scientific inventions have enormously enriched the patrimony of man. The old order has changed, and a new one has taken its place. Nevertheless, the goal of human life as well as the means for its attainment have remained the same. Unquestionably, the search after God remains the highest problem even to-day, and a philosophical justification of our spiritual life is as necessary to-day as it was hundreds of years ago.



# Philosophy of Spirit

R. D. Ranade

' Your Excellency, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Rajasaheb of Aundh, Sir Radhakrishnan, Ladies and Gentlemen, - The honour which has been bestowed upon me by the working committee of the Philosophical Congress is too much for me. I am a man humbly working in my own way. I am indeed very much indebted to the organisers of the Philosophical Congress for inviting me to preside at this XIIIth session of the Indian Philosophical Congress. The honour goes round, and I am a participant in that round for this year. It is only in that capacity that I stand before you to-day.

' 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 the 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.'

' It is only too true, as Sir Hari Singh Gour has just now told us, that philosophy is beset with difficulties, subtleties, obscurantisms, and so on. I do not deny that these things exist. But I beg to submit that the kernel of philosophy is not the difficulties or the obscurantisms, but a metaphysical and moral pith which constitutes the essence of all philosophy whatsoever.'

' I will, at the commencement, take a general survey of the recent discoveries in modern Physics, Biology, Neurology, and so forth and explain how they all tend to prove that Spirit is the

only reality, and how Western thought can be brought into harmony with the conclusions of the great Indian sages and philosophers. '

' I will first take up the contribution which has been made by Sir James Jeans to the development of modern Physics, because that will help very much an interpretation of philosophy in terms of spiritualistic idealism. I would particularly draw your attention to the presidential address to the British Association for the advancement of Science which he delivered in 1934, and I hope that as President of the Indian Science Congress to be held in Calcutta very shortly, he will give further support to the doctrines he enunciated in his earlier address. When Sir James Jeans addressed the British Association, he said that space and time were merely mental constructs, and he postulated a theory of these in terms of seven dimensions, as he said that two independently moving electrons required six dimensions of space, and one of time. Sir James then mentioned two parables, the particle-parable and the wave-parable, as the governing principles of all physical thought hitherto. Photons, protons, positrons, neutrons, gravitons- all these come under the first heading. If Sir James Jeans may be regarded as sympathetic to either of these theories, he may be supposed to sympathise with the second, namely the wave-parable, even though he thinks that that itself does not give us a final explanation of reality. Nature, he says, is thus nothing more than waves of our knowledge, or waves of imperfections of our knowledge. All this is in consonance with the spirit of philosophical idealism, which he says, governs modern physical theories. The next question that he asks is, supposing Nature is only one's own knowledge, how is it that all of us perceive the same Sun, Moon and Stars? And the answer that Sir James Jeans gives is, that this is so because there is one continuous stream of life which runs through the whole of Nature, and which permeates us all. This line of thought, he says, is in harmony with the spiritual idealism preached by philosophers from Plato to Berkeley. All this is good enough and there is no very distant step from this theory of Idealism to a theory of Spirit which is immanent in the whole universe;

' Coming to Biology, we find the researches of Driesch most interesting from the philosophical point of view. Roux had

disbelieved in the autonomy of life on the basis of his experiment consisting in the destruction of one of the two cleavage-cells of a frog's egg immediately after the first cleavage had been completed, because, he said, in such cases the remaining cell develops only the left or the right side of the embryo. Driesch approaches the problem by a different method, based on his experiments on the sea-urchin's egg, where the remaining cleavage-cell develops not half of the embryo of half the size. Driesch applies the method also at the four-cell stage, as well as to the blastula, which is hollow sphere built up of about a thousand cells. He also applies the method in the case of the Ascidian *Clavellina*, whose branchial apparatus is the very type of an equipotential system. From his experience, Driesch concludes that life is an autonomous principle, which he calls the "entelchy". Disarrange a part of a sea-urchin's egg, and it will right itself. Injure a part, and the injury will be made good. Take only a fragment, and it will develop a complete embryo. All this points, he says, to the existence of the "entelechy," which according to him, has no chemical basis, nor any location in space. It governs all vital processes such as assimilation, circulation, reproduction, and so forth. Further, it cannot be divided or cut into pieces. Driesch suggests that in the case of higher animals, and especially in man, it may be called a "psychoid." This principle, however, if we may be allowed to coin a new word for it, may be called a "spiritoid", or a "spiriton," corresponding to the "Bindule" used by Jnanesvara and other mystics.

' I want now to call your attention to certain contemporary researches in the field of Neurology, and particularly, to the researches of Mrs. Head on the function of the "Thalamus", which has been proved to be the seat of emotions. By the application of three methods of (1) the study of lesions, (2) the study of pathological cases and (3) the extirpation method practised especially on higher animals, we arrive, says Head, at the conclusion that the Thalamus is the seat of the emotions. It has been for a long time admitted that the cortex is the seat of intellection. Now, cut below the cortex, and there is exaggerated emotion, e.g., excessive weeping, excessive hilarity, excessive sexuality, and so on. Again cut below the Thalamus, and we find that there is mere automatism. Thus, says Mr. Head, the

Thalamus may be regarded as the seat of emotions. The significance of the discovery of the function of the Thalamus for philosophy is that we clearly see how the intellect is meant to "control" the emotions, following the idea of the higher over the lower in Sherrington and Hughlings-Jackson. But, at the same time, emotions are more internal; they are "antarata," that is to say, nearer reality. Thus neurological discoveries bring to light the problems concerning the conflict and co-operation, the inhibition and summation—to use Sherrington's phraseology of intellect and emotion, or of Jnana and Bhakti. The ideal would be a perfect harmony and co-operation between intellect and emotion.

' We now come to a discussion of the significance of the analysis of moral and religious consciousness by Bergson in his recent work - "The Two Sources of Morality and Religion". According to Bergson, intellect and intuition are two sources of moral and religious consciousness and, action is superior to contemplation. A contemplative, he says, is an arrest of Nature: Bergson's dimorphism, however, is ultimately unacceptable, because there are not two sources of morality and religion, but only one, viz: intuition, as may be seen most clearly by reference to his earlier works; and the exclusive stress laid on action ignores the temperamental differences among mystics. Bergson's elan again, is a biological principle, and not a spiritual principle. Ultimately, however, in the analysis of religious consciousness, the Christian in Bergson asserts himself, and he says that true mystical experience is to be found not in Plato or Plotinus, in the Buddha or the Hindu sages, but in Paul and Augustine. Buddhism, he says, following the usual traditional interpretation, reels on the edge of Nothingness.

' Among the existing historical religions, Buddhism is often supposed to be advocating the view that Nothingness is the only reality. I have continuously thought through the last quarter of a century, though I was not able hitherto to substantiate it by a detailed study of the Sources, that a great religion like Buddhism cannot be based upon the foundation of No-spirit. This line of thought has found remarkable corroboration in the contributions which Mrs. Rhys Davids has lately made to the interpretation



of Buddhism during the last 8 or 10 years, entirely contradicting her original views about Buddhism, a result which has been highly approved of by such critical scholars as Prof. Keith. Buddhism has thus to be interpreted anew on the lines of Mrs. Rhys Davids, who says that the negative side was due to the development of Canonical Buddhism, which was separated from the original doctrines of the Buddha by a period of three long centuries. The question which confronts us in connection with the Buddha is whether his spiritual illumination consists only in ( 1 ) an uncommon insight of moral comprehension, or ( 2 ) a discovery of the law of causality, or ( 3 ) an actual mystical experience. If we just cast a glance at the Buddha's soliloquy immediately after his spiritual illumination, we shall see that he refers to the Soul, the Builder of the body, whom he has found out, but whose house he has entirely demolished. This passage which occurs in the Dhammapada is really in Majjhima, which is a fairly old collection, and may give us the words of the Buddha himself. 'Hahakaraka ditthosi..... sabba te phasuka bhagga might really be the spiritual experience of the Buddha in the very manner in which Trisanku in the Upanishads tell us what he felt when he had reached a mystical apprehension of reality. Then again in the Alagaddupama-sutta, which is a very old record, we are told that in reply to a critic who had charged the Buddha as having been mistaken in denying the existence of the soul, Buddha said that what he meant by preaching a doctrine of No-soul or Anatta was that the body or the mind or the senses were not the Soul, but that it would be a sacrilege to deny the existence of a spiritual principle. Further, in the Mahaparinibbana-sutta we are told how there were two occasions of light or nimbus in the case of the Buddha, one at the time of his spiritual illumination, and the other at the time of his passing away. These facts point unmistakably to the Buddha's teaching about the reality of the Self, as well as to the mystical experience which the Buddha himself enjoyed.

' Coming to a so called spiritual philosopher of the present day, Croce, we find that he believes in an ever-evolving, ever-changing, never-ending Absolute. And though he repudiates the Hegelian dialectic, his system could legitimately be described as a hybrid of Hegelism and Bergsonism. His intuition is nothing



more than imagination, and his view that a philosophy of history and a history of philosophy are both impossible is falsified by the logic of Sciences. Croce's is a bastard spiritualism; his *pirito* is nothing but mind or thought. Both Croce and Gentile decry religion, and elevate moralism and infinite progress; and their doctrine of approximation, though true of the individual, is false about the whole. Croce's ever-evolving absolute is the very philosophical prototype of Mussolini's never-ending political ambition. Mussolini's Fascism, might well be regarded as rooted in Croce's philosophy of the never-ending Absolute.

As we look at history, we see that all politics is determined by the prevailing philosophy of a nation. It was Rousseau, Voltaire and Diderot who paved the way for the French Revolution. It was Hegel, Nietzsche, and Treitschke, who paved the way for the great-World-War of 1914. It is the new philosophy of an ever-evolving Absolute which is responsible for Fascism, whose ambition is never-ending. As against these theories, we have a theory of politics based upon the principles of non-violence and truth, resuscitated by Mahatma Gandhi from our ancient lore. Non-violence and Truth are not new principles, but have been advocated from very ancient times. It is to be remembered, however, that our politics cannot succeed without a spiritual basis. When the teacher of Krishna told him to make Ahinsa and Satyavachana his initial mottoes, he said that they were merely the alms that he was to give. "Akshitamasi, Achyutamasi....." Thou art the imperishable, Thou art the unchangeable-indicated verily the Spiritual Principle that governed all moral action whatsoever. Non-violence has been the basic principle of Christianity, Jainism and Buddhism. It has also been preached by the Bhagavadgita in many a context; but these have been made to repose there definitely on a spiritual foundation. Non-violence and Truth are merely the flower of which the root is Spirit. Let us beware that in our modern political ambitions we do not follow the irreligious Soviet ideal. I entirely agree with His Excellency Sir Hyde Gowan that universal brotherhood should be the foundation of our politics during times to come. But this brotherhood, I submit, should and could repose only upon a spiritual basis. A study of the Philosophy of Religion would contribute greatly to the bringing

together of all creeds and faiths and races. Hindus and Muslims, Nazis and Jews, Communists and Fascists could never be reconciled by any political or moral theories. It is only when all humanity comes to recognize the one Spiritual Principle which underlies all things, that we can bring about a harmony between different creeds, nations and races. Sir Radhakrishnan is such an ambassador of Indian Thought to Western Culture. One could wish that chairs of Philosophy of Religion, as at Oxford, were established at all the Universities in order that all humanity might meet in the Philosophy of Spirit. It is not by an appeal to the dogmas of the different faiths that we can bring together the warring sects. It is only by bringing them to a common consciousness of spiritual life that we can realize the end which we are striving for. The Philosopher's work is not done when he has realised within himself the peace of mind about which Mr. Joseph speaks, and to which His Excellency refers. His supreme business is to bring about peace and harmony in the Society, the State, and the World at large; From this point of view, it may be said, with exaggeration, that the future of the world rests with the Philosophers. '

# Pathway to God

( Report of Shri Gurudeva Ranade's Address at Nagpur  
on 16-2-1924 )

Prof. Ranade began with paying a glowing tribute to the sacred memory of St. Augustine of Hippo and referred to the appropriateness of the **Society** being founded on his day. He quoted the touching words of St. Augustine's mother from his book of Confessions saying " the child of so many tears cannot perish; " and described how he had been radically changed and won from a wayward life and grew in grace till finally he became one of the brightest stars in the firmament of Christian saints and the world's philosophers. Philosophy, he modestly defined, as the love of wisdom, St. Paul has been called as the first great contributor to Christianity since its foundation. St. Augustine was the next great contributor, who brought to the interpretation of Christian religious experience, all the wisdom of the ancients. Then in graceful language he alluded to Prof. Raju, the founder of the **Society** as Augustinian in his outlook and activities. He said that he had succeeded in creating in Nagpur not only a cosmopolitan atmosphere but what he, coining a new word, described as more appropriately a "**theopolitan**" atmosphere, which was not merely a city of man but, in the glorious words of St. Augustine, a **City of God** on earth. He said that the atmosphere of the **Nagpur Philosophical Society** was their envy in Poona and Bombay.

The lecturer then turned to his subject of the **Pathway to God**, and in a word described the Pathway as mysticism. He said that he was embodying into the annual address the substance of a forthcoming book of his on **Mysticism**. He confessed that mysticism is an unpopular word especially with philosophers.

He described a true mystic as one, who holds his tongue, shuts his ears, closes his eyes and enjoys God in his heart. The

mystic has the ineffable spiritual experience of direct contact with Reality. If he speaks at all, it is to edify the few, who are fit to hear his message. A mystic may also be one, who enters into the affairs of humanity and finds God therein. He held that mysticism was not opposed to reason, and that the claims of mystical experience are not contradicted by the verdict of Philosophy. He held that mystical experience was an affair of the heart to which the intellect might contribute its quota. The function of philosophy is to put a ring-fence round mysticism to prevent the inroads of stray cattle. When Philosophy serves these functions, then Religion and Philosophy join hands. In humorous language alluding to the ceremonial reception of his Holiness with flaming torches, he said that while there are many torch-bearers, there were but few mystics.

At this stage the lecturer quoted the words of **Dr. Paranjape** as **President of the Liberal Federation** held at **Lucknow** in which he said that it were best to abolish God altogether in order to end the communal differences that were marring the public life and retarding the political progress in India.

The lecturer, in opposition to this, urged that the true solution of the problem lay not in abolishing God but in **discovering the true conception of God**. Then he alluded to the founder of Historic Buddhism and Jainism as examples of those who sought to abolish God and ended with becoming themselves feeble substitutes for God. He also referred to Positivists like Comte and Frederick Harrison, who sought to dispense with God altogether but by a strange irony of fate ended with worshipping each other. He held, in opposition to the Agnosticism of the Bombay ex-minister of Education, that the true cure of all communal differences and difficulties lies in a true conception of God. So he recommended the serious study of Philosophy and Religion as of value even to the practical politician.

Then he referred to the **distinction between Mysticism and Agnosticism**. The agnostic believes that Reality is unknowable and so ceases to make any effort to know it. Unlike that, the mystic holds that, it is realisable and so makes an eternal pursuit after Reality. Even in the midst of all



the pride and self-satisfaction of the non-religious life, great moments of crises may come, when the desire is born to penetrate to the heart of Reality. **Mysticism is the Philosophy of spiritual experience.** The lecturer explained that by experience, he did not mean the ordinary experience, of Locke and Hume but the *Anubhav* or experience of Self-Realisation that S'ankara speaks of. He referred to Lord Christ, St. Paul and St. Thomas a Kempis as superb specimens of mysticism and urged that if Christianity did not recognise mysticism it would cease altogether.

Therefore he held that the **true Pathway to God is psychological and not intellectual or conceptual** and that God can only be realised within us. In support of this, he quoted from several mystical works of Asia and Europe, of ancient and modern times, as all showing that the true Pathway to God is psychological. At this stage he distinguished between the psychological and the hetero-psychological and said this was not a new distinction but only a new name for the old one, between the 'what is' and the 'what is not' of Parmenides, between the Phenomena and Noumena of Kant, between the Reality and Appearance of Bradley.

Then he passed to **epistemological** problem of what should be the **criterion of Reality.** He said that many different answers had been given to this problem in the History of Philosophy. He classified the most important of these under three heads as follows :- 1) The theory of Coherence of the Idealists; 2) The theory of Independence of the Realists; 3) The theory of Utility and Satisfaction of the Pragmatists. As opposed to all these and as superior to and including them all, he claimed that the true criterion of Reality is **Beatification or Ecstatic Bliss** of the mystics, the bliss of the enjoyment of the Divine. In this connection he alluded to the famous five-fold distinction in S'ankara between the different *Kosās* which he said, had been crudely misunderstood and mis-represented by the Theosophists as different bodies or planes of existence. He held that they referred to different psychological states in the pathway of the soul to the goal of the self-realisation. The Beatific Calculus of the



*Taittiriya Upanisad* measures the highest bliss in terms of the unit of phenomenal happiness, namely, that of the strongest, swiftest, richest, purest and bravest souls, which is higher than the bliss of even the angels or gods. In this criterion of Beatification, other criteria such as those of Coherence, Independence and Satisfaction are included and sublimated. He pleaded that this mystic Beatification should not be confused with mere hedonist pleasure or pragmatist satisfaction. Then he added other mark of this criterion of Beatification namely **objectivity**. Divine enjoyment lasts not for a moment only but is everlasting. Though it is true that mystics may pass through great climaxes of experience, yet the true mystics see always without even a moment's faltering. Next he raised the question of how mystical experience can be claimed to be objective, while it is subjective and psychological. He answered it by saying that it is objective and universal because all mystics irrespective of race and creed talk in the same tongue. He said that while there may be ten per cent of difference among them, there is ninety per cent of unity and continuity. Subtracting all physiological and temperamental differences, there is a grand unanimity of testimony on the part of mystics in every rank of life and of every type and variety. So he pleaded that mysticism should not be confused with occultism and such abnormal phenomena as clairvoyance, clairaudience and so forth, emphasised by Theosophy and other sister systems. The **mystic believes in God and not in ghosts**. He lives in the world as others live and may mix even in the affairs of life but his eyes are set on God. If we realise that this one God is common to all, then we will find therein, the happy and only solution of all our many problems and differences.

Referring to the teaching of modern psychology, he claimed that just as intellect, feeling and will do not contradict each other but combine in the unity of personality, so the three great paths which the *Bhagvad-Gita* mentions as trodden by the pilgrims of God, viz. the *Jnana*, *Bhakti* and *Karma* ways correspond to the threefold psychological analysis of human nature and combine in the perfection of man. Wisdom, devotion and goodness, each with its distinctive emphasis, all coalesce in the true and perfect **Pathway to God**. He said that it was a narrow and difficult

path and that there may be much weeping and gnashing of teeth in the way, agonies of soul, clashes of individuals and national and even cosmic catastrophies. He, who can and does ascend through all this to the summit, to God, is the real mystic: In the words of Tukaram, " Let us see God, let us see God, let us stand on the top of Reality; let us see God, let us see God and let us be afraid of none. "



# Religion and Science\*

Dr. R. D. Ranade

Of all antagonisms of belief, that between Religion and Science, Religion is the oldest and most important. In whatever way religious sentiment may have arisen, whether as an act of special creation, or a product of natural evolution, it deserves to be treated with respect while students of science need to be pointed out that science is a gradually and continually increasing sphere, and addition to its surface only brings it into wider contact with nescience. On both sides truth must exist. How to reconcile them, how to find the ultimate truth which underlies them both ..... that is the question? It is manifest that the truth must lie in some highly abstract proposition. Science and Religion respond to two different aspects of the universe, and therefore there must be a fundamental harmony between them. They are the two positive and negative poles of thought, and the abstract proposition which unites them must be the one in which the two coalesce.

**Ultimate Religious Ideas :** When on the sea-shore we see the hulls of distant vessels and do not even see the hulls of vessels more distant, and when we seek in imagination to follow out the curved surface, we find ourselves utterly baffled. The two questions about the universe are : whence comes it? Respecting the first, the *origin* of the Universe, we may say that it is self-existent and be Atheists; that it is self-created, and be Pantheist; that it is externally created, and be Theists. All these theories are absolutely unthinkable, and even if thinkable, they would not afford a solution. Respecting the second, the *nature* of the universe, we may say the Idea of a First Cause is full of contradictions. There is no absolute verity in any of these theories, but there is a verity in them that they agree that there is a

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\* With kind courtesy of "Satsang," Journal of Shri Gurudev Ranade Ashram, Nimbai.

problem to be solved; and that they are unanimous, that the mystery passes comprehension. But this is not a relative mystery: It is an absolute mystery. If Religion and Science, then, are to be reconciled, the basis of reconciliation must be this deepest, widest, and most certain of all facts ... that the *Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable.*

**Ultimate Scientific Ideas :** The ultimate scientific ideas, Space, Time, Matter, Motion, Force, Consciousness, and Ego are all equally incomprehensible. (1) What are Space and Time? Two hypothesis 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 impossible. Nor can they be subjective " forms of the intellect , " " a priori laws of the 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.

(2) Then Matter also presents similar antinomies. It is either infinitely divisible, or it is not infinitely divisible. If we suppose it is infinitely divisible, we are committing ourselves to a mere symbolic conception; if we say that it is not infinitely divisible, we are committing ourselves to the impossibility of conceiving a power which can divide. Neither Leibnitz's theory, nor the Newtonic theory, nor the intermediate Boseovichian theory, are in any way comprehensible.

(3) Is motion real or not real? Is it directed towards a given point or not? Neither when we consider Motion in connection with Matter, nor when we consider it in relation to

space, do we find it truly cognizable. We are obliged to think of absolute motion, but its occurrence can't be realized.

(4) Force is also incomprehensible. The force as known to us is an affection of consciousness; we cannot conceive the force as existing in the machine without endowing it with consciousness. Then again, matter can't be known without resistance (force); but resistance is equally unthinkable apart from matter.

(5) Is the chain of the states of consciousness infinite or finite? It is neither. We can never identify our first state of 'consciousness' nor our last.

(6) Turning from the extent of consciousness to its substance, we may ask what is it that thinks? Shall we betake ourselves to the sceptics' position that we know nothing more than our impressions and ideas? (for these are to us the only existences.) Or, shall we ask the sceptic to explain how he calls the impressions and ideas his impressions and ideas? Thus, established as the belief is in personal identity by the assent of mankind, by the endorsement of diverse philosophers, and by the suicide of the sceptical argument, it is a thing which can't be truly known at all.

Alike, therefore in the external and internal worlds, Physics and Psychology, the man of science sees himself in the midst of perpetual changes, of which he can discover neither the beginning, nor the end. He learns at once the greatness and littleness of human intellect; its power in dealing with things within the range of experience, its importance in dealing with things which transcend experience. If he reduces the appearances of things, into manifestations of Force in Space and Time, to what can he reduce Force and Space and Time themselves? He realises in comprehensibility of the simplest fact. (That we can move our arm is itself a wonder of wonders-Carlyle). He, more than any other truly knows that in its ultimate essence nothing can be known;

### **The Relativity of all knowledge—**

Is there any truth in which Religion and Science then may agree? Yes. They agree in the supreme Truth that human



knowledge is capable only of relative knowledge. All thought is the establishment of relations, differences, and likenesses. The Universal form of thought is Relation; to think is to relate; Hence the Absolute, which has no relation, differences, likenesses with any other being, because there is no other being outside itself is a trebly unthinkable concept. But though it is unthinkable, Spencer is not prepared to say with Hamilton (*Philosophy of the Unconditioned*) and Mansel (*Limits of Religious thought*) that the absolute is a purely negative concept. The considerations which argue for the limitation of knowledge to phenomena, and its relativity, argue also in favour of the existence of a non-phenominal, non-relative Absolute. Our conception of the Relative itself will disappear, if our conception of the Absolute is a pure negation. The Absolute, then, inspite of Hamilton and Mansel, is a positive concept; though they are right in saying it is incomprehensible. There is therefore a real, Non-relative, yet incomprehensible, Absolute.

### **The reconciliation of Religion and Science :**

Of Religion, we must remember that amid its many errors and corruptions, it has asserted and difused a supreme verity. And now observe that all along, the agent which has effected the purification has been Science. Religion ignores its immense debt to Science; Science hardly knows how much Religion owes to it: The vice of each has in all times been its incompleteness: As they reach their final forms, they will come into entire harmony. Religion and Science are necessary co-relatives, they are the positive and negative poles of thought, of which neither can gain in intensity, without increasing the intensity of the other. There is a soul of truth in every error. We are, however, not permitted to know, nor even to conceive, the Reality which is behind the veil of Appearance. It is absolutely Unknowable. It is in this doctrine of the unknowableness of Ultimate Reality that we find the principle of reconciliation. Our toleration should be the widest possible; in fact, we should aim beyond toleration. As we are descendants of the past, so we are parents of the future; and we must fearlessly utter the truth we see.

We thus see the basis of reconciliation is to be found in (1) an utter sense of mystery about the ultimate reality (2) the

co-relation of Religion and Science : opposite poles, and yet complementary poles, of thought, no conflict between moral and intellectual faculties when their provinces are demarcated. (3) Symbols of the same Ultimate Reality (an element of verity in both ) (4) which is a real non-relative Absolute. (5) And which Spenser identifies with the Unknowable. (6) The conflict will vanish when both Science and Religion increase their spheres. " As knowledge grows from more to more, so will more of reverence in us dwell, and the choral harmonies of knowledge and feeling in the time to come will be richer and vaster than the broken music of the past " (Collins). (7) Quite unexpectedly we come once more to that ultimate truth in which Religion and Science coalesce : it is the Persistence of Force.

The Absolute is infinite, but is not a person, though it is supposed by Mansel to be personal. (inconsistently with its infinity.) Personality and infinity are mutually exclusive. Anthropomorphism is a crude conception. Personality is too narrow a concept ( and not too wide as the personalists suppose) It is impossible to write a divine psychology. We can't talk of the " Character of God. " ( Martineau ). The quarrel between Religion and Science will last so long as the adherents of Religion claim a familiar knowledge of the Inscrutable mystery, and so long as the students of Science are not aware of the surrounding ocean of Nescience.

# Dr. Ranade's Concept of Philosophy and His Spiritual Attainments

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, M. A., D. Litt.

## (I)

1) " I have known Dr. Ranade for a number of years. It has been possible for him, much more than myself, to pursue his supreme object in a spirit of dedication. My activities have been scattered and I have had to give much of my time and attention in recent years to other things than Philosophy and Religion.

All the same Philosophy remains my first affection. With Ranade, Philosophy is the pursuit of wisdom, not a mere intellectual exercise: It is for him meditation on the Spirit, a dedicated way of life. "

2) " Each religion and philosophy aim at the understanding of Self and communion with Self. They are based on the fundamental bed-rock of self-realisation. " " When, therefore, it is said that we are pursuing the goal of Adhyatma-Vidya which is the quest of the Supreme Self, we are getting beyond the dogmatic and sectarian controversies. " " What we have always stressed is the fundamental spiritual state variously called ब्रह्मानुभव, ब्रह्मस्पर्श, साक्षात्कार etc. that is, direct communion with the Divine, the direct union of the human Soul with the Divine. " " What may be regarded as the reconditioning of man's nature must take place, so that his Self soaks and sinks completely in the spirit of the Divine. "

3) " Paramartha Sopana may be translated either as the Ascent to the Divine, or the way to Perfection. Wherever

philosophy has been seriously pursued, wherever religion has been understood in the truest sense of the word, it has meant the study of the true nature of the Self. All religions and philosophies at their highest are agreed on this point.

4) Socrates was asked when he was to die 'Where shall we bury you?' He gave the answer 'You may bury my body, but my soul you cannot bury; it is incorruptible and imperishable'. The Upanishads say, however far you may go, there is something beyond. The limits of Self are unreachable. There is something which exists beyond logic and language. Buddhism holds that one can rise to be Buddha. The potentialities of human nature extend to Divinity. Jainism makes a discrimination between Atma and Anatma. Their *अर्हत्* attains the knowledge of 'Atma'. Christianity says 'The Kingdom of God is within you.' It is universal spirit of God that dwells in you. 'The Spirit of man is the candle of the Lord' say the Jews. St. Paul observes 'Know you not that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you'.

In different ways, therefore, all the great Prophets have called us back to the realisation of the deepest Self in us which lies behind the layers of the body and mind. Until man attains it, his goal remains unfulfilled. Spiritual realisation is the manifest destiny of man. Until he is able to find his way to the understanding of the Supreme, his heart is restless. All these Prophets of God believed that the natural culmination of human development was in the Divine".

5) In our country, we have worshipped not the industrialists, or the military heroes, or kings, or the emperors, or the dictators, or the statesmen, but we have worshipped the Saints who have penetrated behind the layers of body and mind, sunk into the depths of Self, and anchored themselves to the Divine. Such men are not to be limited to Europe, Asia or America, or to this or that religion. The spiritual quality is common to the Arya, Anarya, Muslim or Christian.

6) Secular State does not mean a State without religion. It is not secular in this sense that we deify the worldly and the

material. It is secular only in the sense that we recognise that every religion shows a way to reach the Supreme, and we do not wish to identify the State with any particular dogma or creed. It is secular in the sense that it is something which takes its stand on the very roots of our religion. In the Secular State we give liberty to all to exercise freedom of worship and thought. We recognise the liberty of religious life. The same liberty must be given to all people.

7) Spirituality does not involve renunciation of the world. On the other hand, spirituality is excellence in action. योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्. The world at present finds itself in a nightmare condition of tension and conflict, from which it can be rescued and united only by true religion. The world can be really bound together and united at the spiritual level through religion expressing itself in love. Religion signifies two things in particular. One is the inward awareness of Spiritual Self, spiritual perception. Outwardly, it is abounding love to humanity. प्रज्ञान and करुणा, Wisdom and love, constitute true religion.”

(Extracts from Dr. Radhakrishnan's speech at the publication function of the Paramartha Sopan at Sangli on 9th January 1954)

## (II)

Friends,

I am delighted to be here and inaugurate this building set up in honour of one whom I had known for nearly 40 years of his life. I met him about the twenties of this century and have had to do a great deal with him when he was in Allahabad University.

The purpose of all knowledge is experience of personal insight अनुभवावसानमेव विद्याफलम् । *Vidyā - phala* is *Anubhava* Experience, not mere talk. And this experience you can never have by textual learning. वाक्यार्थज्ञानमात्रात् न अमृतम् । You can never reach the end of your things, man's fulfilment, by mere “*Vākyaārtha Jnāna*”. You may go on interpreting texts and you may give philosophical discussions, but all that does not take



you to the true fulfilment of man's nature. The *Upanisad* tells us, you start with *Sravaṇa* or listening to authoritative texts; then *Manana*, logical reflection on them; and then *Nididhyāsana* or personal meditation; it is after that, that you get *Atma Darsana*. An insight into reality comes to you after *Sravaṇa*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana*. The same thing is repeated in the *Bhagavad-Gita* also. ( तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन, परिप्रश्नेन सेवया । *Tadwiddhi Prani-patena pariprashnena Sevayā*) *Pranipāta*, is listening to a Teacher; *Pariprasna* is logical enquiry and investigation; *Sevā* is devotion and discipline which transforms your nature and makes you into a true religious being. Those who stay merely repeating the texts are priests; those who indulge in logical investigation and discuss arguments for and against, are philosophers; but those who get beyond these two stages of priestly learning, philosophical enquiry are the Prophets. And true Religion is Prophetic Religion, is religion worked on the depths of your being. You feel what you talk about. It is not merely *Pracara* but it is something which is personal experience or encounter with Reality. That is what the end of religion is. The end of religion is not learning texts from the Scriptures or attending Churches or Temples or Mosques, but it is by personal meditation, self-discipline and self-scrutiny, to transform your nature, so as to make yourself a symbol of an emancipated or a free human being.

Ranade, to the best of his ability, performed meditation, throughout his life, and was trying to see God face to face, to have direct encounter with Reality—Personal communion—that is what our sages have spoken to us, as the true end of religious life. The *Vedās* tell us; “*Sadā Pasyanti Sūrayaha, Tad Viṣṇoho Paramam Padam*” *Diviva Caksuratatam*. “*Pasyanti*” is the word used; it is not a question of repeating texts, or knowing by inference, but it is a question of seeing him face to face. That is what our sages did. They did see the Divine, the Ultimate Spirit, as our naked eye sees the sky, spread out before us: Even as the naked eye sees the sky, so should the eye of the Soul be trained to see the Ultimate Reality which is there. If religion is the pursuit of this experience, what we intuit, what we see, cannot be irrational, cannot be unreasonable. That is why in the

*Brahma, Sūtra*, in the II *Sūtra*, it says, : *Jānmadvasya ratah.* " It is a logical enquiry. You look into the Reality, look into the cosmic process, look, try to find out whether it is self-sustaining, self-maintained or whether it requires something else to back it. Is there a profound Presence underlying this great cosmic panorama? That is why in the *Taittiriya Upanisad*, it starts by saying : *Yato vāimāni bhutani Jāyante, yena jātāni jivanti, yat Prayanti abhisamvisanti. Tad Brahma, Tapasa Bramha Vijijnāsasva, Tapo Brahma.* *Pānini* says, *Tapa* is *Alochanā*, it is not merely the first look at things, it is the second look. You try to penetrate behind the external surface, you try to get into the roots of Reality and find out whether this world is to be regarded as self-sustaining, self-maintaining or whether it is a product of chaos or caprice or anything like that. It is then that you get an answer. This world, which has been a molten mass of fire, has developed from molten mass of fire, has developed from *Anna* to *Prāṇa*, from *Prāṇa* to *Manas*, from *Manas* to *Vijñāna*, from *Vijñāna* to *Ananda*. This is logical enquiry. This is not personal experience. This is merely trying to examine the nature of things and trying to get at the roots of Reality by a good survey of the nature of the world which is presented to us. What we talk about is not dogmatic or sectarian kind of religion. It is a religion which is based on experience and investigation by logic. We look into the world and we try to find out why this world has been perpetually unfolding itself or whether there is some principle underlying it which is making this world go forward from step to step. If this world is to be regarded as a cosmic staircase, with rungs in the ladder, there must be some principle which makes the world grow from one stage to another. The present stage of logical enquiry is not the ultimate thing. Man has to be surpassed. He has to grow beyond the stage at which he has arrived. He is intellectual, he is questioning, he is sceptical, he is irreverent, he does not know what the truth of things is. Therefore, he has to go forward. The intellectual being is disturbed by doubts and discords. There are all sorts of troubles in his mind. If he has to attain perfect tranquility of being, if he has to get what you call the calm, the composure of the saintly man, if you have to get what the *Bhagavad-Gita* describes as "*Sthitaprajna*", it is necessary for you to burrow

into your own self, to churn your mind, to so scrutinize it and transform it into something which is steady, calm and composed. It is that kind of composure which experience gives you. It is that which we all aim at. Everyone says that "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." The expression used in the Christian scripture is "They shall see God." When do they see God? When they purify their hearts? When their minds are cleared of all doubts and difficulties. When they try to translate an intellectual inference into a deep burning conviction. If you are able to make the Ultimate Reality into something which you feel in the pulse of your being, something which transforms your whole nature, makes you into a different being altogether, makes you reborn, "*Tadwitiyam Janma*", if you are able to become reborn, it is then alone that you can call yourself a truly religious man. Otherwise you may talk about religion, discuss about religion, but you don't have it in your heart. It has not enlarged your mind, it has not enriched your heart, it has not transformed your being, it has not made you something different from what you are. If you wish to get it, what is necessary is, some moments of stillness. Man is not merely a social being, he is also a solitary being. It is when he is alone that he is most himself. It is in those moments when he can examine himself, when he can find out what the doubts are, what the difficulties are, what the impediments are towards the realisation of the highest at which we all aim.

Ranade was a man who by sheer exertion, by real practice, meditated, long time, long hours and tried to catch the spirit of God and see God face to face. That is the great thing which he has achieved. If this building and those who would live in it, if they are able to catch something of his spirit, to feel that religion is experience and not intellectual gymnastics, if they are able to do that, they would have done well. I wish this Institution success.

# Dr. Ranade's Philosophy of God-realisation.

Sri. G. V. Tulpule, M. A.

The subject of this talk is "Dr. Ranade's Philosophy of God-realisation." Now his Philosophy may mean the Philosophy of the *Upanisads*, the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Bhagavata* as well, because all are ultimately the same in essence. Gurudeva Ranade expounded the ancient Philosophy of the *Upanisads* in all his works, according to the methods of modern philosophy, in order that not only India but the whole world also might be able to understand and appreciate it and be benefitted by it.

Dr. Ranade was a mystic-philosopher, a mystic first and philosopher afterwards. So, we have to consider his life-story, very briefly, before attending to his philosophy. Born at Jamkhandi on the 3rd July 1886, he had a brilliant career at school and college and took his M. A. in philosophy in 1914, securing First Class Honours at all examinations. He worked as a distinguished Professor of Philosophy in the Deccan Education Society of Poona and later in the University of Allahabad and finally retired in 1947 as its Officiating Vice-Chancellor.

His spiritual career ran parallel to his intellectual advancement since 1901, when he had the great good fortune of his life, in being initiated by the revered Saint of Umadi, Sri Bhausahab Maharaja. Sri Ranade commenced his spiritual *Sādhana* or meditation on God's name, almost immediately and had some important spiritual experiences of light, form, colour and sound. But his spiritual life started in full swing in 1909 which was also the year of the beginning of his serious illness. His health was never particularly sound after that, yet he devoted long hours to meditation daily and the periods of serious illness always proved to be the periods of attainment of great heights of valuable,



blissful, spiritual experience. As he once remarked "To my spiritual bliss there is no end." By 1920 he reached a very high stage as a mystic, through these experiences. He wanted to justify spiritual experience in terms of philosophic thought. This philosophy never interfered with his spiritual *Sādhana* and progress. On the contrary, it enhanced and intensified them.

According to Sri Ranade, philosophy is a quest for the highest value, for Beatification or Divine Bliss. In answer to the criticism that the *Upanisadic*-Philosophy is pessimistic, he writes, "A great huge ocean of blissful existence is depicted in the *Upanisads*. If the present book points to any moral, it is the moral of the life of beatific vision, enjoyed at all times by the mystic." (A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy Preface. P. 12). These remarks are fully true of Ranade's philosophy also. He was convinced, not by studying philosophy, but by the attainment of God-realisation and Bliss Divine, that God-realisation is the highest value and therefore the highest duty of man. So, like all saints, it became his noble task to spread, out of great compassion, this Gospel of God, for the benefication of afflicted humanity. This he did by expounding his philosophy in his books on the *Upanisads*, the *Bhagawad-Gītā* and the *Marathi, Hindi* and *Kannad* saints, all of whom have preached the same truths, through centuries.

Dr. Ranade's philosophy is known as **Rational Mysticism** or **Philosophy of God-Realisation** or **Philosophy of Beatification** (Divine bliss), though he gave no particular title to it. He teaches that God-realisation alone will make life divine and blissful, will bring consummation to life, will enable man to solve the riddle of life and of the universe, in short, to achieve all the ideals held out in modern philosophy. His philosophy tells us that God exists, God is not merely a creation of man's mind and fancy, that He is the only Reality, the Ultimate Reality behind this world of appearances. He assures that God is not an object of faith only, that it is possible to realise Him, to see Him face to face, that great many saints of all countries, times and faiths, have seen Him and that there is a definite *Sādhana*, consisting of moral purification and spiritual meditation on the name of God-*Nama-Smarana*-by means of which He can be realised.



Finally he points out the sublime effects of God-realisation which show that it makes a man blissful, selfless, pure and fills him with compassion for every being, makes him God ultimately. Truth, Goodness and Beauty, the values formulated by philosophers merely intellectually, are achieved fully in a Unitive experience. All these three values are included in God-realisation and its eternal bliss. Again, a devotee who has thus attained to God here achieves something more. He becomes immortal by transcending body-consciousness. To use Dr. Ranade's words "The immediate effects of God-realisation are the entire abatement of bodily excitement, the resolution of all doubts, the obtainment of infinite power, the enjoyment of illimitable bliss, the destruction of all fear and the fulfilment of any contemplated end", (A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy p. 350). But what is the proof to support these assertions? Philosophy would not admit theories merely on authority. Mysticism, to be accepted as rational, must be founded on unquestionable evidence. Then alone it will be "**Rational Mysticism.**" "The direct, first hand, INTUITIVE, mystical experience" of saints is the evidence to prove that mysticism is rational. "There is an amazing similarity in the teachings of saints of all times, countries, faiths and languages about the Name of God, the fire of Devotion, the nature of Self-realisation", (Mysticism in Maharashtra, Preface P. 24) and its effects on the mystic. This similarity or universality is sufficient to prove that all of them had direct experience of the same Reality or God. If their experiences were hallucinations, imaginations or fancies, there would be no universality among them. This evidence of saints will satisfy the claims of science. Mysticism has the capacity to make life sublime and perfect, as seen from effects of God-realisation, quoted above, and that will satisfy the claims of philosophy, for sublimation of life is the quest of all philosophical endeavour. It meets the claims of all religions also; for God-realisation is the immanent truth in the various forms of religion, which quarrel only because they cannot see this common central truth. Mysticism thus meets the requirements of science, philosophy and religion and so will be accepted as rational by intellectual standards as it fulfils the conditions required by reason.

Dr. Ranade's philosophy of God-realisation, however, is not meant for intellectual satisfaction only. It is a way of life;

it means to make life divine and blissful. Like all practical sciences, it is a science and an art, it has its theory and its practice, and it is the practice that is most important. Knowledge of its theory is of little value, unless it inspires the student with zeal to realise God and to perform *Sādhana* for it. So, from theory we now proceed to the *Sādhana* or practice. A spiritual master; initiation into viable or *Sabija Nāma* ( God's name ) by him, constant, continuous, loving meditation by means of that name-*Nāmasmaraṇa*, development of necessary discrimination, or *Vivek*, attainment of detachment or *Vairāgya*, morally pure conduct and thought, company of *Sādhakūs* - these are the chief requisites of *Sādhana*. Loving meditation without losing a single moment to the end of life, is not possible unless the aspirant develops discrimination or *Vivek*, detachment and moral purity, leads a pure life, lives in the company of saints and *Sādhakūs* and, above all, is blessed by a spiritual teacher's grace.

As the aspirant advances on the path of meditation, he may be fortunate enough, by God's grace, to have spiritual, supersensuous, intuitive experiences of light, forms, unstruck sound and spiritual nectar etc. The Hindi saint, Dharamadas mentions some of these, as thundering sound, lightening flashes, spiritual nectar, and great light, which puts an end to darkness. All these experiences, he says, are blissful.

खन गरजै खन विजली चमकै ।  
 लहर उठै शोभा बरनिन जाय ॥  
 सुन्न मंडल मे अमृत बरसै ।  
 प्रेम आनंद है साधु नहाय ॥  
 खुली केवडिया मिटी अंधेरिया ॥  
 धन सद्गुरु जिन दई लखाय ॥

These are expressions of God or *Atman*, and the *Sādhaka* should meditate on these in addition to Name. There is happiness in meditating on, or *Anusandhāna* ( अनुसंधान ) of, these visions and sounds. So, Dr. Ranade, like other saints, emphasises *Swarupānusandhāna* and *Nādānusandhāna* ( स्वरूपानुसंधान and नादानुसंधान ), attention to these spiritual lights and sounds. Bliss derived from such meditation purifies the mind, clarifies the intellect and

sanctifies the soul. Here begins the gradual process of his transformation into Divinity or Beatification, in proportion to the experience. By this meditation or *Anusandhāna* the aspirant's devotion for God is intensified and strengthened and reaches the stage of *Bhāva* or unique, supreme love, when he is willing to sacrifice everything, even his life for God. This is surrender or *Saranāgati* ( शरणागति ). All meditation is the means to attain *Saranāgati*. When this end is reached, God blesses the devotee with the highest, blissful, Self-realisation, which transforms him into Divinity. This is beatific, intuitive experience, the vision of the Self by the Self, in which the individual soul merges, dissolves, into the Universal Soul or *Brahman* and becomes one with it, like salt thrown in the sea. *Jñāneshwara* tells us of his own experience : " The whole sky was filled with light and overflowed with it; there was the spiritual music of divine musical instruments, in the form of unstruck sound. I was merged in an ocean of bliss, which cannot be described in words. In that blissful condition the mind ceases to function ".

आरती विट्टलाची पूर्ण उजळली अंतरीं ।  
 प्रकाश थोर झाला साठवेना अंबरीं ॥  
 रवि शशी मावळले त्या तेजामाझारी ।  
 वाजती दिव्य वाद्ये अनुहत गजरी ॥  
 आनंदसागरांत प्रेमे वुडी दिघली ।  
 लाघले सौख्य मोठे नये बोलता बोलीं ॥  
 सद्गुरुचेनि संगें एसी आरती केली ।  
 निवृत्ति आनंदात तेथे वृत्ति निमाली ॥

Such Divine Bliss is the supreme prize which the Philosophy of Mysticism and Beatification holds out to a man, who meditates on God lovingly, without losing a moment, to the end of his life. ( दिर्घकालनैरन्तर्य-सत्कारसेवित । )

" A God-realiser cannot be selfish or inactive. He does not achieve bliss for himself only. He is of extreme value to mankind by calling their attention continuously to the perception and greatness of God " ( Mysticism in Maharashtra : Preface P. 28. ) As Dr. Ranade wrote to a friend in 1924, " For myself, spiritual life has been the most important thing. My innermost

inspiration has been that of the spiritual life, which is the end, not only of my own spiritual existence, but I am sure, of humanity at large, which is consciously or unconsciously, pursuing the Pathway to God." This is the conviction of all saints. So, Dr. Ranade writes, "One has only to remember that it becomes the mission of such a God-realiser to spread the Gospel of God whenever and wherever it becomes possible for him. One God, One world, One humanity, should be his maxim. Whoever realises the unity and presence of God, cannot but direct his life in such a way that the greatness of God, becomes not merely understood, but even achievable". (The *Bhagavadgita* as a Philosophy of God-realisation P. 136) Dr. Ranade has unconsciously depicted his own life-work as a mystic-philosopher, in these words; 'The only way to bring about the spiritual unity of mankind and consequent peace and good-will on earth' is to spread the Gospel of God. Saints like Dr. Ranade spontaneously work for his cause, which is their highest activity and utility to society.

Like all great saints, Dr. Ranade attained liberation or *Mokṣa* ( मोक्ष ) by drinking the nectar of Divine Bliss and then freely distributed it to mankind for its liberation. 'सेवितो रस वाटितो आणिका ॥' (तुका) and "आपण तरोनि विश्व तारा ॥" (मुक्ता).

This is Gurudev Ranade's Rational Mysticism or Philosophy of Beatification or Divine Bliss. Would it not inspire a genuine seeker, a true *Mumukṣu* ( मुमुक्षु ) to aspire after, and, to the best of his abilities to strive for the realisation of this state of Divine Bliss or God-hood ?

Gurudev Ranade leaves behind a large number of disciples belonging to all religions, who visit Nimbai, to offer their homage to His *Samādhi* and to pass a few quiet days in spiritual meditation in that holy atmosphere. Seekers, inquisitive of the spiritual path of Gurudev Ranade, may with advantage visit his holy shrine at Nimbai.

# Sri R. D. Ranade \*

## His works and Message.

Dr. P. Narasimhayya, M. A., Ph.D.

Rightly and aptly, by virtue of scholarly excellence and spiritual exaltation, has professor *R. D. Ranade* been loved, adored and reputed as *Gurudev*. His spiritual ambit comprehends not only a rational, critical and comparative philosophy and a practical life of rare patience, love, and dedication, but also a constant or perennial irradiation of mystic or spiritual experience;

So, most significantly, his three major works, ( *A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy*, *The Mysticism of the Maharāstra Saints* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, ) range over these three essential fields of philosophy, religious experience and ethic,—or reason, realization and conduct, *darsana*, *anubhava* and *sādhana*.

The main accent however, in his life and message is on practical self-realization, *anubhūti*—*Atmā vā are dr̥ṣṭavyah*, as the motto of the journal has it, in the great terms of the *Upaniṣad*.

From this direct, living experience or realization flows universality of love, and a vision of one God, one World and one Humanity.

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*Note* : \* ( I had the privilege and fortune of knowing directly, a little of his nobly simple and most lovable personality. He stayed with me as an esteemed guest many years ago, and I have been very kindly received as his guest both in *Poona* and *Allahabad*. I had another chance of meeting and hearing him several times in *Delhi* when he gave a few discourses on religion and experience. The impressions and influence of such a soul on anyone are bound to be permanent, indelible. )



So, earnest scholar and comparative philosopher though he was, he was an even more ardent advocate of *sādhana* and *anubhava*, meditation and realization.

Thus his philosophy has a wider range or comprehension than the usual intellectual, and moral or civic and social, philosophies.

*Sri Ranade* ( and the great tradition which he represented ) said with the *Greek* master *Socrates*, that real knowledge is virtue, that knowledge is real assimilated knowledge, only when it becomes a part of one's character and flows out in conduct or action. Knowledge is knowledge strictly so called, only when it expresses itself in virtue.

Going further, *Sri Ranade* and the great tradition he symbolised, affirmed that knowledge has an infinite reach, and finds fulfilment in self-knowledge and realization of the Self, or the Divine. This extension of knowledge, the widening of horizons, comes from man's efforts to reach out to the Infinite, to realize his own highest personality, his strength and beauty and love and goodness.

This is the universal goal of human evolution. To its higher levels of experience the term *mystic* experience has come to be widely applied. This term has to be kept free from the wrong popular associations that have gathered round it, suggesting dark mysteries, irrationality, monopoly and exemption from all moral and aesthetic values and standards.

Beyond civic, social and personal *Ethics*, which *Socrates* emphasised as the fruit of knowledge, *Sri Ranade's* message moves on to the *experience of the creative Reality* or *Soul*, with its *trinity of Values*.

An incident about *Socrates* and the Indian *Vedāntins*, which is interesting in this context, is well known. A few *Indian* philosophers visiting *Athens* met and conversed with *Socrates*. He was as usual discoursing to his listeners at the market-place at *Athens*. The *Indians* greeted him and enquired on what the

master was discoursing. *Socrates* replied, "On things human." His inquiries and discourses were on things concerning the life of man - human problems. The *Indians* said that discourses on human problems and the good, should necessarily involve inquiries into the Divine, since man has a higher or Divine dimension.

Man reaches his full personality or stature when he touches and realizes more and more the infinite potentialities of his being: Man is fully man when he recognises his stature higher than that of a clever animal with tools, or a citizen of a state or society.

This higher personality, with its infinite reach and values of Truth or Wisdom, Beauty and Goodness, *Satyam*, *Sundaram* and *Sivam*, has been known for ages in all lands, by the short term, soul, *Ātmā*. So, higher than animal pleasures and civic, communal or national regulations and their limitations, man struggles for the creative joy of these great values and through them, his higher Self-realization, the bliss of self-perfection, the freedom of self-determination. This, in the much-abused *Indian* term, is *mokṣa*.

This supreme trinity of redemptive values, the Rational, Aesthetic and Ethical, are also the bases on which any human society, the community, city-state, nation-state or the world-order, is based. Without reverence for and pursuit of Truth, without Beauty and the graces of life and the joy of the fine arts and religious devotion, and without moral Goodness, love and mutual aid, there can be no human society of any kind. These are the first bases, and also the final standards by which all human institutions are judged, reformed, re-vitalised and developed.

Their progressive realization is culture and civilization, from the point of view of the society or nation. From the individual's point of view, their pursuit has been emphasised as the three fold *yoga* of knowledge, devotion and action, the trinity of *Jñāna*, *Bhakti* and *Karma yoga*.

Masters like *Ranade* and his venerable predecessors and conferrers the world over, are examples of the higher echelons of noumenal experience, or realization of Self and its values. The *Indian* masters and others bear witness in various ways and degrees to this higher reach of man, – the potentialities of his soul and its increasing realization beyond the life in society and state, sensuous intoxication, and intellectual dissection and abstraction.

Man is more than a social and political animal. Man is not fully understood except as a soul, meditating on and reaching out to and realizing the trinity of values.

So the *Vedānta*, pointing out this infinite reach of man, and his spiritual being or soul, enunciated the ultimate formula, *Tat tvam asi*. So too, the *Vedānta* called its *Sūtrās*, in content both human and Divine, *sāriraka Sūtrās* and *Brahma Sūtrās*: An ultimate or basic study of man is necessarily also a study of the Divine.

This wide reach or scope of man's being, this Divine spark, is expounded and exemplified in the life and experience and works of *Gurudev Ranade*.

Among the many disciplines of human progress, *Sri Ranade* exemplified in particular, two disciplines, *meditation* and *the spiritual direction of life*.

Meditation has been regarded as a specially *Indian* contribution in its many-sided developments and in the great emphasis laid on its value. *Professor Toynbee*, the famous author of the monumental works on civilizations and history, said in his lectures at *Delhi*: " This ( meditation ) is the greatest lesson that *India* has to teach the present day world ". ( *Azad Lectures* )

Meditation is an essential discipline which has priceless results for the progress of both the individual and his society: Amidst the din and uproar of the great battle of *Kurukṣetra*, *Arjuna* was taught the virtues of meditation. The discourse on war and battle shifts to the need of meditation, the strong and well-controlled mind, the mind which is firmly set towards duty and the highest excellences.

Meditation is as essential for social duty and reform and other objective work, as for one's own spiritual uplift and

progress. It is when the individual withdraws for a while, from the pressures of the prevalent social codes, their narrowness and corruptions, that man can calmly contemplate on the great basic values of life, and from out of these meditations, go forth with a clearer vision to bring about a better state, society or international order, or a necessary reform in religion or the current ethic.

Secondly, a great and comprehensive purpose, an infinite or ever-increasing purpose giving a general direction and organization and inspiration to our modes of life, is essential. This purpose may be very briefly denoted as soul-realization.

This purpose is especially necessary in our modern age, where the tempo or speed of life is so fast, and the distractions and temptations to dissoluteness of life, are so very many.

The incident is well known, of the celebrated *Thomas Huxley* getting into a cab at *Dublin* in a hurry and asking the cabman to drive fast. After some time, he asked the cabman where he was driving. He answered he did not know; he was asked to drive very fast and he was driving on very fast !

This is a true picture, a parable, of modern life. The tremendous speed of modern life, its revolts and changes, its rivalries and conflicts, lack any good purpose, a great and good over-all humane ideal. We are worshippers more of materialism than spiritual humanism. There is a *crisis of soul* in the modern world, because matter sits on the throne and rules and suppresses the spirit, the great soul of man.

It is the urgent need for the restoration of the soul to its right place or centre in our human life that *Sri Ranade* and his brotherhood all over the world, point out to us, by precept and example.

There has been no lack of emphasis on this teaching, no lack of repetition of this truth by teachers and devotees, saints and sages, *āchāryās* and *gurus*, mystics and *sādhakās*. But, even the men who have this knowledge intellectually, do not follow it in practice. Most men know better but do the worse; Humanity

is always slipping down into evil and vice, and unable to sustain itself at the level of its better Self.

This is why we need a constant manifestation of the highest spiritual dimension of humanity, a recurring or ever-present galaxy of spiritually exalted masters: We need also all the methods of popular education, such as song and lecture, seminar and journal to sustain the human will and mind at its higher levels.

Souls like *Gurudev Ranade* are the recurrent sign-posts, the bright lamps on the path of human evolution towards stable peace, self-controlled power, and all-round and abiding happiness, *prāna-ārāmaṃ, ěmana-ānandaṃ, sānti-saṃrddhaṃ*. Unless we recognise this higher dimension of man,-the soul, and its methods and values-there can neither be a stable and clean social order nor a reliable individual goodness,-neither *ātma-suddhi* nor *lokasaṃgraha*.

This emphasis on the soul, the subjective discipline of meditation and spiritual life, does not mean a *retreat* from the objective world of reality, an *escape* from the material world of science and technology, or their utilization in the progress of human happiness on every side. The emphasis on the soul means only their orientation to the true ends of the human soul and being.

*Gurudev Ranade*, expounding this full vision regarding *India*, said: " I see India taking up the scientific spirit and energy of *Europe*. I see her assimilating the excellences of both the East and the West, and rising in the scale of modern nations, preserving all the while the integrity and pristine purity of her spiritual Self "

The life, teachings and writings of *Sri Ranade* are one continuous and impressive affirmation and manifestation of this supreme and universal gospel.





# Gurudeva Ranade and the Path of the Spirit

Dr Aravind Vinayak Apte, M. A., Ph. D.

## I Introduction

Man is born on the face of this earth and lives out his life till Death calls him away. What does man do during this his all too brief sojourn on earth? On the answer to this question depends the quality of his life, the manner of his death and his destiny thereafter.

As long as we are satisfied with the things life has to offer us, as long as we are not made uneasy and inquisitive by the promptings of some undefinable 'divine discontent' in our hearts, so long do we take things as they come, good and bad, without bothering about the 'why and wherefore' of things. Our philosophical queries and spiritual quest may be said to begin the moment things around us start making us restive enough, to ask questions of a very fundamental nature about them, such as "Is there any Order, any Justice in the events that occur in our life?", or "Is there any God or Spirit governing the destiny of this World?" Such a moment marks the transition of man from the 'enslaved' (*Baddha*) state to the State of "a seeker of Liberation" (*Mumukṣu*).

The *Mumukṣu* or 'man seeking Liberation' asks further: "Is there any Ultimate Freedom and Bliss for man, or is he destined only to wander endlessly in a round of multitudinous births and deaths, trapped for ever in the thralldom of the senses and the dualities of existence? And if it be possible for man to attain such Freedom and Bliss, what is the Way to attain it?" The *Mumukṣu* asks these questions because, unsatisfied with the finite and limited joys of worldly life which are ever tinged with sorrow, he seeks infinite joy which is free from

sorrow; and unsatisfied with the ever-fleeting and evanescent things of the world which are prone to death and destruction, he seeks something that is stable, ever-lasting, eternal and beyond all change. Anxious in his search, he looks out for a helping hand.

## II Gurudeva and his Spiritual Tradition

It is here that Gurudeva steps into the picture. Submitting himself wholeheartedly to the unrelenting spiritual discipline insisted upon by his spiritual Teacher, Sri Bhausahab Maharaj, he attained ' *Sāksātkāra* ' at an early age; but he was not one to rest content with just that ! Till the time he surrendered his body to God in the final act of Dedication in 1957, he stood ready always to give a helping hand, by example and precept, to all those *Mumuksūs* who cared to ask him about the Ultimate Destiny ( viz. God-realisation ) of man and the Bliss thereof. All those hundreds, nay thousands of ' lost souls ' who came to him seeking spiritual enlightenment, will bear testimony to this. By giving them spiritual initiation, encouragement, guidance and help, he turned these *Mumuksūs* into a band of ' *Sādhakās* ' i. e. ' Pilgrims on the Path of the Spirit ', seeking pure Bliss and Immortality through spiritual practice and Realisation.

Gurudeva (and the Spiritual Tradition to which he belonged) performed the *Task of the age*, viz to re-live, re-interpret and re-state the Highest Spiritual Ideal of mankind in this Modern Age, wherein scientific progress outstrips itself every day and man prides himself on his Rational and practical outlook on life. This line of spiritual Teachers—Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, Sri Bhausahab Maharaj, Sri Amburao Maharaj and Gurudeva—did not teach a thing of which they were themselves not ideal examples, and their teachings possess the following characteristics which give a rational, practical and scientific orientation to the Ancient Spiritual Ideal.

## III Spiritual Instruction : Its Outstanding Characteristics

### 1) Need of Spiritual Life in Human Existence :

Gurudeva has gathered from spiritual literature in Marathi, Kannada and Hindi and wonderfully analysed the

'Incentives' which lead a man to spiritual life. Spiritual life is essential for man in every Age because it helps him to fulfil his Ultimate Destiny and thus round off human existence. It gives him that real sense of contentment and bliss, which no other thing in the world can give him. To-day, the need for spiritual life is all the greater because the Advance of Science has brought greater comforts to human life and also greater mental discontent and unhappiness ! What with the increased hurry and worry of modern life, man has begun to wonder whether in finding a pathway to the moon he has lost his soul ! Spiritual discipline and experience give man that sense of contentment, joy and fulfilment which makes man bless the day he was born, fills his life with the joy of the Divine and enables him to greet death with a cheer ! Gurudeva, in all his writings, deals exclusively with the Theme Spiritual and carries conviction to the reader regarding the necessity and value of spiritual life:

**2) Accommodation of spiritual life as an integral part of Normal Human Existence :**

Gurudeva, like Sri. Nimbargi Maharaj and Sri. Bhausahab Maharaj, first proved by personal example and then preached that one can attain the greatest spiritual heights, while leading the normal routine life of a house-holder in society. Sri. Amburao Maharaj did not marry again after the loss of his wife, as per his Spiritual Teacher's advice, but after attaining Realization himself, he spent a very busy life in looking after the spiritual well-being of the huge *spiritual family* he had gathered around himself. These spiritual teachers continued to practise their spiritual austerities, without pause, even after attaining Realization, and yet never shirked their duty towards their own worldly and spiritual families.

A few exceptional human beings may find it suitable to renounce all worldly ties, in order to devote themselves exclusively to spiritual life; the trouble starts and tragedy results when these men of renunciation mislead mankind by postulating 'external' renunciation as an inevitable pre-condition to lead a spiritual life. Many early house-holder Saints and this our line of spiritual Teachers, fully explode this myth, indiscri-

minately spread by monks in order to claim a 'monopolistic right' to spiritual life. The *genuine* spiritual men of renunciation also do not subscribe to this myth. Gurudeva has said, without directly referring to himself (as usual!), that there is no contradiction in leading a life of God-realization and holding the post of Vice-Chancellor in a University! What more need be said about the positive harmony between our normal routine of life and spiritual life?

### 3) Relation between spiritual life and the March of Science :

Gurudeva, in his Presidential Address at the Indian Philosophical Congress (1937) has clearly shown, with reference to the latest advances in the sciences of Physics, Biology, Neurology etc., that the march of science only helps the ancient spiritual ideas and ideals to shine with all the greater effulgence; that one does not contradict the other; rather, one complements and completes the other. In the same Address, he goes on to call the first glimpse of man's spiritual experience by the term '*spiriton*', similar to modern scientific terms like electron, proton etc. It is easy to see the great needs of spiritual life in this modern age of astonishing scientific progress, because man can be as unhappy on the moon as on earth! So, man's journey to the moon will not make spiritual life obsolete; on the contrary, it would only mean that spiritual wisdom will have to reach the moon in order to make man *truly* happy there!

### 4) Role of human faculties in spiritual Life :

Gurudeva, in his Introduction to 'Pathway to God in Hindi Literature', explains how spiritual life gives scope for the highest development of the three traditionally accepted human faculties of (a) Thinking, (b) Feeling, and (c) Willing, while a higher faculty called (d) Intuition enables us to have spiritual experience i. e. direct contact with Reality.

#### a) Thinking :

Every thinking person gathers wisdom through manifold and diverse experiences in the world and learns to discriminate

between the right and the wrong, the good and the bad. The evanescent and sorrowful joys of the world soon disillusion him and he turns to spiritual life in search of something that is eternal and blissful. Thus, the thinking, reasoning, discriminating faculty of man brings him to the Life Spiritual and sustains him in the pursuit thereof.

Gurudeva speaks of '*Rational Mysticism*' and insists that not only is there no contradiction in these terms, but also that it is the only kind of mysticism worthy of the name. He grants that mystical experience may transcend human reason, but maintains that it does not contradict human reason. A mystic who leads a life of the Spirit, cannot be a fool or a dullard; he needs must have intellectual power of a high order, states Gurudeva categorically.

#### **b) Feeling :**

The faculty of feeling or emotion has a vital role to play in spiritual life. Gurudeva has assigned the most important place to "taking the potent, *Guru-given Nāma of God*" (*Nema*) in the technique of spiritual practice, but he goes on to state that the Name of God is to create a genuine, feelingful devotion (*Bhāva*) to God in one's heart: He speaks of '*Bhāva*' as being superior even to '*Nāma*' and says that God is never far from such intense feeling of love for Him, and reveals Himself soon to such a devotee. Here, Gurudeva strikes a note of warning that this intense feeling or emotion **must** be directed God-ward, under the control of the intellect; otherwise it can lead to untold harm: There are many instances of unchecked and misdirected over-emotionalism of spiritual aspirants, leading to mental derangement and downfall.

#### **c) Willing :**

The will to act also plays a very important role in spiritual life: The rigorous spiritual discipline which has to be pursued day after day and year after year with faith, patience and perseverance, till God-realization is attained and also thereafter, requires constant effort of the will to act spiri-



ually. Gurudeva (and his Spiritual Tradition) insists that spiritual life is nothing if not tireless spiritual practice.

#### d) Intuition :

Gurudeva says that while the above three faculties play a vital role in spiritual life, it is the faculty of intuition alone that enables us to attain a direct and immediate apprehension of God or Reality. The faculty of Intuition does not contradict the other three faculties, it rather penetrates and lies at the back of them all, says Gurudeva.

#### 5) The Methodology of Spiritual Life :

Gurudeva (and his Spiritual Tradition) excels in making the most practical suggestions for leading a spiritual life. Most problems arising in the path of the spiritual aspirant have been tackled and solutions offered. Practical hints regarding the conduct of the spiritual aspirant in private and public life have been profusely given. The difficulty of 'right ordering of loyalties', i. e. co-ordination of spiritual duties with one's normal daily activities, has been resolved by example and precept. The writer sincerely believes that such clear, practical advice about the practice of spiritual discipline in its various stages, leading up to Realization and thereafter, is rarely to be found elsewhere.

The spiritual discipline consists of (i) the principal discipline of Meditation on the Name of God, and three subordinate disciplines of (ii) Daily reading of spiritual literature, (iii) Daily reciting of the Glory of God, and (iv) Cultivation of the company of devotees of God.

i) The principal spiritual discipline consists of 'silent, mental repetition of the Name of God (i. e. the potent *Mantra* given by the Spiritual Teacher), set to the accompaniment of the ever-present rhythm of the natural act of breathing. This is called *Nema* or *Namasmarana* or Meditation on the Name of God. By a steady and long practice, such rhythmic repetition of the Holy Name becomes natural and enables the breath to flow evenly over a long period of time. This meditation is done

in a steady, sitting posture, and the even flow of breath soothes the nerves, calms the mind and establishes gradually psycho-physical harmony. As the steady, even flowing of breath (in and out) is sustained naturally over a long period of time by regular, daily practice of meditation, an ideal condition is established, in the quickest possible manner, for the occurrence of that 'natural suspension of breathing' which is technically called '*Kevala Kumbhaka*' in the science of Yoga. The thought-waves in the lake of the mind tend to become still during such a 'natural breathing-pause', and when the occurrence of this state becomes frequent and more prolonged by practice, the stage may be said to be set for the manifestation of that Ultimate Reality which lies beyond all thought and speech, i. e. for the direct, immediate, intuitive apprehension of God.

This spiritual discipline is to be practised once a day, for a short time to begin with; then the time is to be gradually increased; then it is to be practised twice a day; then, thrice a day. To practise it, any of the following times may be chosen according to convenience: on waking up in the morning; at noon; in the afternoon or evening; before sleep at midnight. In this way, 'God-consciousness' is to be practised more and more extensively, as also more intensively (i. e. with devotional fervour) till it pervades and becomes co-extensive with our 'Self-consciousness'.

Another very important thing about this meditation is that, when it is practised, no *imaginary* form of the Deity (representing the *Mantra* given by the Spiritual Teacher) is to be brought or kept before the mind's eye. This helps to leave the field clear for an *actual*, real, manifestation of the Divine.

ii) 'Reciting the Glory of God' (*Bhajana*) is to be done thrice a day to develop fervent devotion to God. Such feelingful devotion (*Bhāva*) sustains our daily Meditation which is also to be done thrice a day, and adds depth to it. Gurudeva, at the command of his Spiritual Teacher, edited a wonderful little book of *Bhajanas* (*Nityañemāvali*) for the daily use of devotees.

iii) 'Thoughtful Reading of spiritual Literature' (*Pothi*) is also to be done thrice a day to sustain and renew our intellectual interest in spiritual life, and to provide an effective intellectual fence for protecting our daily Meditation from the disturbance caused by stray doubts, wandering illusions, passing fancies etc. Gurudeva, with his amazing powers of intellectual analysis and synthesis and with his sterling sense of the practical, has written books which provide us with selections, arranged in a spiritually constructive order, from the writings of Marathi, Kannada and Hindi Saints. These selections form ideal material for the devotee's day-to-day spiritual reading.

iv) 'Cultivating the company of Devotees of God' (*Satsanga*) and of no one else forms an essential part of the Spiritual Discipline. The company we keep can make or mar our spiritual life. It is a truism to say that 'good company' reforms the evil and encourages the good to become better, while 'bad company' spoils the good and encourages the bad to become worse. Spiritual life is a plant of rare delicacy which thrives in the company of devotees of God, but is blighted by the company of the immoral and the ungodly. This '*Satsanga*' may be spoken of as providing the ideal condition for the sustenance and development of the other three disciplines of '*Nema*', '*Bhajana*' and '*Pothi*'.

It may be said that the four disciplines of '*Nema*' '*Pothi*', '*Bhajana*' and '*Satsanga*' take care of the 'intuitional', 'intellectual', 'emotional' and 'socio-ethical' aspects of an aspirant's Spiritual Life, respectively. There is a unique spiritual experiment, made current by the Spiritual Tradition to which Gurudeva belonged which expects the disciples to come and live with their spiritual teacher for the whole month of *Srāvana* every year. Sri Bhausahab Maharaj used to conduct such a unique 'school of Spiritual Studies', and this tradition was scrupulously maintained by Sri Amburao Maharaj and Gurudeva. Such learning of the Theory and Practice of Spiritual Life, for one month every year, in the inspiring presence of the Spiritual Teacher, provided ideal opportunity for the immediate resolution of the intellectual doubts, emotional disturbances and

spiritual problems of the disciples. Further, it enabled the disciples to strike a balance between his material life and spiritual aspirations, and taught him how to co-ordinate the two for the better development of both.

#### 6) Scientific analysis of Spiritual Experiences :

Spiritual Experiences are stages on the Path of the Spirit, indicating to the Pilgrim the progress he has made God-ward. From Vedic times to this day, Saints and Mystics endowed with exalted spiritual experiences, kept them mostly to themselves and told others that these experiences belonged to that domain which lay 'beyond the realms of thought and speech'. If they spoke about spiritual experiences at all, it was confined to the small esoteric circle of their closest disciples. This kept the rest of mankind in almost total ignorance, for centuries, about the content of spiritual experiences which form the very fabric, as it were, of spiritual life. This, in turn, led to the exploitation of the spiritual ignorance of mankind by charlatons and hypocrites who could, just by sitting in silence for a long time, claim to have spiritual experiences without having them at all ! This went on and on for a long, long time indeed.

Gurudeva came to us in this Age to enlighten us, as it were, regarding the so called mysteries of spiritual life. He has said that he had taken to the study of philosophy in order to find intellectual and rational justification for the spiritual life he was leading and the spiritual experiences he was having. Thus, on the one hand, he was endowed with varied, progressive and exalted spiritual experiences and on the other hand, the modern scientific methods of critical analysis and scholarship had been also mastered by him. Thus he was uniquely qualified to apply the scientific method in the esoteric field of Spiritual Experience, and was the first to write a grammar, so to say, of spiritual life in the history of the literature of the world. He has written books on the *Upaniṣads*, the *Gita* and the spiritual writings of Marathi, Kannada and Hindi saints.

In these books, ( i ) he has arranged the literary material at hand, in a spiritually constructive order, ( ii ) he has discussed



the genesis, growth and culmination of spiritual experience, (iii) he has analysed and classified spiritual experiences into forms like photic, morphic, phonic, olfactory etc. and discussed their relative order and merit, their varieties, their effects, and so on. The spiritual path has been so very clearly lighted up for the first time in the history of the human race, in order to tempt modern man to tread it with an alert mind and open heart, for his own ultimate illumination and bliss and for the moral and spiritual regeneration of mankind.

### 7) **Spiritual Life as a Eternal March towards Perfection :**

The doctrine of 'Asymptotic Approximation to God' states that "one can reach God so near as to be only just short of Him", that we can asymptotically approximate to God but cannot become God. Saints like Jnaneswara and Ramadasa have spoken of this doctrine which Gurudeva upholds, renders more explicit and enunciates very clearly. This doctrine turns spiritual life into an 'Eternal March towards Perfection', it implies that reaching the goal of God-realization (*Saksātkāra*) does not mark the end of the spiritual journey at all, but rather the beginning of the real spiritual life and career of the God-intoxicated Saint! It further implies that as long as the Man of Realization resides in the human body, he cannot and should not be identified, one hundred percent, with God; a little imperfection separates him from total God-hood, in which he completely merges the moment he gives up his body. This is not to deny that the God-realised saint, during his moments of exalted spiritual experience, merges in and attains, at-one-ment with God; during such moments the saint is entirely bereft of body-consciousness, naturally. The doctrine is only a warning against identifying a saint entirely with God during his earthly existence.

If this doctrine is properly studied and accepted generally in India, it will cut at the root of the spiritual humbug of all those pseudo-saints who, with little spiritual practice and experience behind them, or none at all, forcibly usurp the throne of God with impunity and without authority, and



exploit the spiritual hunger of credulous, gullible and ignorant people, for personal profit and pleasure. Such spiritual hypocrisy renders turbid the clear stream of spiritual life in this country; it has had a field day for too long indeed ! May the general understanding and acceptance of this doctrine of spiritual life being an 'Eternal March towards Perfection' mark the death knell of false spirituality for all time !

### 8) Ethics in Spiritual Life.

Gurudeva has selected and separately classified excerpts from the spiritual literature of Marathi, Hindi and Kannada Saints, which deal eloquently with the 'necessity of Moral Preparation' in spiritual life. He never failed to underscore the important role played by moral conduct in spiritual life: His books contain a wonderful analysis and discussion of 'Virtues to be cultivated' and 'Vices to be avoided' by the spiritual aspirants.

Gurudeva and his Spiritual Tradition followed one rule without exception and it was this : At the time of spiritual initiation, the spiritual aspirant was required to take two vows before the Spiritual Teacher : ( i ) That he will lead a moral life which will be totally free from all blemish from the sexual point of view ( *Paradārā-tyāga* ) and ( ii ) That he will lead an incorruptible life from the monetary point of view ( *Paradravya-tyāga* ). Those who frankly hesitated to take these two difficult vows were positively dissuaded from taking initiation. Woman and Wealth are the two principal temptations, traditionally known, which pose a constant threat to the moral purity and well-being of man. No slight to womankind is intended here; all that is meant is that men and women, on entering spiritual life, have to be extra-careful in their relations with the other sex, because their spiritual life can be sustained only by the moral purity of their conduct. As for the lure of wealth and the attraction of the enjoyments it brings, one glance at to-day's money-mad world is eloquent proof of the disasters it can bring. So, the two vows taken at the time of Initiation make the spiritual aspirant permanently aware of this twin-threat to his moral and, consequently, spiritual life.

Gurudeva has often said that moral purity and spiritual elevation go well together, each helping the other to grow and develop and that in a man of God-realization, moral and spiritual excellences meet and reach their zenith. Once all people truly understand this intrinsic relationship between Morality and Spirituality, they will not be misled by pseudo-saints whose only liberation consists in their licentious, ethically unfettered behaviour ! Just as the wrong interpretation of the statement " Spiritual experience transcends human reason " leads to the false equation of ' spirituality ' with ' irrationality ', so also the wrong interpretation of the statement " A man of spiritual realisation transcends all laws of morality " leads to the false equation of ' spirituality ' with ' immorality ' ! Nothing could be farther from the truth ! Just as spiritual experience transcends human reason but does not contradict it, so also a ' Man of Realization ' may transcend all moral laws but he *never* transgresses them.

### 9) Social value of Spiritual Life.

Gurudeva has said that a person leading a Life of the Spirit cannot but be useful to society. Such a person is a living illustration of pure, moral life; along with his spiritual disciplines, he performs his own worldly duties, in a diligent and selfless manner, and thereby helps to elevate the moral and spiritual tone of society and to instil a sense of duty among the people. In the world of to-day, whether the society be communist or capitalist, there is a growing awareness of two basic conditions of human progress and prosperity : (i) The need of basic moral sense to sustain the fabric of society and its human institutions, and (ii) the need of the individual's awareness of his own duties and responsibilities. The Spiritual Teacher, living a Life of the Spirit while pursuing his normal duties in society, teaches both these vital lessons to all, by his living example and enlightened precept, and thus helps directly in the solution of these two vital problems facing mankind to-day. Further if the spiritual discipline he teaches is practised by more and more people, it will help to offset today's growing material comforts ' without ' by a greater spiritual awareness ' within ' and thus restore the balance in human personality. In short, the presence

of people leading a spiritual life is a 'must' for the well-being of society.

#### IV) Conclusion

To conclude : Here are some of the unique things which characterized the Life of Gurudeva Ranade : (i) He lived the normal life of a householder, worked as a Professor of Philosophy and retired as the Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University; simultaneously, he practised intense spiritual disciplines throughout his life, attained the highest spiritual experiences and lived a life of God-realization thereafter. He thus excelled in both worldly life (*Samsāra*) and spiritual life (*Paramārtha*). (2) After attaining Realisation himself, he gave spiritual initiation and help to countless aspirants seeking spiritual enlightenment, experience and bliss, and also continued to practise spiritual disciplines rigorously himself. In him, thus, one could find the rare combination of a Spiritual Teacher (*Guru*) and a spiritual aspirant (*Sādhaka*)! (3) With all his spiritual sublimity and intellectual brilliance, he bathed his spiritual disciples and associates in a constant shower of boundless love and solicitude: It was this universal love of his which tied them all to him, and through him to spiritual life. He thus combined in himself the finest qualities of the head, the heart and the soul. (4) He wrote a number of outstanding books with the sole purpose of serving an urgent spiritual need of mankind; this proved that he could move with rare ease and attain exceptional heights in both the fields of intellectual scholarship and spiritual realisation; he thus excelled in *Sabdajnāna* as well as in *Nihsabdajnāna*. (5) Gurudeva gathered all these exceptional achievements to his credit while, for more than half his life, he lived under the ever-present shadow of a dread disease like T. B, and continuously suffered from many other ailments too numerous to mention! And yet his face beamed with beatific spiritual joy, at all times of the day and night! Further, the boundless energy and enthusiasm he displayed in all his activities, kept his associates on their toes and on the run at all times of the day and night! He thus combined in his person intense, continuous physical suffering, with ever-flowing spiritual energy and bliss. (6) Gurudeva successfully managed to hide his exceptional spiritual stature behind the

facade of continuous spiritual austerities; in his talks, speeches and writings also, he managed to keep himself hidden by making a practice of always expressing himself ' through the words of another', but while keeping himself hidden, he scattered broadcast the secrets of spiritual life which were kept well-hidden for centuries. This he did, to fulfil the need of this Age. Modern Man and his Age owe this great saint a debt of gratitude which, well, they can hardly ever repay !



# The Traditional Proofs of God's Existence

by S. K. Gupta, M. A.

The existence of God is rather to be realised than proved. In all ages man did realise God. The proofs are adduced in support of such realisation. Says William James: "The unreasoned and immediate assurance is the deep thing in us, the reasoned argument is but a surface exhibition. Instinct leads; intelligence does but follow."\*<sup>1</sup> Galloway affirms the same in his statement "their (proofs of the existence of God) ostensible function has rather been to confirm religious belief than to create it."<sup>2</sup> The Indian attitude is the same. Sankara and other Vedantins believed in God on scriptural authority. Subsequently reasonings were put forward in support of the belief. Faith in God is ingrained in man. That is human nature. To deny God is unnatural. This natural faith in God is accentuated by intuition. Poets have greater capacity for intuition than the common man. They find in nature God's handiwork. A beautiful flower on a natural scenery is manifestation of Divinity. Poets have the eye for it. Mystics can see more of God in the world than mere poets. In them the natural faith in God is still more accentuated. They are the persons who ultimately can have direct realisation of God. Faith in God can be developed infinitely through regular *yogic* practice. Such faith is not anti-rational. Reason comes forward to support such natural faith. By itself reason is not adequate to prove God's existence. Starting from facts of the world as premises to arrive at the existence of God as conclusion is fallacious. As Galloway says here we put more in the conclusion than what can be logically justified by the premises.<sup>3</sup> Proofs of the exist-

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\*1) The Varieties of Religious experience by William James.—P. 13.

2) The Philosophy of Religion by Galloway P. 38.

3) The Philosophy of Religion by Galloway. P-381



nce of God judged strictly by the rules of Logic, do not carry conviction. When based on faith in mystical realisation they have utmost religious value.

### Ontological Argument

Let us examine the ontological Argument: Anselm argues "God is Being than which a greater cannot be conceived; but an idea which existed only in thought would not be so great as one which existed in reality as well as in thought; therefore God must be necessarily existing."<sup>1</sup> Against this argument Kant argued that the idea of a perfect being entails the idea of his existence which is not real existence. Descartes puts the argument like this: "that the very notion of God, the most perfect Being, carries existence as necessarily with it as the idea of a triangle carries with it the equality of the sum of its angles to two right angles."<sup>2</sup> The same attack of Kant holds good here as well. From the idea of God as the most perfect the idea of existence follows necessarily. This is not real existence: Existence is not part of the content of an idea. Hegel's ontological Argument is as follows: "God expressly has to be what can only be thought as existing. His notion involves being"... "Certainly it would be strange if, the notion, the very inmost of mind, if even the 'Ego' or above all the concrete totality we call God, were not rich enough to include so poor a category as being, the very poorest and the most abstract of all." With Hegel the idea of God is different from the idea of one hundred dollars or idea of any finite object. In God, thought and reality are identical. In other words in God, thought is realised as being. Now such realisation is necessarily mystical. In the empirical world such an experience does not occur. It is to be noticed here that Hegel refers to God as "the very inmost of mind" and then "the concrete totality." This is a positive mystical experience. According to Ranade when God is realised He is experienced within as well as outside. Self is realised as God and then the same God is seen in all objects: The same idea occurs in the Gita.

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1) The Philosophy of Religion by Galloway—P-382.

2) Ibid P-382.

*Sarvabhutastha ātmānam sarvabhutāni ca ātmani  
Iksate yogayuktātmā sarvatra samadarsanah — VI. 29*

Self is seen in all objects and all objects are seen in Self by the *Yogi*. Everywhere the same God is seen. Hegel's dialectical movement of thought from thesis to antithesis and rising to synthesis ultimately ending in the highest synthesis-God, has mystical significance. Thought has immediacy. This... immediacy is felt partially at each synthesis of thesis and antithesis. At the highest synthesis-God, there is complete immediacy. At that level thinking is at once being. This is the level where *sat* and *cit* are experienced as one. The rational is found to be real.

The Ontological Argument according to Ranade is psychological approach to ultimate Reality. We start here from within: We concentrate on Self. When there is Self-realisation there is God realisation. Self is perceived as pure consciousness which has existence. Ranade calls it Self-consciousness. *Taittiriya Upanishad* asserts "The Absolute is existence, consciousness and Infinity". Realisation of such consciousness is Self-consciousness which is also Existence. The mystical realisation of Self is simultaneous realisation of its Existence. He who knows God becomes God. "Thought and Reality" in terms of Hegel are here identical. According to *Aitareya Upanishad* Self-consciousness is the ultimate existence. All worldly realities (existences) are rooted in Self-consciousness. Identification of consciousness (or Self-consciousness) and Existence is the Ontological Argument. To put in the words of Ranade "God to them (*Upanisadic* Philosophers) is not God unless He is identical with Self-consciousness. Existence is not Existence if it does not mean Self-consciousness. Reality is not reality if it does not express throughout its structure the marks of pure Self-consciousness.

John Caird's view of the Ontological Argument is very similar. In his *Philosophy of Religion* he states: "the true meaning of the Ontological proof is this, that as spiritual beings our whole conscious life is based on a universal consciousness, an Absolute Spiritual life which is not a mere subjective notion or conception, but which carries with it proof of its necessary

existence or reality.”<sup>1</sup> Here the fact, that our conscious life is based on a universal Self-consciousness which necessarily exists, is a matter of mystical realisation. It is Self-realisation in terms of Ranade.

### Cosmological Argument

From the world as an effect, thought moves on to God as the cause. Logically it is unwarranted, as there is more in the conclusion than what can be justified by the premise. From a finite effect a finite cause can be inferred but not an Infinite, All-powerful Being. John Caird says “its (Cosmological Argument) truth and significance consists in this, that it is the first step of the movement by which according to the secret logic of religion, thought advances to a higher and richer idea”.<sup>2</sup> He further adds that the very consciousness of the finite, implies some awareness of the infinite. When we say, this is finite, we are aware of what is not finite, that what is Infinite. Only when there is some idea of Infinite, that finite can be adjudged as so. In the words of Caird “If we are wholly finite we should never be conscious of our finitude.”<sup>3</sup> Now the idea of Infinite can be negative and also have positive content. The positive idea of Infinite is that which is complete, Self-sufficient and from which the finite world arises. We enter here into the arena of Mysticism. Thought is not adequate to grasp the positive Infinite. In Self-realisation which is a mystical experience, we realise what is real Infinite. The *Upanisadic* conception of Infinite is that from which the world originates, by which it lives and into which it is finally absorbed (*tajjalān*). As Ranade points out, God is conceived in the *Upanisads* as the source of all power and energy in the world. God is infinite “unmanifest Power which lies at the back of the so-called manifest powers of nature and mind and which must therefore be understood as the primary reality”.<sup>4</sup> The forces of Nature are only partial manifestations of the infinite power of the Absolute. Not only physical powers but also mental powers are manifestations of God.

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1) Philosophy of Religion by J. Caird—P. 150.

2) Ibid —P. 131.

3) Ibid —P. 128.

4) A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy by R. D. Ranade, P. 187,

### Teleological Argument

Teleology may mean either design or order in nature. Ranade makes such a distinction: "Those who believe in personal God, believe in design; Those who believe in an impersonal Absolute, believe only in Order."<sup>1</sup> From a beautiful workmanship such as a wonderful flower we may infer a personal God, external to the object, expressing design. From harmonious relationship or order among objects of nature, for example the sun, the moon, the earth and other heavenly bodies, an impersonal immanent Absolute may be inferred. In the *Upanisads* it is stated that the sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies, remain in their position, due to the command of God. Seasons following one another in regular order, exemplify an order in time. The Absolute keeps the world in order "preventing it from rocking to and fro, at the slightest gust of chance."

The traditional teleological argument as we get in Western Philosophy, is argument from design. From design observed in nature, a designer is inferred. Against such argument Kant's criticism holds good. He remarked: "All that the argument from design can possibly prove is an architect of the world, who is very much limited by the adaptability of materials in which he works". Such a God cannot be regarded as all-powerful. He is limited by His materials. He has to overcome intractability of matter. The conception of immanent teleology, as we get in Ranade's philosophy, is free from this attack. The *Advaita* conception of *Brahman* pervading the whole universe which is superimposed upon Him, exemplifies such immanent teleology. Being immanent, God maintains order in the world. The world show, which proceeds from *Brahman's* magical power or *Māya*, is orderly. *Brahman* is not only the cause of the world but also preserves the world in order. J. Caird in his *Philosophy of Religion*, gives us a similar kind of teleology.<sup>2</sup> Instead of taking particular examples of design in nature, he takes the world as a whole. He conceives of the world as "one vast self-consistent system, one organic whole, one self-evolving self-realising idea,

1) A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy P.-189,

2) *Philosophy of Religion* P.-139



infusing the lucidity of reason into all things, potentially present in the lowest order of existence, slowly advancing itself, without cleft or arbitrary leap, from lower to higher." God is here depicted as functioning teleologically from within the world. Both the teleological and cosmological arguments start with the world and arrive at God as its source. God is the power behind the world and such a power works orderly or systematically. Ranade calls it the cosmological approach to Ultimate Reality.

### Moral Argument

After severe criticism of the three traditional proofs, Kant puts forward his Moral Argument to prove God's Existence. Our moral nature demands that the Highest Good of man be realised. The Summum Bonum or the Highest Good contains two elements-virtue and happiness. Virtue is the state of fulfilment of all our duties which is accompanied by a sense of satisfaction or happiness. If a virtuous person be unhappy, virtue loses its significance. God guarantees the union of virtue and happiness and makes realisation of the Highest Good possible.

The Moral Argument of Kant is an advancement over the three traditional proofs. Intellect alone is not adequate to grasp the Ultimate Reality or demonstrate its existence. The higher values of life provide a greater justification of the existence of God. The moral value, the sense of duty, makes us feel somehow the existence of a Sublime Reality which makes morality significant. It is rather a matter of feeling than argument. This is a step towards mystical realisation of God- the highest value

Ranade in his book "The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation"<sup>1</sup> writes that certain manuscripts of Kant were published after his death by Erich Adickes in 1920 wherein Kant indicates that even his Moral Argument is not adequate to prove God's existence. His existence is a matter of direct realisation. Such realisation can occur if the Categorical Imperative be strictly followed. The Categorical Imperative issues from God and therefore can lead us to God. When God is realised, He is felt within us. "He is immanent in human spirit."<sup>2</sup> With further

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1) The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation by R. D. Ranade. P-194.

2) Ibid P.-296.



mystical advancement, God is realised to be "not merely in him (man) but about him and over him". Kant's mysticism is a corroboration of Ranade's mystical experience. Ranade in his famous books, Maharashtra Mysticism and Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, has shown that when God is realised, He is first experienced within. Thereafter the same God is experienced all around. He is in the front. He is behind. He is to the right. He is also on the left side: He is above as well as below. Mystics all over the world have similar experience. Kant goes further. He writes that at last the realisation comes "I AS MAN, AM MYSELF THIS BEING." This is *Shankara's* mysticism. Ranade calls it Identitate Philosophy. The *Gītā* contains the same idea. After having attained the companionship of God, ultimately the devotee merges in Him.

*Bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yavānyaschasmi tatvataḥ*

*Tato mām totvato jnātvā visate iadanāntaram*

XVIII—55.

Through devotion the devotee comes to know my real nature and thereafter he merges in me.



# Gurudeva's Contribution to Indian Philosophy\*

C. P. Nair

EVER since the dawn of civilization, the human mind has been trying to solve the riddles of existence, to probe beneath the illusive veil of nature. Problems of life and death, of pleasure and pain have agitated the minds of saints and savages alike: in fact, these 'obstinate questionings' belong to the permanent stuff of human nature. It is this innate longing in the human soul to discover a sustaining faith and to realise the nature of the ultimate Reality that forms the basis of philosophic thought.

Thus, by its very definition, philosophy cannot be just an intellectual pastime or an academic exercise. It must be correlated to, and rooted in human experience if it is to subserve the needs of the soul. A philosophical conclusion must, no doubt, be able to stand the test of logic in the light of reason: But the more it is based on a personal and direct apprehension of the truth, the greater will be its validity.

It is here that lies the significance of Gurudev Ranade's contribution to Indian philosophy: The truths he discovered and taught were the result not merely of a cold, cerebral process: they have the authentic ring of deeply felt personal experience. They were the result of his own life-long *sadhana*. Ranade was a mystic first and a philosopher afterwards. In him, deep scholarship was leavened by a keenly mystical temperament. Now, the very essence of mysticism consists in a direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence. The mystic has no use for the crutches of logic and reason: a deep, intense awareness of God, arrived at through intuition, is the basis of his spiritual existence. This was the basis of Ranade's

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\* With the kind Courtesy of Bhavan's journal.

ethics too. Direct experience alone was his guide, as indeed it has been of all great mystics,—of Boehme and Aquinas, of Mira and Kabir, of Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo. Whatever he experienced, whatever he felt and whatever he realised, alone constituted his philosophy. That is why his writings have an urgency, a directness and immediacy of appeal, a prophetic ring, which we miss in conventional works on philosophy.

It may not be correct to say that Gurudev Ranade evolved anything like a new 'technique' of God-realisation through mystic contemplation. The Pathway to God is as old as Time, and while no sage or saint has claimed it as his own exclusive innovation, each has given it a different emphasis, a different orientation, as suited his purpose and temperament. This was what Ranade too did. His achievement consists in his systematic and comprehensive exposition of the intuitive path to the Divine, in a way that satisfies the thought of the modern age and can be adopted by the modern seeker after self-realisation. The strands were old, but he wove them into a new fabric.

What are the essential elements of the process of God-realisation that Ranade evolved? Reason and Faith, human effort and divine grace, have their own places in it. The seeker after truth, in the initial stages, will have to accept certain propositions as axiomatic. But as he progresses along the spiritual path, he has to rely more and more on his experience, verify the hypotheses in their light and accept or discard them. Thereafter, his own experience must be his guide until he reaches the end of his pilgrimage, when religious certitude becomes logical certainty. Needless to say, the path is arduous and the obstacles are many. The pilgrim has, therefore, to go through a process of moral self-preparation before he starts on his quest. A strong urge to have spiritual self-fulfilment, a deliberate cultivation of dispassion and concentration, and constant, soulful meditation on the Divine Name form the essential prerequisites. Ultimately, when his *sadhana* reaches the white heat of intensity and the last vestiges of egoism drop away, then indeed, the aspirant stands face to face with the Divine, and basks in the sunshine of spiritual bliss.

Such, in a brief compass, is Gurudev Ranade's chart of spiritual progression. To him, it was as much an instrument of individual uplift as of universal harmony and peace. Ranade believed that religion in the modern world had a vital mission to fulfil, as a unifying force. God, the object of intuitive realisation, is a force that is immanent in the whole universe, and there is no reason why the pursuit of this Immanent Principle should not form the silken thread binding humanity in a fraternal bond. Mysticism, he held, could bring about a harmony between diverse creeds, nations and races and achieve the ideal of a universal brotherhood. This daring vision of a kind of spiritual 'One World' is something unique in the annals of philosophic thought.

It was but natural that Ranade, who had such a deep faith in the possibility of a universal brotherhood, should accept synthesis as the cardinal tenet of his philosophy. To him, there was no inherent contradiction between reason and intuition; or between science and religion. After all, if religion deals with God, science deals with the handiworks of God; and hence science must supplement rather than supplant religion. He denies also any conflict between religion and philosophy. Both are ultimately concerned with the problem of 'the ways of God to Man', though philosophy engages itself with the intellectual side of the problem while religion approaches it from the practical angle.

This syncretic vision is reflected again in Ranade's emphasis on the common points of eastern and western thought. Thus, he highlighted the close similarity between the Absolutism of Bradley and the non-dualism of Sankara: to both, the objects of the world are an illusion, and the Absolute is the only Reality; to both, God is different from the Absolute, and unreal in comparison with it.

Ranade rendered a signal service to Indian philosophic thought by interpreting the Indian tradition to the Western mind, through his commentaries on the great primary treatises of Hinduism. He went to the original sources directly and interpreted them underscoring their aspects which are of

immediate relevance and validity in the modern context, in a terminology acceptable to the modern mind. Thus, he pointed out how the Upanishads, far from being mere subjective fancies, give us a view of Reality which would satisfy the scientific aspirations of man as well as the religions. He highlighted the intellectual curiosity, the imaginative daring, the spirit of independent enquiry and the profound insight into Man's inner being which they reveal, and which are worthy of any modern scientific mind: how they deal with the eternal enigmas confronted by the human soul; how their answers have a validity not for an age, but for all time. In thus expounding the essence of the Indian spiritual tradition to the West, Ranade takes his place with the greatest of savants, like Radhakrishnan, Max Muller and Sir John Woodroffe.

With his abiding passion for the mystic approach to God-realisation, Ranade undertook to collect, collate and edit the canticles of the mystics and saints of ancient India, like Jnaneshwar, Tukaram and Namdev. This task was with him, no doubt, a labour of love; but it was also an invaluable addition to the existing literature on mysticism. Ranade shows how these "Echoes of God's voice in the souls of men of long ago" all reflect the same doubts and disbeliefs, toils and trials, through which every aspiring soul must pass in its quest for God. And beneath the diversity of temperaments and creeds, he points out an undercurrent of unity.

"To be a philosopher," said Thoreau, "is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live, according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity and trust." It was in this sense of the term that Gurudev Ranade was a great philosopher. As Dr. Radhakrishnan so rightly said, he *lived* philosophy while others *talked* about it; it was with him, not a mere intellectual exercise but the pursuit of wisdom, and what is more, a dedicated way of life.



# Dr. Ranade's Philosophy of Approximation

Prof. B. R. Kulkarni, M. A., LL. B.

“The religious non-agnostic” Flint observe,<sup>1</sup> “holds that religious beliefs ought to have a rational basis whereas a non-religious *agnostic* holds that religious beliefs have no rational basis. The former stands for inevitability of rational proof while the latter's position is logically unjustifiable. He, - the non-religious agnostic,-has definite anti-religious beliefs; but if he is an agnostic, can those beliefs be taken to be ultimately tenable?” The whole discussion can be pinned down to a very important truth that we should neither be too confident of our knowledge about God nor *hold firmly* to anti-religious ideas though professing to be agnostics. The middle course seems to be that of a religious agnostic who opposes belief to knowledge and faith to reason. In so far as we do not have discussive knowledge about God but believe in his existence, or in so far as we cannot reason about the ultimate reality but have a firm faith in it, we are religious agnostics. Religious agnosticism is a healthy doctrine; it does not question the existence of God; it only questions the completeness of our knowledge of God. It is as though a synthesis of the thesis and anti-thesis of the two doctrines of religious non-agnosticism and non-religious agnosticism.

What is granted to man is only partial knowledge; it is only God who can be non-agnostic for he alone can be said to possess all-comprehensive knowledge, his own knowledge included. This is what divine self-consciousness means. This is what *Arjuna* meant when he said: Verily you alone know yourself by yourself (*Bhagavadgita* x. 15). God is apprehended

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1) Agnosticism PP 463 ff

by men according to their power of understanding. This power of understanding not being perfect, man has to strive towards perfection. Thus human self-consciousness has to approximate Divine self-consciousness. As regards knowledge of God, we have to traverse a path from non-religious agnosticism to religious agnosticism.

*Dr. R. D. Rānade* holds<sup>1</sup> the doctrine of approximation not merely in epistemology; that doctrine runs through the whole of his philosophy. In epistemology there is approximation to Divine Self-consciousness as Truth itself; in metaphysics to Divine self-consciousness again as Reality itself. In both the sciences it is the Divine self-consciousness which is the goal, it being an epistemologico-metaphysical concept. Now in ethics man being morally imperfect, has to strive towards moral perfection. Attainment of moral perfection as all approximation, is an infinite process. The same holds good in the realm of religion where the truth is: "not perfection but progress, not realization but approximation."

We may try to understand *Dr. Rānade's* views<sup>2</sup> on some of the epistemological problems. The ordinary process of knowledge involves three things; the *Jnātā*, *Jneya* and *Jnāna*. Can the *Atman* or the ultimate reality be known by this process? The *Atman* is not knowable in this technical meaning of the term knowledge. But this does not mean that it is only a 'matter of faith'. The unknowability of *Atman* can be explained from the 'standpoint of philosophic humility.' Again, how can the *Atman* be known if he is the eternal knower? He knows every thing but who will know him? That *Atman* is the knower may have further implications: Does the knower know himself? Can the *Atman* be split into two, one part of which is the knower and the other the known? 'This is possible in the case of the *Atman* who can dichotomise himself.' He knows himself, He is Self-conscious; nay, Self-consciousness alone constitutes the whole reality. The *Atman* is an object of mystical realisation. Thus the highest stage in epistemology is to reach the Self-consciousness. This

1. Dr. R. D. Ranade : Pathway to God in Hindi Literature : Page 197-198

2. A constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy : Pp. 270-275.

realisation, however is not an event but a process. The Self can not be realised all at once. We have to reach it by degrees and this is what is meant by approximation.

*Dr. Rānade* further points out that the Divine Self-consciousness and not human self-consciousness is the pivot of all *existence*. It is the peak of all thought. <sup>3</sup>

But Divine Self-consciousness is not only the peak of all thought; it is the peak of all existence as well. The state of knowing the *Atman* can hardly be said to be purely epistemological for knowing *Brahman* is no less than being *Brahman*. If reality can be said to be a coherent whole, then the knower of this coherent whole, must be included in that perfect whole as an irreplaceable part-for without him the coherent whole would not be really so. But this stage of perfect coherence is far off from the fragmentary human experience very much lacking in coherence. Still all human experience does not exhibit the same degree of coherence. There is a more or less here; and this doctrine is termed the degrees of reality in metaphysics. But are there really degrees of reality? Is relativity the ruling principle in the theory of existence? It cannot be, for then the 'doctrine itself will have only a relative value.'<sup>4</sup> There is absolute reality as there is absolute truth. The degrees of reality are surely the degrees of unreality- "all sublunary things being emblems of infinite error" or falsehood, - the Absolute, the emblem of absolute Reality. We have to go from falsehood to reality, from fragmentary experience to perfect coherence, infinitely long though the process may be.

And in ethics we seek to go from moral imperfection to moral perfection. For *Kant* rationality constitutes perfection. We are under a moral obligation not only to attain to *Good Will* but also to *Holy Will*. We should not be satisfied if we can behave rightly on all occasions; but the very inclination to do wrong must be eliminated. This according to *Kant* involves a striving through infinite time. Apart from the

3. The Bhagavad Gita as a Philosophy of God-realisation.-P. 192.

4. Dr. R. D. Ranade: Philosophical and other Essays. Part I. P. 108

implication of personal immortality which *Kant* draws from this assumption, we may note his assertion that 'for a rational but finite being there is possible only a *Progressus ad infinitum* from lower to higher grades of moral perfection.'<sup>5</sup> As we are not purely rational beings but creatures of sensibility it is not possible that reason should be our sole motive to the exclusion of all influence of desire. This is why *Kant* brings in the idea of asymptotic approximation to the ideal.

*Caird* has pointed out difficulties in *Kant's* idea by saying that "if passion is essentially at variance with the law of reason, then the idea of continued progress is meaningless; the task of reconciling the absolute opposites cannot even be begun. On the other hand, if there is no essential difference, the infinite progress is unnecessary. Moral life can never have the form of movement towards an external end such that all stages have value *only* with reference to the ideal.'<sup>6</sup> *Caird's* constructive suggestion is : "The principle of morality is universal and contains in it an exhaustless spring of life. The faith in the infinite power of goodness is a faith which springs up in the mind of the good man naturally and spontaneously." Thus the moral ideal is not outside the man but inside him. God resides in the heart of every being, says the *Bhagavadgita* (xviii. 61.) But the eternal principle is not equally manifest in all beings and for that, moral striving is necessary. Effort on our part is thus a necessary condition of attaining to perfection though not a sufficient condition. It is not sufficient because, self-effort alone will not take a man to perfection unless his efforts are crowned by God's Grace which will be the sufficient condition. As man ascends by his efforts, *God's* Grace descends on him; and thus there is a reciprocal causation between the necessary and sufficient conditions of man's attainment of the ideal, the two together culminating in his union with God.

Still, can we say that God's Grace is only a sufficient condition and not a necessary condition? Does it mean that God's Grace is sufficient to endow moral perfection on man but that he

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5. *Caird* : The Critical Philosophy of *Kant* Vol. II, Pp. 272-273.

6. The Critical Philosophy of *Kant* Vol. II, Pp. 281.

can attain to it by other ways also? Saying so would be putting limitations on Grace. For what other things are necessary when Grace is there? Grace is all-powerful, recognises no law of causality and is showered at His Will. Effort on man's part seems to be only a superfluous, never a sufficient, not even a necessary condition of perfection. But there lurks a danger in such a supposition. It is enough to make man relax and be lethargic. As *Sankara* points out in another connection, if man's effort is superfluous, man will attain to salvation without recourse to *Sādhana* (commentary on *Brahma Sutra* II 2.27). What we want is not a lazy dependence on God's Grace but an active self-surrender. Hence at least to induce us to the moral end, effort must be taken as indispensable. Man has to attain to virtues and leave aside vices; and carry on the work continuously and step by step, till his character is confirmed in virtue. In almost each one of his writings *Dr. Rānade* has stressed the utter necessity of moral preparation for spiritual life.

The attainment of liberation also is a gradual process. We can attain to illumination even in this life provided there are no obstacles, says the *Brahma Sutra* (III 4.51). But if the impediments are present, liberation may not come about immediately. *Vamadeva*, it is said, passed an initial life and then got illumination while in the womb of his mother. The *Gītā* also speaks of liberation being a matter of number of lives. Even when *Jivan-mukti* is attained, the saint may take some time to be completely merged in *Brahman*. We can not do better than quote *Dr. Rānade* in the original : "There might be limitations of *body* and *mind* so long as the saint subsists on earth, and hence we can never fully identify the Saint with God: On the other hand, when the Saint has left off his body, there is nothing to prevent his spirit from merging into the highest spirit."<sup>7</sup>





# Is Rational Mysticism Possible ?

( Sri Gurudev Ranade's Views )

Prof. K. D: Tangod, M. A.

Sri Gurudev Ranade is counted among mystics of modern India of whom she can be very proud: By his achievements he has added a little to the already existing spiritual glory of India. Right from his childhood he had a religious bent of mind and in 1901 Sri Bhausahab Maharaj, of Umadi initiated him into spiritual path. Thus the seed of his later spiritual greatness was sowed when he was very young. This seed yielded wonderful results, which all his associates and devotees know very well. He had said, ' spiritual life has been my aim from the beginning of my philosophic career; let me hope that it would be its culmination also. ' It is well known that this hope of his did not remain unfulfilled.

Sri Gurudev lived a life of a saint that was ' God-centred, God-inspired, God-possessed and God-intoxicated. ' In him we find a rare combination of a mystic and a philosopher. As such, he believed that God-realisation is and should be regarded as the *Summum Bonum* of human life. He preached and practised a life of intense *Sadhana* which could surely lead to this goal. According to him ' the surest and the safest and the best pathway to spiritual illumination or self-realisation is constant, and one-pointed meditation on the Divine Name with unswerving faith and whole-hearted love and devotion, ' This Name of God, it is insisted, should be imparted by a *Sadguru*, a Spiritual Teacher who has realised his identity with God. Sri Gurudev was very fortunate to find such a Teacher in Sri Bhausahab Maharaj.

Sri Gurudev was a Mystic-Philosopher. He says, " A mystic may be a philosopher but is not necessarily so. His

mystic experience is sufficient for his own elevation into Divinity; but if he philosophises, he may raise thinking humanity into a Divine Kingdom of Ends." He belongs to the famous Nimbargi Sampradaya into which he had the good fortune to be initiated very early in his life. This spiritual school is known for its rational attitude. His spiritual teacher discouraged all superstition. Because of such training he, like Ramdas, held the view that "miracles do not constitute spirituality and are not a true indication of spiritual greatness. Spiritual greatness lies only in the knowledge of the self or Atmajnana...While analysing the veracity of spiritual experiences, he sounds a cautious note that a saint should not introduce poetry in the account of his realisation." These views stand testimony to the philosophic spirit in him. Despite these views, his close associates and devotees constantly remember several miracles which happened in his life; But Sri Gurudev has warned us that these miracles should not be confused with spirituality though they may follow from it. The miracles should not receive undue importance though they may indicate at times the spiritual powers of persons from whom they come. A true mystic is he who, in spite of being responsible for miracles, does not remain contented with and lost in them.

Sri Gurudev advocates Rational Mysticism: It may be doubted whether rational mysticism is possible and involves self-contradiction: It may be instructive to know in what sense he thought it to be possible. As an undergraduate he had dislike for philosophy and therefore he offered Mathematics at the B. A. in preference to philosophy. Nevertheless, the impulse of philosophy was so strong in him as to make him undertake a serious study of both Eastern and Western philosophy later and offer philosophy at the M. A. Facing the problem of justification of spiritual experience in terms of philosophic thought he began a serious study of European philosophy, with the intent of finding in Eastern and Western philosophic thought a justification for the spiritual life. In his opinion the problem for the philosophy of immediate future is to place mysticism on a truly philosophic basis. Far from being a contradiction in terms rational mysticism is a truism.

Mysticism denotes that attitude of mind which involves a direct, immediate, first-hand intuitive apprehension of God. It implies silent enjoyment of God. Rational mysticism justifies mysticism as a scientific doctrine by freeing it from rusty chains of mysteriousness, inactivity and occultism to which it was wrongly confined. It is an attempt as far as possible to understand the supra-rational element in the mystical experience. It is the rational analysis, though it is bound to be inadequate to express the 'extra' in the religious experience. It enquires as to what is the faculty of God-realisation, what is its nature, whether it receives material from outside (*i.e. peripheral initiation*) or whether it spins from itself. (*central initiation*). It has to answer questions such as, Is self-knowledge possible and if so, how? What are the criteria of spiritual experience?

Sri Gurudev has supported the opinion of the Indian Seers that faculty of Intuition is the faculty of Mystical realisation. It lies at the back of all faculties in man which ordinary psychology recognises. Instead of contradicting Intelligence, Feeling or Will it lies at the back of them all. To recognise the role of intuition in Mystical realisation is not to belittle or overlook the role of reason. Rational mysticism implies a harmonious development of both reason and intuition. It is giving to reason what belongs to reason and to intuition what belongs to intuition. Reason receives illumination from intuition in the form of saving experiences. Intuition has thus come to fulfil and not to destroy reason. By undertaking a rational analysis of mystical experience, reason tries to isolate the unnamed something in it, something which does not respond to the call of reason. But this isolation itself is very important; it makes us aware that beyond the sphere of reason there is a vast arena, by no means untrodden but where reason is forbidden to enter and where intuition is the only guide.

Another way of understanding rational mysticism is taking Jnana as illumination. By the word Jnana Sri Gurudev does not mean ordinary discursive knowledge but intuitive knowledge. Real knowledge is thus very much compatible with devotion. There is no contradiction between Jnani and Bhakta. "On the

other hand, the Bhagavadgita regards a real Jnani as a Bhakta of the highest type”.

One wonders how and why Sri Gurudev accepts that rational mysticism is possible. To be clear on this point one has to remind oneself that Sri Gurudev was a unique personality in whom a mystic and a philosopher happily co-existed. As a mystic he could not overlook intuition, the mystical faculty and as a philosopher he could not overlook reason, the faculty on which the philosopher mainly depends. \*

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\* The author is indebted to Sri Gurudev Ranade and his disciple Prof. B. R. Kulkarni. This article is directly based on the information available in their works.

# Message Eternal of Kannad Saints

( As Expounded by Gurudev )

( A Student of Karnatak Mysticism )

## Kannad Saints :

The great Kannad Saints can be divided into two classes : Some are *Saivites*; while others are *Vaiṣṇavites*. But as they advanced in their spiritual life, as they attained higher spiritual experiences, they gradually rose superior to those class-limitations, entered into the Kingdom of God and actually became the devotees of Divinity. They assumed the role of Mystics, God-realisers. In the course of their development, these Mystics gained certain spiritual experiences that were common to both the classes, and hence these experiences brought about reconciliation between them. As pointed out by Sri. Gurudev Dr. Ranade : “ *Seṣa* ( spiritual vision of a serpent ) is welcome both to the *Saivās* and *Vaiṣṇavās*: *Saivās* make *Seṣa* into a necklace which decorates the neck of their God *Siva* and *Vaiṣṇavas* look upon *Seṣa* as the resting couch of *Viṣṇu*. So it is this *Seṣa* who reconciles these two schools of thought. ” The same thing is true in the case of other spiritual experiences as well. Dr. Ranade has also tried to show that their Pathway to God which embodies their Message Eternal to mankind is essentially one and the same. He has pointed out its general nature and has tried to trace its different common aspects in the spiritual literature of these Saints. We intend to briefly deal with this problem here, in the light of Dr. Ranade’s discussion in his monumental work on Karnatak Mysticism.

## Nature of the Pathway :

“ If we make a comparative study of the philosophies and religions of the world ” observes Dr. Ranade, “ and especially



of the lives and teachings of those, who, in the various stages of humanity and in different ages and lands, have walked on the path of God, we shall see that there are certain broad characteristics common to the pathway which they have all trodden in the attainment of God. These might, for convenience sake, be summarised under five heads. First, there are certain incentives which prompt men to spiritual life. Then, there is the question of moral and spiritual preparation which they must tackle before they can hope to advance on the pathway. Thirdly, they have to keep before themselves certain exemplars of conduct and attainment which they must necessarily follow. This they cannot do unless they have defined to themselves, both theoretically and practically the nature and functions of God in relation to the exemplars above-mentioned. When the relationship between the exemplars and God has been defined, they have to tread the path themselves, before they can be convinced about the reality of the experiences of those who have gone before them. Finally after having walked on the Pathway for a long time, and through travails and turmoils of body and mind, of nature and society, they can envisage to themselves certain land-marks, certain lamp-posts, which will help them to walk with courage and confidence on the Pathway to God and attain to the highest ideal they have been seeking. ”

Thus, the Pathway to God chalked out by Gurudeva has the following five stages :

1. Incentives to Spiritual Life.
2. Moral Preparation:
- 3: Relation between Saints and God.
4. Spiritual Pilgrimage.
5. Mystical Experience.

The first stage may be termed Emotional Preparation; the second, Moral Preparation, the third, Intellectual Preparation; the fourth, Intuitional Preparation; while the fifth stage consists of the actual Mystical Experience along with its effects on the seeker,

These five stages depict the five aspects of spiritual life. They are, however, not to be regarded as water-tight compartments, coming one after another or resting one above the other. There is a fine harmonious intermingling among them. In the course of their gradual evolution, each helps the other and is being helped by the other. They, thus, go on evolving and reach perfection only after mingling and losing themselves in the Eternal Perfection viz Godhead.

Let us now see how all these stages are present in the spiritual literature of some of the prominent Mystic-Saints of Karnatak.

### **Incentives :**

What are the main Incentives to Spiritual Life mentioned by the Kannad Saints ? They are of the following three types : ( i ) philosophical, ( ii ) psychological and ( iii ) moral. The first philosophical incentive is the great spiritual ideal of constant praise of God, of constant meditation of God, of constant vision of God, of losing oneself in the glory of God and of communion with the Foundational Reality. Such service of God has been held as the highest ideal, the pursuit of which would lend blessedness and glory to this precious human life. The second incentive is the consciousness of the misery of worldly life as contrasted with the joy of the life with God. This has been depicted in a fine poetic way by the poet *Kudaluresh*. The poet observes a child crying and struggling incessantly in a cradle. He also observes occasional smiles on the sweet lips of the baby. He imagines that the child is crying because of the consciousness of the future life of misery it would be required to lead. He also thinks that its smiles might be an outcome of the occasional glimpses of God which it might have got in its infancy. A contemplation of such a strong contrast between the life of misery and joy, due to the oblivion and vision of God, will certainly act as a powerful incentive. The first psychological incentive is the deceit and destruction caused by the senses. The natural attraction of the senses towards their objects and their repulsion from the objects associated with the service of God, cause a great havoc

in our lives. So we must rise superior to the senses and utilise them for a higher and proper purpose viz. the service of God. The second incentive of this class is frustration in life. This incentive of hopeless helplessness will instil into the mind of man the superiority of the power of God and force him to bend his knees before Him. The preponderance of vices and the necessity of destroying them is a moral incentive. The doctrine of the sleep of ignorance, the Evanescence of the world, and the Universal Reign of Anxiety, are some other incentives. Finally, the Grace and Vision of God are the ends to which all these incentives are expected to lead the aspirant.

### **Moral Preparation :**

Let us now try to ascertain the nature of Moral Preparation, as enjoined by the Karnatak Saints, not merely for entering into spiritual life, but also for developing it and ultimately making oneself perfect in it. The proper utilisation of human life for developing spirituality is the first topic of their discussion, straightening of the human mind is the next one. Human mind is reputed for its crookedness. It has its twists and turns of vices and wickedness. So the Saint of Nimbargi prays God to remove them and make his mind straight, so that it may be free from the desire of other people's property and women, flattery of the rich and censure of the Saints. Next comes a great apostrophe to the tongue by another Saint. He advises the tongue to observe absolute silence, avoid talking ill of the good and rising into fury, live in the company of the spiritual teacher and give itself up to the utterance of God's Name. In another beautiful poem containing an agricultural metaphor, another Saint wants us to remove our vices, cultivate virtues and sow the seed of Guru's instructions, grow a rich crop of spiritual experience and live upon the bliss of God-enjoyment. The next poem advises us not to allow our initial devotion to falter or diminish. On the other hand it should increase day by day. It should be free from doubts of any kind. Then only shall we be able to reach the immaculate God. Then another poem describes the influence of ignorance on the human being. Under its spell, man is unable to see the divine light, as illusion, despair and sin spread like a thick covering over it. He hugs his body, considering it to be

his very Self, and abandons the pursuit of God. Hence the poet prays God to remove this darkness and grant him the vision of His feet.

### Saints and God

We shall now deal with the relation between Saints and God as pointed out by Kannada Saints. We would present three aspects of the great spiritual idea which an aspirant desires to achieve. We shall first describe the main characteristics of saints who are really embodiments of this ideal. We would, then, point out the nature of God, as realised and enjoined by the saints, and also the sweet relation of devotion on the one side and grace on the other, that exists between saints and God. This would bring about the intellectual preparation of the seeker by rationally convincing him about the supreme value of the spiritual ideal which he has placed before himself.

The 'Saint' is phenomenon common to all religions. Of course, certain religions stress one aspect of Saints, others, other aspects; but the essence of Sainthood is one and the same. It consists in deep devotion towards God, vision of God inside and outside and entire self-surrender to God. Such a saint is beyond fear, beyond sorrow and beyond torment. None dare torment him with impunity. His face shines with the light of the moon and the sun. His body is very clean even without a bath and his mind is intoxicated even in the absence of wine. He is asleep while fully awake; he is in a sort of *Samādhi*. Such being the case, a Saint is beyond dualism. It matters little to him whether he is a prince or a pauper, a *Yogi* or a *Bhogī*. He believes that all things are done by God-whether good or bad, and acts accordingly. Hence he is the highest type of man.

The problem of God is a very difficult one. It is the central problem of all philosophy and religion. It is not fully discussed here; nor could full justice be done to such a vast subject in such a short space. So only an outline of the problem is attempted. One of the most important points discussed in all philosophies and religions is: 'Is God Personal or Impersonal?' This problem alone has received some attention here. In this



connection it has been pointed out that, in a developmental stage, a saint acquires new experiences and he formulates his doctrine of God in consonance with those experiences. A study of the songs of the great *Purandardas* will clearly show that there are three stages of development - the personalistic stage, the personal-impersonal stage and finally the impersonalistic stage. In one of his songs, *Vijayadas* tells us, how he is carried on, from a state of darkness and delusion, to a stage in which he could see with the torch of divine meditation, the splendour of God, attended by a number of divine associates, every one of whom looked like *Visnu* Himself. This description of God encompasses all the stand-points viz. the personalistic, the pluralistic and the monistic stand-points. *Purandardas* tells us in one of his songs that Lord *Krisna* is actually standing before him. In a second song he describes the Child God as both with form and without form. He saw the form and yet it was formless. In a third song he is giving utterance to *Upanisadic* description of Reality when he says : "God or *Brahman* neither appears nor disappears; it has neither beginning nor end." Such descriptions of God are to be found in other saints also. Says *Kudaluresh* in one of his songs, "He become one with the 'great lustre' which fills the illimitable space." "It is impossible to express the joy of the formless experience; the beatific joy is in-expressible by words of mouth." This is the nature of God which the saints have realised.

The relation, in which a saint stands to God, is reflected in the four types of attitudes of saints : i) The philosophical attitude, ii) The attitude of prayer, iii) The attitude of quarrel, and iv) The mystical attitude. The first and the last attitudes reflect the relation of identity between the saint and God. While in the second and the third, is reflected the relation of devotion on the one hand and grace on the other. In the first, is seen the relation of a Saint with *Nirguna* God and in the next two with *Saguna* God, while, in the last is to be found his relation with both *Saguna* and *Nirguna* God. A couple of *Vachanas* of *Basaveswar* speaks about the omnipresence and omnipotence of God. It has been stated therein that if God encompasses the world from the point of view of space, a devotee encompasses God from the point of view of love and



devotion. There is also the inter-immanence of God and the devotee. God fills the devotee and the devotee fills God. God is mirrored in the devotee as well. This is about omnipresence. Similarly, God is stated to be omniscient. He knows the devotee; the devotee also knows God and therefore, knows the omniscient. The same is the case with omnipotence. If God is all-powerful, the devotee is not less so. This is about the *Nirguna* aspect of God. The attitude of prayer and quarrel, expressed in a few songs, is an out-come of the underlying devotion and surrender of a devotee towards a *Saguna* God, the object of both being the acquisition of His grace. Finally, the mystical attitude reflected in some songs, is directed towards both the aspects of God. And the saints have tried to establish in them, their identity with God. Not only that, they have also pointed out a triune unity between God, devotee and saint.

This is the great ideal which is expected to silence all intellectual doubts and inspire the aspirant to tread the Pathway to God with steady devotion.

### **Spiritual Pilgrimage :**

Then follows the actual Spiritual Pilgrimage which begins with the initiation by a worthy spiritual teacher. It proceeds along the path of deep devotion and surrender (at the feet of the Master,) on the part of the disciple, and of the steady pursuit of the *Sādhana* of Meditation on the Divine Name as prescribed by him. Finally it culminates in the realisation of God.

What determines the worth of a spiritual teacher? What is his nature and what are his functions? A spiritual teacher is God objectified. There is a final identity between the spiritual teacher and God. He is a great wonder-worker. He brings about a great transformation in the outlook of his disciple merely by his touch and *Mantra*. He brings the fickle mind of his disciple under control, creates in him an all-absorbing and all-encompassing love of God and enables the disciple to approach him, both in meritorious deeds as well as in realisation. He thus makes his disciple like himself. The spiritual teacher is like a snake-charmer. He takes away the poisonous

fangs of the serpent of sense and through his grace, enables the *spiritons* to re-enter the ant-hill of his body so that they may ultimately devour the serpent as well as the ant-hill. The spiritual teacher is an embodiment of Mercy. He fore-fulfils all the desires of his disciples. Wherever such a spiritual teacher lives there is bound to be auspiciousness and prosperity, both material and spiritual-especially spiritual.

The functions of a spiritual teacher can be classified as i) Metaphysical, ii) Axiological, iii) Moral and iv) Mystical. i) The driving away of the darkness of illusion and infatuation, making the mind rest in the Eternal and establishing the identity between the Self and God, are his metaphysical functions. ii) The destroying of all egoism and making the disciple participate in beatification and raising him to the plane of liberation are his axiological functions. iii) His moral function consists in giving guidance and strength to his disciples so that they might conquer all the robbers viz. passions. The fire of his grace burns all the thorns of life viz. infatuation, honour-dishonour, wealth, woman and land and so on. He further saves the disciples from sin, calamity and even death. iv) A spiritual teacher is the generous giver of all good. He gives a generous *Mantra* which is the bestower of consummate good. To meditate with its help is to take life to its perfection. He thus confers a new spiritual birth by showing the disciple his spiritual form. Through his grace, the vision of God spreads everywhere both inside and outside, and fills him with illimitable joy. This is the mystical function of a spiritual teacher.

We shall now try to give an idea about the variety of feelings generated in the devoted heart of a faithful disciple. There are disciples on whom the grace of the Guru has descended and there are others on whom it is yet to descend. Those who are the recipients of the grace are full of the feeling of gratefulness and praise, for their Gurus. For the vision, touch and unison of the Divinity endowed by him, the disciple expresses his deep sense of gratitude to his Master. But the disciple, who is still hankering after the grace, incessantly prays his Guru-whom he believes to be as good as God Himself-to shower his blessings upon him, so that he may have a constant vision of God and

live upon His Grace. There are three types of such faithful disciples described in three different songs: i) Those that exhibit a defective, pessimistic and suffering mind, ii) Those that exhibit a gladdened, exhilarating and elative mind and iii) Those that offer a synthesis of these two attitudes-the two mixed together in a mystical way. The disciple of the last type is the ideal disciple. The following qualities that he possesses and exhibits are worth-developing by all the aspirants. Such a disciple is born upon earth like Faith incarnate and like Penance resplendent. He is absolutely unmindful of his own greatness and ever singing the glory of his Master only. He thus loves to become a veritable flute in the hands and on the lips of his Master. He milks the wish-fulfilling cow and distributes the milk to the society and even to the world. This disciple is more than camphor because camphor illumines and glorifies the Image of the Lord with its brilliant flame no doubt, but it disappears along with the flame, while the disciple immortalises both himself and his Master,

**The Name of God** is a matter of supreme importance in spiritual *Sādhana*. Meditation on God's Name has been practised and preached, from times immemorial, in all the principal theistic religions of the world. Its power and value has received universal approbation and admiration. The Name of God has been indentified with God Himself and its utterance with the Knowledge of *Brahman*. All the saints have spoken very highly about the Name and have attached special metaphysical and mystical significance, not only to the different Names but also to their syllables. They have advocated the utterance of the Name, both in prosperity as well as in adversity, in fact, in all the conditions of life, so that we may not lose our heads in weal, and hearts in woe. If the Name is repeated with full devotion, it is sure to contribute to material as well as spiritual progress, sinlessness and God-realisation.

*Purandardas* traces the origin of this tradition of Meditation on the Name of God, to the great saint and devotee of yore viz. Nārad. It was this saint who is believed to have sown the Divine Seed of *Nāma*, which, in course of time, germinated, sprouted, began to shoot up and became a flower and a fruit,

and continued to fulfil the wishes of all the devotees. However, it is not easy to secure this Divine Name. We can only get it by paying the heavy price of sinlessness and surrender. The power of *Nāma* is so great that under its protecting wings, a devotee does not care even for God Himself. It is considered by him to be superior to God. Along with this supreme power, the Name is associated with supreme bliss as well. Divine Name is a *Kāmadhenu*, wish-fulfilling cow. She comes to us uninvited. She is ever ready to protect those that remember her. We must send our mind to her as her calf and place before her, the fodder of devotion. When her udders of compassion become full, and ready to discharge milk, we must employ our hands of consciousness, milk the cow and enjoy the bliss of God-realisation. This sublime description of milking this *Kāmadhenu*, clearly shows how we should meditate on the Name. Here as well as in some other songs, great stress is laid on devotion. Mere mechanical repetition of the Name or the formal singing of His Praise, will not take us nearer the desired fruit of realisation. God has no relish for such dry things. These must issue from a heart replete with devotion. Then alone will the devotee realise his Goal.

The topic that would be next discussed is **Methodology of Meditation** that the great Kannada Mystics have practised. Methodology or science of Method is a very important topic. The whole of Methodology would not be discussed here. A few important points only would be dealt with... The first point to be noted, is the necessity and significance of vision in mysticism. The poet saint *Sarpabhūṣaṇa* wants us to place our *Bilva Patra* upon the Lord. The two eyes and the nose constitute the three-leaved *Bilva Patra* involving the fixing of the gaze upon the tip of the nose. This will enable the devotee, through the grace of God, to see some Divine Light. The second point is the efficacy of concentration. In a fine continued metaphor on the practice of shooting at the target of Brahman, the poet *Cīdānand* describes the importance of a steady posture, perfect silence and concentration of eyes. The third point is the value of the spinal energy and its proper utilisation. This energy may not be merely some fluid which flows through the hollow of the spina<sup>l</sup>



cord. It may also be the carrier of the spiritual power. In a triple song, Saint *Nijaguni* describes the meditation on the three *Lingas* practised and preached by him: The *Iṣṭa Ling* is a phenomenal *Ling*. It is to be meditated upon on the palm of the hand, as a symbol of *Nād*, *Bindu* and *Kalā*. The *Prāṇa Ling* is a mystical *Ling* a *Ling* of Divine Light. It is, in the words of Bacon, Janus-faced. It looks once at the *Iṣṭa Ling*, and at other times at the *Bhāva Ling*. It is to be meditated upon, in the heart. The *Bhāva Ling* is a philosophic *Ling*. It is all - pervasive. It shines through the other two *Lingas*, which are its manifestations. It is the 'original cause,' 'all spectator', 'pure bliss' without a parallel. The *Bhāva Ling* is to be meditated upon, as such, in the head, for attaining the highest spiritual realisation. These are, in short, some of the salient points in the Methodology of Meditation adopted and advocated by the Kannada Mystics.

### **Mystical Experience :**

Finally we shall present a grand panorama of the rich variety of mystical experiences enjoyed by the Kannada mystics and the supreme mystical-heights reached by them. Really "The mystical experiences which have been recorded by the Karnatak Mystics surpass, in their denouement and literary expression, almost all the experiences that have been recorded elsewhere. At first, we shall discuss the *Criteria* and *Genesis* of spiritual experience in general. The criteria to be discussed are not the following ones of Indian Philosophy viz. *Pratyakṣa* (direct evidence), *Anumāna* (inference), *Upamā* (analogy) and *ṣabda* (authority); nor are they the criteria of Modern Contemporary Philosophy viz. the realistic criterion of Correspondence; the idealistic one of Coherence; and the pragmatic one of Utility. But they are the practical, mystical criteria. They are discussed here along with some philosophical and moral criteria. So far as philosophic criteria are concerned *Nijaguni* tells us that Reality is beyond words, or thought or imagination. It is Eternal and Infinite both in time and space and is unique and blissful. About the Moral criteria *Mahipati* tells us that religion is the crest of morality. He thus stresses morality and makes it a regular criterion. Like *Nijaguni* he



also says : Expression presumes a duality while experience presumes a unity. So experience cannot be attained by mere expression. Super-sensuousness is a mystical criterion. The vision of spiritual seeds involves a kind of supersensuous experience. In a supersensuous experience, interchange of the functions of different senses may take place. The eye may be able to hear and the ear may be able to see, because there is a unity of apperception lying behind all these experiences. This is about the Criteria in general. In regard to the Genesis, we are told how the beginning of spiritual experience takes place. All the saints tell us that it begins with the experience of pearls and jewels. The sight of these pearls is, thus, the threshold of spiritual experience. This pearl is subtler than a hair's breadth. It has no hole, yet it is priceless and peerless. The pearl shines with a variety of changing colours, the colours being inside the pearl and not merely hanging on it or in the air. The greatness of this pearl reveals itself in course of time. The vision of such a pearl confers immortality on an aspirant as it is the vision of God Himself. Lastly *Mahalingarang* describes the spiritual jewel bedecked with pearls, which shines everywhere, both inside and outside-especially in the devout hearts.

Then we should deal with Morphic, Photic, Phonic and other mystical experiences. These spiritual experiences resemble those that are gathered by the senses but unlike the sense-experiences, they are gained from within, by a sort of intuition and not from without. Like the experience of pearls, the experience of what is called '*Para Bindu*' by the mystics, or the '*spiritual atom*' as we may call it, is also one of the earliest of such Morphic experiences. Morphos means form. There are many such experiences of form. Later on the spiritual realiser sees a string of pearls, creepers of corals, etc. The vision of 'Burning fire' 'Flash of Lightening' either as a rod or a creeper or branch, are Photic or light experiences which the Kannada Saints have described. They even talk about "dazzling light of a crore of suns". There are experiences in which both form and light are combined together. The vision of a luminous *Atma Ling* is such an experience. Any form which God assumes, from a *spiriton* to *spacelessness*, is called '*Vastu*' by these Saints. This *Vastu* is the root of all liberation while

alive. The vision of this form of God itself constitutes *Jivan-Mukti* or Liberation while living and though living. God appears all the more beautiful, when He appears in the light followed by various colours and accompanied with *Anāhat* sound. Along with these experiences an aspirant also visualises a *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa*, ( a wish-giving tree ), a *Parisa* ( a philosopher's stone ) and a *Puruṣa* ( a person ) inside the heart. He listens to the Unstruck Sound. Poet *Cidanand* tells us that when he began to hear spiritual sound, his mind, senses and also all the bad qualities disappeared altogether. How can darkness be found in sunlight? He also tells us that there was synchronousness of light and sound. They were simultaneous. He saw, at the same time, colours of various kinds. '*Vibgyor*' is a small expression for these differens kinds of colours. When he saw the unvisualisable form, he fell into the sleep of ecstasy. Here is a combination of Phonic and Photoc experiences. Finally there is the decription of the preparation of the spiritual *Pāyasa* (porridge) and its enjoyment in the company of the spiritual teacher and spiritual brethren which constitutes the acme of spiritual experience.

Next we come to the discussion of Cumulative Experience, which consists in the amalgamation of the various supersensuous experiences. Here the mystic deliverances of different senses are coupled together-viz. light, sound, flavour, colour, form and so on. One song speaks of an over-flowing pitcher of nectar and of a form of God, playing on a blue mirror, inside a ring. A song of *Mahipati* combines together experiences of light, sound and ambrosial juice and tells us that these are to be obtained in the company of saints. In one of his songs, *Purandardas* defines a Brahmin as one who hears the sound of a clarionet by means of which the snake-charmer catches hold of a cobra. He does not become drenched under the rain-shower of pearls, sees the over-spreading Moonlight everywhere and enjoys an ecstatic sleep in the dazzling light inside *Brahma-randhra*. Apart from the usual manner of expressing the Cumulative Experience, a famous *Vacana* of *Basava* speaks of the pores of the body as having become eyes for the vision of God and of the extraordinary pleasure he enjoyed in seeing and coming in unison with God. *Vijaydas* describes the vision of *Vaikuntha* (heaven) with its beau-

tiful gardens and lakes, temples with golden towers, palaces with resplendent gates and beams of diamonds, Lord *Visnu* sleeping on the bed of *Sesa* and Lord *Siva* wearing a necklace of a serpent. The poetess *Sivalingavva* tells us that she saw a number of saints, sages, *Yogins* and *Fakirs* with Lord *Siva* presiding over them. *Vaikuntha* itself, she says, seems to have descended upon the earth. The assembly was lit up with stars moving in all-pervading dust of saffron. The great *Sesa* appeared in designs of various colours. There were peels of thunder and God was manifesting Himself there in one beautiful form after another. Finally poet *Sanga* advises his mind to partake of draught after draught of the mellifluous juice, to shine like camphor lit up with flame, and to swallow itself to non-existence.

Then we would describe Cumulative experience on a higher level, as well as Supernal Experience which consists in seeing the Form of the Self. The saint *Nirupadhi* speaks of God as capable of being seen here and now and advises us to test the reality of experience. He describes God, as the Ultimate Doer, as shining disembodied, in the empyrean, without touching the body; *Mahipati* speaks of the all-pervading sunlight without the sun and moonlight without the moon, the beautiful Form of God inside the heart and ultimately of his unison with his own Self. Then another poet-saint speaks about the stomach being full without partaking of food, the belching out of joy, *aponea* or *Keval Kumbhaka*, the humming sound of the great black bee and the vision of the Primeval Person who stood before him. The next song is of Supernal Experience, the highest experience of Self being described in it. The poet speaks of the radiant jewel, of stars of gold, of hearing the sound *OM* in a state of *Unmani* and becoming one with his own Self. Then follow three important songs which are on a new and higher level referring respectively to i) the movements of God, ii) the supersensuous experience in relation to Absolute or *Nirguna* Reality and iii) the cradle song of the birth of the spiritual son ( the Self ). The first, discusses the movements of God. This subject is continued in another poem by *Jagannāthadās*. The next song by *Mahipati* describes the Cumulative experience, in relation to the Absolute Brahman. Says *Mahipati* : It ( Brahman ) appears like an Eye before the eye and flashes like lightning. It comes on playing,

makes its appearance, both inside and outside, and disappears. Its movements remain mysterious. This is the eternal form of the Self which *Mahipati* saw inside his heart. Finally we have the famous poem by *Shivalingavva* devoted to the description of the birth of the spiritual son (the Self) in a cradle which she touches and swings so as to reach the highest empyrean.

Lastly we would discuss the various effects of God-realisation viz.

i) Liberative, ii) Cosmical, iii) Intoxicative, iv) Moral, v) Beatificatory and vi) Theopolitan, produced on the perfected mystic.

i) A saint who attains identity with God-head sets aside the barrier of castes and creeds, puts an end to the rounds of birth and death and becomes a benefactor of humanity. A God-realiser rises superior to the considerations of the body, and is indifferent to its growth and decay, because he has attained to liberation while living. He becomes the purifier of the entire universe. This is the Liberative effect.

ii) So far as the Cosmic effect is concerned, when a Saint knows his Self, his individual limitations break down, and he attains to atonement with all creation. He takes his lodgement in the universal life and realises his identity with man, nature and God. When one is blessed with such a unitive experience, one is himself the All as well as the One. The mystic experiences a rapturous vision of the immaculate spirit, whereby the whole world looks transfigured. He sees a new glory in the world. The whole world from the earth, up to the top of the mountain, appears full of the immaculate Spirit. It is impossible to express by word of mouth, the beatific joy he feels at this time in contemplation and realisation of the absolute Spirit. This is the Cosmic effect.

iii) Many great religious teachers have spoken of a mystic occasionally getting a kind of spiritual intoxication. He becomes intoxicated with God-love and revels in his own Divine lunacy. The saint is filled with overflowing devotion to God as a result of which he disregards his own bodily pleasure. He talks about the *Atman* and is filled with exceeding joy when so doing. Thus,



even while living in this world, he becomes one with the great 'lustre' that pervades infinite space. He leads a life of solitary independence, becomes totally detached, remembering God alone and dancing with joy. The vision of the gracious Lord is the only object he places before himself, so much so, that by the continuity of the vision in beatific joy before his eyes, he becomes ultimately identified with the lustrous Atman Himself and like an intoxicated elephant, he destroys evil in the world and lifts his associates out of the pit of existence.

iv) So far as the Moral effect is concerned, we find that great insistence is laid by the Kannada mystics on washing away the dirt of the mind for partaking of Divine Bliss. Unless the dirt of mind is washed away, God cannot be reflected in the mind; and unless God is seen in it, its dirt cannot be completely washed away. As a result of this moral purity, the saint attains to the poise of absolute equality, treating alike friend and foe, happiness and sorrow.

v-vi) After this comes the question of ecstasy in which state the divine presence keeps the saint ever awake. Dejection and disappointment cease to affect him; infatuation cannot overtake him; sorrows cannot torment him; he becomes death to the very God of death; when the aspirant becomes imbued with such a moral heightening, he falls into mystic raptures. Finally the Theopolitan effect is to be found in the vivid description of the *Anubhav Mantap* or the House of Spiritual Experience, to be a member of which was considered to be the be-all and end-all of all spiritual pursuit. Such blessed God-realizers on account of their intense love for the afflicted mankind, live only for its benefaction and betterment, proclaiming from pole to pole, like a rumbling cloud, the eternal Gospel of God, from everlasting to everlasting.

Such is the silken thread that passes through "the multicoloured flowers of the (Kannad) Mystic Garden," whose fine garland has been prepared by Sri. Gurudeva, with exquisite skill and presented by him to the Lord with deep devotion! It is the fragrance of this beautiful garland that is presented in the Message Eternal of our Kannad Saints, in a clear and effective manner.





# Love Human and Divine

Padmashri, Prof. V. K. Gokak, M. A.

Human love is a wickered light,  
A tiny flame that flickers in the heart's niche.  
You feed it with your own blood for oil  
And do all you can to shelter it for a while  
From storms within and without.  
But Divine Love  
Is the naked majesty of midnight stars.  
It is an infinite and luminous downpour  
That fills all your being  
To the very cells of the body.  
Human love is a little laughter heard amid tears.  
To mentalise it is not to transform it.  
It wells out of the body  
And loses itself in earth.  
But Divine Love descends on you  
As from the Milky Way  
And more and more, the more open you are.  
It upholds your sail on its ocean of being  
And is the chart (er) of uncharted seas.  
Human love is the fire of the body  
That creates man in the image of man.  
It is a sallying out of self to self.  
But Divine Love is the light of heaven  
That recreates man in the image of God.  
It is the rallying point of his self to the Divine.  
Open yourself, my friend !  
Let your earthly sojourn  
Prepare you for the divine pilgrimage.  
Let human love,  
Which is but a track in the forest of being  
Lead you to divine love  
And make you labour loyally  
For the paradise of Tomorrow  
In the forest of Today.

# Dr. Ranade's Philosophy of the Bhagawadgita

Dr. M. L. Sharma, M. A Ph. D. Jodhapur

As far back as 1928 the eminent philosopher-saint Prof. R. D. Ranade delivered a series of three lectures on the *Bhagawadgita* at the Nagpur University for the Kinkhede Lectureship Endowment. Though the Gita remained an absorbing passion for him, and as he once remarked to the present writer in 1953, the Gita was in his 'very blood', he regretted that due to his preoccupation with the publication of his works, he could not till then, bestow his attention to it. But during the couple of years before his passing away in 1957, he was able to work devotedly on his planned volume on "The *Bhagawadgita* as a Philosophy of God-realisation", thus leaving it ready for the press. The Nagpur University published this volume posthumously in 1959, which together with the Author's monumental works on the *Upanishads* (A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy) and the *Vedānta* ('Vedanta as the Culmination of Indian Thought', under publication from the Calcutta University) constitutes a veritable modern '*Prasthāna Trayi*.'

Dr. Ranade may be classed with Jnāneswar, the renowned mystical exponent of the Bhagawdgita, with this important difference that being well-versed in Western Philosophic thought, Dr. Ranade brings to bear on the subject, contemporary concepts and mode of procedure. After dealing with the Vedantic interpreters like Samkara, Ramanuja and Madhva, the German interpreters like Garbe, Holtzmann and Otto, the Christian interpreters like Lorinser, Farquhar and Weber, and the modern interpreters like Tilak, Gandhi and Sri. Aurobindo, Dr. Ranade finds that in the labyrinth of interpretations "a definitely mystical interpretation of the Bhagawadgita in terms of contemporary philosophy has been hitherto lacking" (P. 174)

This mystical interpretation is the clue which will enable us to find a way out of the labyrinth (P. 174). According to this mystical interpretation, God-realisation constitutes the supreme teaching of the Bhagawadgita. The Metaphysics, and Ethics of the Bhagawadgita are a propaedeutic to the mystical theme of God-realisation. Dr. Ranade substantiates the mystical interpretation by showing how the author of the Bhagawadgita in a manner remarkably similar to that of the great German philosopher Kant, discovers the antinomies embedded in metaphysical thought, propounds the Categorical Imperative of moral life, and reveals the nature of the Sublime, linking it ultimately to the vision of the Divine which constitutes "the be-all and the end-all of all existence" (P. 191). Very peculiarly the three great Critiques of Kant also deal with the same important topics of the Antinomies, the Categorical Imperative and the Sublime. Thus in the process of interpreting the Bhagawadgita in terms of Kantian concepts, Dr. Ranade simultaneously illumines the abstruse philosophy of Kant and supplements by a new Critique, namely, "the Critique of Intuition or Spiritual Experience." And last but not least, he draws out a fullfledged Philosophy of God-realisation, complete in all respects, from the greatest mystical-philosophical Poem, which will serve as a beacon-light to the seekers of the Divine.

### **The Antinomies in the Bhagawadgita.**

As in Kant so also in the Bhagawadgita, we find the antinomies concerning God, the World and Causality. These antinomies are necessarily embedded in metaphysical thought. Dr. Ranade deals with five antinomies in the Bhagawadgita : (i) the antinomy of the Personal and the Impersonal; (ii) the antinomy of the Actor and the Spectator; and (iii) the antinomy of the Transcendent and the Immanent, about God, and (iv) the antinomy of the Reality and the Unreality of the world, and (v) the antinomy of *Videha mukti* and *Karma-mukti*. He further points out that the solution of these antinomies is also contained within the Bhagawadgita itself.

#### **i) God, Personal or Impersonal ?**

Reconciled in *Super-Personalism* : The antinomy of the Personal and the Impersonal, the *Saguna* and the *Niṣguna* is the

familiar antinomy which has divided interpreters like Samkara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha, and Nimbarka into different Schools. In regard to the Impersonal characterization of Reality, we have the following passage in the 13th Chapter of the Bhagawadgita :

ज्ञेयं सत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते  
अनादि मत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ।  
सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत् सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम्  
सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ XIII-12, 13

Here we have an absolutely impersonal characterization of the Absolute. But in the 15th Chapter, the Bhagawadgita puts forth the personalistic conception of God which is pitted against the former part of the antinomy, namely, the impersonalistic conception. This antinomy is solved in the following passages from the 9th Chapter, wherein the Personal and the Impersonal characterizations are put forth simultaneously, and God is called not only पिता and माता, but also प्रभवः, प्रलयः and स्थानम् ।

पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः  
वेद्यं पवित्रमोँकारः ऋक् साम यजुरेव च ।  
गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत्  
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् । IX-17, 18

## ii) Activity or Passivity ?

Reconciled in *Emanationism* ! We find in the Bhagawadgita antinomian description of Reality or God as being Actor or Spectator. On the one hand, the Bhagawadgita regards *Prakṛti* or *Svabhāva* as fashioning the destiny of the Universe, and absolves God of all responsibility for action. God must, therefore, be regarded as a Spectator :

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम्  
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा देवं चैवात्र पंचमम् ।  
तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः  
पश्यत्यकृतवद्वित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥ XVIII-14, 16

On the other hand, in another famous passage, Action is attributed to God who whirs the world :

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति  
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यंत्रारूढानि मायया ॥ XVIII-61

The Bhagawadgita reconciles these two doctrines of Actor and Spectator in the doctrine of *Emanationism* :

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।  
हेतुनाऽनेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ VI-10

The *Prakṛti* gives birth to all animate and inanimate existences, but it does so, on account of the fact that God is its Supervisor or *Adhyaksa*, and is responsible for its स्फुरण. Dr. Ranade remarks that " it is on account of the combination of this passivity of *Prakṛti* and the activity of God that we can speak of *Emanationism* as a reconciliation of the conflicting ideas of activity and passivity " ( P. 184 ).

### iii) Immanence or Transcendence ?

Reconciled in *All-pervasiveness* : Propounding the doctrine of Transcendence of God the Bhagawadgita says that God illumines the world like the Sun, and like the Sun and the Sky he remains uncontaminated :

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः  
ज्ञत्रं ज्ञेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥ XIII-33  
यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते  
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥ XIII-32

But many other passages illustrate the Immanence of God :

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किंचिदस्ति धनंजय ।  
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥ VII-7

All existences in the world are like pearls or jewels woven on me who is their thread. The Bhagawadgita offers a reconciliation of Immanence and Transcendence in what Dr. Ranade calls the doctrine of *Transcendo-Immanence* :



विष्णुभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत । X-42

Again according to the doctrine of Incarnation " God stands outside the world but descends inside as an *Avatāra*. From a transcendent being, He becomes immanent in world. " (P. 186).

#### iv) The World Real or Unreal ?

Reconciled in *Ephemerality* : In a celebrated passage the Bhagawadgita asserts the reality of the world :

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।  
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ VII-4

This passage speaks of the reality of *Parā* and *Aparā Prakṛti*, in unmistakable terms. As opposed to this realistic doctrine, the Bhagawadgita puts forth the doctrine of unreality of the world in terms of *Māyā* or in the conception of "*Asvattha*". In one passage it is said that the *Māyā* being a tool in the hands of God, is destroyed by Him.

देवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।  
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ VII-14

Again in the conception of '*Asvattha*' mentioned in the 15th Chapter the Bhagawadgita sums up the ultimate type of unreality. As Dr. Ranade points out, etymologically '*Asvattha*' means " that which will not last even till tomorrow " न श्वोऽपि तिष्ठती त्यश्वत्यः P. 188 ). Now the reconciliation of the reality and unreality of the world is achieved through the doctrine of *v्यक्तमध्य* or *Ephemerality* :

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।  
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिवेदना ॥ II-28

Dr. Ranade explains : " Things come into existence and depart in a short while...They are only *v्यक्तमध्य*. Behind them there is an Infinity. before them there is also an infinity. " ( P. 188 ).

v) **Videha-Mukti or Krama Mukti ?**

Reconciled in *Jivanmukti* : In the passage,

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् । VI-45

The Bhagawadgita talks of *Karma-Mukti* or "procrastinated liberation" through a successive series of lives. On the other hand, *Videhamukti* or *Ante-mukti* is described in the passage :

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन् मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ॥ VIII-5

यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ VIII-23

To remember God at the time of death will enable a man to pass into God at once. A reconciliation of the two doctrines has been achieved by the Bhagawadgita in the concept of *ब्राह्मीस्थिति* or life in God or Brahman, which is equivalent to "*Jivanmukti*" or "Liberation during life through God-vision." To quote Dr. Ranade, "that state of beatification is itself our liberation." ( P. 190 ).

After discussing the antinomies, Dr. Ranade sums up the whole metaphysical doctrine of the Bhagawadgita in his own exquisitely suggestive style by saying that for the Bhagawadgita, Reality is mystical in nature, in the sense that firstly, God is the greatest miracle; secondly, there are absolute limitations of human knowledge in respect of God; and finally, it is "God alone who is able to know His ultimate nature." ( Chapter X. 15 ). Thus according to the Bhagawadgita, Divine Self-consciousness alone constitutes the ultimate Reality, the foundation and peak of all thought and existence. Dr. Ranade here suggestively reminds us of the Aristotelian God who is thought of thought or the Eternal Self-spectator.

**Activism and the Categorical Imperative**

Dealing with the ethical doctrines of the Bhagawadgita, Dr. Ranade points out that as regards the conception of the Categorical Imperative, there is a wonderful resemblance between Kant and the Bhagawadgita. What is to be noted is that he goes beyond the sheer surface resemblance between the two,

which has frequently impressed many a scholar and derives the general formulation as well as the three Specifications of the Categorical Imperative from the Bhagawadgita, in a remarkably Kantian spirit. The general formulation occurs in the following utterances :

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन । XVIII-9  
कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ॥ II-47

“ You ought to do a thing because it is your duty to do.” This is the general formulation of the Categorical Imperative in the Bhagawadgita. Then there are three specifications of it. Firstly, duty is to be performed leaving away all attachment and desire for the fruit (संगं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च XVIII-6 ). Secondly, duty is to be performed skilfully (योगःकर्मसु कौशलम् II-50 ) and in a spirit of equanimity (सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा सन्नत्वं योग उच्यते II-48 ). Thirdly, actions done in a spirit of *Yajna* or sacrifice free one from their contamination, because being dedicated to God they are deposited in safe custody with Him :

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।  
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ IX-27

This specification corresponds to the Kingdom of Ends in Kant. The ethical antinomy between *Karma* and *Jnāna* is also solved in the above concept of *Yajna* or sacrifice.

Dr. Ranade says that in addition to Activism which is the most prominent theory of the Ethical Ideal in the Bhagawadgita, there are three other theories also, namely, Moralism, Supermoralism and Beatificism. As regards Moralism the Bhagawadgita presents an analytical study of virtues in the twelfth, thirteenth, sixteenth and eighteenth chapters. Dr. Ranade selects three representative virtues each, from the four different groups of virtues in the above chapters, and comprises them under one single central virtue of God-devotion in an Augustinian manner. Thus the virtues of Compassion (करुणा), Equanimity (समता), Purity (शौच), Harmlessness (अहिंसा), Self-control (आत्मविनिग्रह), Non-attachment (असक्ति), Fearlessness (अभय), Sacrifice (यज्ञ),

Peace (शांति); Valour (तेजस्), Lordliness (ईश्वर-भाव), and Service (परिचर्या) are linked together by the central thread of God-devotion in the sense that they are all expressions of the latter. Compassion is an expression of praying for mercy from God. Equanimity is both a condition and a result of God-devotion. Purity of mind is an effect of God-devotion. Harmlessness arises from the consideration of equality of all beings before God by the devotee. Control of our senses is a prerequisite of one-pointed devotion to God. Attachment to God involves non-attachment to all other objects whatsoever. Fearlessness follows on the heels of God-realisation by the devotee. Complete sacrifice of all objects to God is implied in God-realisation. Highest peace follows upon the enjoyment of divine bliss. Valour or courage is a *Sine qua non* of a God-devotee. Lordliness characterises a realised-saint in the sense that "he stands alone to himself in his solitary greatness," with power to do good, whenever and wherever he likes. Service to humanity by creating conditions for the realisation of God in and for others, constitutes the supreme value of a saint;

After elucidating this analytic and synthetic view of moral life according to the Bhagawadgita, Dr. Ranade passes on to the Supermoralism propounded in it. This Supermoralism is signified by the terms "नैष्कर्म्य-सिद्धि" and "निस्त्रैगुण्य", the former meaning rising superior to all *Karma and Dharma*, and the latter, rising beyond the triplet of *Gunas*. The truest morality would be by going beyond all *Dharmas and Karmas*,

! सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ' XVIII-66

and rising above even the *Vedas* to the Atman because they are permeated by the three *Gunas*,

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।

निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ II-45

Thus the Bhagawadgita exalts mystical experience above the knowledge of the *Vedas*.

Finally, the doctrine of Beatificism implied in the conception of the 'स्थितप्रज्ञ' is said to rank higher than

**Moralism and Supermoralism.** Beatificism identifies happiness with Reality, i. e. the axiological conception of Bliss and the metaphysical conception of Brahman are the same. Dr. Ranade asks us to note three points in the analysis of Beatificism. Firstly, a saint touches God, comes into direct contact and communion with Him :

युञ्जन्नेवं सदाऽऽत्मानं योगी विगत-कल्मषः  
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥ VI-24

Secondly, there is the identification of the saint and Brahman :

योऽन्तः सुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।  
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति । V-24

Thirdly, there is the identification of the blissful state itself with Brahman :

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।  
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥ VI-27

### **The Nature of God, Criteria of God-realisation and the Sublime Vision of God.**

The discussion of the problem of the nature of God in the Bhagawadgita is a comparatively small one. The only place where it is somewhat philosophically treated in the twelfth chapter of the Bhagawadgita where a distinction is drawn between *Saguna Upāsanā* and *Avyakta Upāsanā*, the former being regarded as even higher than the latter :

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः । XII-4

However, as Dr. Ranade says, “ the chief object of the Bhagawadgita is a practical one and instead of spending much labour upon a theoretical discussion of the nature of God, it suggests to us certain methods by means of which God could be practically attained ” (P. 225). Before coming to these methods, we may point out briefly the three *Criteria* of mystical experience suggested by the Bhagawadgita in one famous line of the ninth chapter :



## प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् । IX-2

Dr. Ranade here points out that "these are very pregnant words, प्रत्यक्षावगमं, सुसुखं, अव्ययम्. They contain in themselves all the criteria of mystical experience that could be imagined" (P. 232). प्रत्यक्ष is supersensuousness; सुसुखं is beatification or bliss, and अव्यय is permanence or continuity. Firstly, mystical experience would be real, only if it becomes an object of प्रत्यक्ष or supersensuous knowledge or intuition. Secondly, genuine mystical experience is सुसुखं or is accompanied by beatification or bliss. Dr. Ranade says, "This bliss is as much above what we call happiness as happiness is above pleasure. The bliss of a Saint is as much above the happiness of Socrates as the happiness of Socrates is above the pleasure of a pig" (P. 233). Thirdly, true mystical experience must be अव्यय continuous, growing and permanent, and pervade all our states of consciousness, namely, जागृति, स्वप्न, सुषुप्ति and तुर्या. An experience that occurs to-day and is lost tomorrow is no real experience at all. The mystical form we see, the *Anahāta Sabda* we hear must not desert us.

As regards the practical aspect of God-realisation, Dr. Ranade draws out three different methods of meditation namely, the Ideological, the Moral, and the Mystical which are suited respectively to the intellectually inclined philosopher, the ethically oriented moralist and any human being in general. In the Ideological Method, a philosopher may meditate on the conception of God as पुरुषोत्तम or all-pervading परमात्मन् who rules over all material and spiritual existences alike, the conception of God as सूत्र that is immanent in all existences ( मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव VII-7 ) of the world, the conception of God as वैश्वानर or the Heracleitean celestial fire that inhabits and enlivens all animate and inanimate existence ( अहं वैश्वानरोमूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः । XV 14 ), the conception of God as the great transcendent Being or the Atman responsible for generation and growth of all objects in the world ( यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः । XIII-33 ), the

conception of God as मायी or the Being living in a camouflage which has to be penetrated, the conception of God as the mellifluous supreme spiritual nectar (अमृत), the conception of God as तज्जलान्, or the source of all things, the annihilation of all things, and the life of all things, the conception of God as अतिष्ठान or immanent - transcendent Being (विषुभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्तितो जगत् । X 42), the conception of God as supreme ज्ञेय- transcending all dualities, qualities etc. सत् and असत् ( XIII-12 ), and the conception of God as आश्चर्य or supreme object of wonder (II-29). Dr. Ranade comments that such an ideological meditation may not put us in possession of God, but it will take us a few steps ahead in our spiritual pursuits.

Then there is the Moral Method of contemplating on the virtues of अमयम्, शौचम्, आत्मविनिग्रहः, समत्वम्, अहिंसा, क्षमा, etc. so as to fix them firmly in our mind, the method followed by the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society. Such a contemplation may not take us to God, but as Dr. Ranade says " they will give you the gun-powder; only a spark might be required and then there might be a spiritual explosion. " ( P. 248 ).

Lastly, there is the Mystical Method of meditation comprising the physiological element, the psycho-ethical element, the devotional element, and the element of grace. Under the Physiological head the Bhagawadgita mentions the आसन or posture for meditation, breath - control or equalisation of प्राण and अपान, and नासिकाग्र-दृष्टी or fixation of sight on the tip of the nose. According to Dr. Ranade these physiological aids are helpful but not absolutely necessary. Psycho-ethically one can reach a powerful stage in mystical life first, by sacrificing the objects of our senses in the senses, the senses in breath, breath in mind and mind in Atman, and secondly, by controlling *Kāma* the chiefest enemy of man, intense concentration and composition of mind, and destroying even the subconscious flavour or रस for sensual and sexual enjoyment. Thirdly भाव or भक्ति, an unexplained and inexplicable love of God, one-pointed ( अनन्यचेतस्त्वम् ), continuous ( नित्ययुक्तत्वम् ) and all-absorbing devotion ( तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत । XVIII-62 )

is the most important element of mystical meditation. It will enable us to know God, see Him and enter into Him.

ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप । XI-54.

The last element necessary for the success of our spiritual meditation is the Grace of God, which descends on the aspirant in three stages. Firstly, God gives a bent to his intellect and volition, a stimulus and a direction in which he might work (ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं X-10). Secondly, after he has worked unceasingly in this direction for a long time, he becomes recipient of God's अनुकम्पा or compassion (तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थं X-II): Finally, God crowns his efforts with the gift of his blessing.

तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् । XVII-62

It is by this Mystical Method that the sublime Vision of God, which is the supreme goal according to the Bhagawadgita, is attained. Dr. Ranade points out that we find in the description of विश्वरूप-दर्शन, experiences such as those of splendour, wonder, terror and joy, which link it up with a universal Philosophy of the Sublime. Recalling Kant's metaphysical analysis of the concept of the Sublime in the Critique of Judgment, he says that the distinction between the beautiful and the sublime is the distinction between assimilation and conquest. While in the experience of the beautiful, the mind of man becomes assimilated to the object perceived, in case of the sublime it is conquered by outside experience. But he advances further than Kant and insists that the nature of the Infinitude is portrayed in the manifestation of the Sublime. The experience of the Sublime seems to be almost transcendent and baffling, even for the imagination to reach. Infinitude is inevitably linked up with Divinity, as is the case with the *Apeiron* of Anaximander and बेहद of Kabir. When we remember the great statement made by Kant that there is nothing more sublime in the world than the Moral, we see how the ideas of the Sublime, the Moral and the Divine are connected together in the great system of Philosophy of Spirit like that of the Bhagawadgita according to Dr. Ranade.

# Sri Gurudeva's Contribution to Greek Philosophy

**Dr. ( Mrs ) Chandrakala Hate M. A. Ph. D.**

( At the outset let me seek the apology of readers of this article. The writer is not a student of philosophy, much less an intuitive critic to do full justice to the contribution of such a genius as Prof. R. D. Ranade. It is only the desire to extol him-that has emboldened this writer to venture on this task. The writer is open to correction for any misstatement. )

A brief historical background of Greece will be illuminating before we start with the subject proper.

Greece being situated in the Mediteranean, has been much influenced by sea. The country is not a very rich country, but perhaps because of this fact, it is a land of strong and active race. These people are simple in their needs, thrifty and self-reliant. They had strong sense of family and filial devotion as the Aryans had. This family sense led to the stabilization of Greek social life. They are aware of their cultural and spiritual heritage. And to this day they consider themselves as a particular people and a nation.

In ninth century B. C., Greek alphabet was adopted. Nearly after two centuries, i. e. in early seventh century B. C. coinage was introduced. Proper recorded history of Greece begins with first Olympic games in 776 B. C.

It is a well-known fact that Greece was comprised of small independent city-states. Athens was a model state of free citizens. Next was Sparta. They had their colonies e. g. in Ionia, to which a referencce will be made further in this article. It was a colony of Athenians; It was here that two

worlds and two ways of life, the east and the west, the Oriental and the Greek, were fused together.

The Persians wanted to conquer Athens and Sparta. Xerxes-the Persian emperor-invaded them but was totally defeated. Thus the whole of the western world was saved.

After the invasion, Pericles the leader of Athenians, worked hard to make Athens the most splendid city in Greece. The development in various arts and sculpture was during Pericles' times. This was in the fifth century B. C. This development of Athens, made the Spartans jealous which ultimately led to civil war among these two city-states. The war continued for twenty-five years ending in the defeat of Athens. That was the beginning of the death of classic Greece. Gurudev Ranade was attracted to this seat of civilization.

Gurudev was a mystic first and philosopher afterwards. The combination of mystico-philosopher in one person is a rare phenomenon. Gurudev simultaneously advanced in mystic experiences and higher learning. It is a well-known fact to those who had come in contact with him, directly or indirectly, that he was initiated into spiritual life by his Guru Bhausahab Maharaj, when he was only fifteen years old. By continuous and intensive penance, and more so by the grace of his Sadguru, he met with the acme of spiritual experience, about twenty years after the initiation. While traversing the pathway to God, he tried to test his transcendental perceptions on the intellectual plane. He selected philosophy as his special subject for Master's degree. Not only he studied eastern and western philosophy but made a critical and synthetical analysis of both. In all his works he has shown parallelism of metaphysical ideas. His study of all the available literature on Mysticism and Philosophy, led Gurudev to conclude that not only the Supreme Being - the Creator, the Supporter and the Destroyer - is the only one सौख्यमात्मा but His experiences are more or less the same for all ages and places, nay, they must be so because He is the same for all times and for all purposes. "It is thus that the



Mystics of all ages and countries form an eternal Divine Society. There are no racial, no communal, no national prejudices among them. Time and space have nothing to do with the eternal and infinite character of their mystical experience."<sup>1</sup>

Gurudeva's study of western philosophy prompted him to learn the source language. As Sanskrit is to most of Indian languages, so is Greek the source to modern European languages. There have been controversies as to the priority and superiority of either Greek or Sanskrit, among the scholars. In order to set at rest these and similar controversies Gurudev made an independent study of both these languages which he calls the noblest languages of the world. In his essay 'Greek and Sanskrit: A Comparative Study' he has in a very scholarly manner, shown that there are many resemblances in both the languages and has concluded at the end of the essay, that 'it is to the credit of comparative philology that it first showed beyond dispute, that the great similarities of many of the Indo-European languages, cannot be explained except on the hypothesis of a prolonged and continued common stay together of the nations, such as Greek and Indian, which seem to have parted for ever."<sup>2</sup>

To arrive at this conclusion of resemblances of two languages, Gurudev started right from the very alphabet. He says that "Greek alphabet is to the Sanskrit, much nearer than it is, for example, to the Latin, German and French alphabet."<sup>3</sup> Similarly both the vowel and consonantal combinations-Sandhi are identical in Greek and Sanskrit. An interesting similarity he has shown, is with regard to number. He says "it may be noticed that Greek and Sanskrit are at one in having a Dual, and in this respect they differ from all other languages."<sup>4</sup> In brief, he points out in this essay most of the grammatical resemblances at the same time mentioning also a few differences that exist between these two languages. For example "a difference presents itself in the case of the Article."<sup>5</sup>

1. Mysticism in Maharashtra—R. D. Ranade—p 2

2. Essays and Reflections—R. D. Ranade—pp. 68

3. Ibid—p.33.

4. Ibid—p. 40.

5. Ibid—p. 38.

Reviewing thus all the peculiarities of these two ancient modes of speeches, he remarks, "that Greek and Sanskrit are by no means less similar than Greek and Latin." <sup>6</sup> Such comparative study has been for the first time undertaken by Gurudev which he himself acknowledges. According to him there must be "common origin of nations and languages so far removed in these days as Greek and Indian." <sup>7</sup> What has been Gurudev's objective in taking great pains for such a kind of study? It is no less a lofty objective than to create a new perspective with regard to the study of different languages and "to win a new soul," <sup>8</sup> for the path of God I believe.

Gurudev's statement of common origin of these two nations is further corroborated if we study their respective cultures. The cow is sacred to Hindus; similarly "the most cherished animal of Greeks is cow." <sup>9</sup> Further, "the bull was sacred and occupied a place of honour in the life and customs of ancient Cretans." <sup>10</sup> Is not one reminded of the worship of bull even at present in India and especially in the Deccan?

Let us now turn to Greek philosophy. In order to appreciate fully the original contribution of Gurudev to this subject, we should trace the evolution of Greek philosophical thought in brief. Usually when Greek philosophers are mentioned, three prominent names of Greek thinkers namely, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, come to one's mind. But there have been previous thinkers and Thales of Ionic school is considered the father of Greek philosophy, nay, to all ancient philosophy of the west. But it is significant to note that the origin of western philosophy was in the east viz. in Ionia in Asia Minor where Greek colonists had settled as mentioned above. The very word philosophy is derived from a Greek compound philo (I love) and sophia (wisdom).

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6. Essays and Reflections—R. D. Ranade—pp. 67

7. Ibid - p. 67.      8. Ibid - p. 68.

9. Greece and Her People—Theodore Gianokonolis - pp. 31

10. Ibid - p. 48.

Thales (About 640-550 B. C.) was the first to raise the nature of the original and ultimate substance of the universe. To his self-raised question Thales replied that it is water. How he arrived at this conclusion, it is difficult to say. Aristotle, however, says that Thales probably derived his opinion by observation. His significance is acknowledged in that 'this was the first recorded attempt to explain the universe on naturalistic and scientific principles without the aid of myths and anthropomorphic gods'.<sup>11</sup>

Gurudev has done a wonderful service to Indian philosophical thought and for that matter to the knowledge of philosophical ideas of the world by mystically interpreting the evolution of metaphysical ideas. It is due to him that our attention is drawn to the old philosophers of Greece. About Thales he says that he was an incorrigible star gazer. Through his contact with the knowledge of the Egyptians and Babylonians, he was able to predict the year of the solar eclipse in 585 B. C. though not the exact date and time of the event. Besides due credit is given to Thales as a scientific geometrician. His was not merely theoretical knowledge but he made a practical application of the same, e. g. Gurudev cites, "he diverted the course of the river in a semi circular 'moon-like' canal and the army could safely cross over it."<sup>12</sup>

But how far Thales can be credited with philosophical originality when he mentions : water is the original substance of the universe? After all water is matter! Aristotle does not recognise Thales for having discovered "the cause efficient." But Gurudev points out the contradiction in Aristotle's statements and credits Thales of "having discovered the cause efficient and having introduced the conception of the soul, and endowed the soul with the power of initiating movement."<sup>13</sup> After sieving the different interpretations on Thales, Gurudev says, "Thales regarded not merely the world of plants as living beings, that is, as

11. Critical History of Greek Philosophy—W. T. Stace - p. 22

12. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - 84

13. Ibid - p, 88.

endowed with souls, but he also regarded even inorganic objects as already endowed with life. In fact Thales saw soul everywhere." <sup>14</sup>

Plato included Thales as one of the seven sages of Greece. These sages were known for their practical wisdom. Their cryptic sayings were inscribed on Apollo's temple at Delphi. The maxims "know thyself" and "love our neighbour as well as ourselves," go to the credit of Thales.

In general, Gurudev points out that the "early Greek cosmologists among whom Thales was the first" had recognised the substance "that from which all things *spring*,.....that of which all things *consist*, and from which they first *came to be*, and into which they are finally *resolved*" <sup>15</sup> on the testimony of Aristotle. Is not one reminded of a line from the Bhagwadgita, प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम्? ( Bhagwadgita - IX - 18 )

The next thinker from the same Ionic school was Anaximander ( About 611-547 B. C. ). He had astronomical and geographical knowledge and it was he who first constructed a map. Anaximander did not agree with Thales in considering water as the ultimate principle because it has conflicting qualities. " The primeval matter of Anaximander is just matter not yet sundered into the different kinds of matter. It is therefore formless and characterless." <sup>16</sup> " The generative element was the boundless atmosphere itself, from which everything was formed by gradual separation and into which everything was finally resolved." <sup>17</sup> This process was the Anaximander's answer. Apart from this for one conjecture of his, he must be duly credited and that is viewing though dimly, the present theory of evolution. The earth according to him, was fluid and by its gradual cooling, different species from fish onwards evolved. It must be acknowledged that this was an advance over the thoughts of Thales. Another point in favour of

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14. Philosophical and Other Essay—R. D. Ranade - p. 82

15. Ibid - p. 6.

16. Critical History of Greek Philosophy—W. T. Stace - p. 25

17. The Western Philosophers—E. W. F. Tomlin - p. 30



Anaximander is that he considered the earth to be spherical and not a flat disc as Thales had thought.

Taking a survey of Upanishadic Philosophy Gurudev has referred to the transition in philosophical thought. He says, " ... we find the same transition here as we find in the History of Greek Philosophy from Homer and Hesiod to Thales and Anaximander. Natural forces cease to be personified, and a definite attitude comes to be taken which is worthy only of speculative thinkers. " <sup>18</sup> Both the Upanishadic and Greek thinkers were after the search of the Real according to Gurudev. These impulses of the thinkers from two different countries however, differed in timings. " The hey-day of Upanishadic philosophy was that great millenium before ever the earliest Greek philosophers, Thales and Anaximander began to speculate, and as in Greek philosophy, so in Upanishadic philosophy, the primary impulse to thought came from cosmologic, and more particularly from cosmogonic, speculation. " <sup>19</sup> Being awe stricken by the wonders of this universe, the great Upanishadic and Greek seers had started thinking as to the origin and for that matter the originator of this whole cosmos. Though there is parallelism in their ideas, they had arrived independently at the same aspect of sublimity from cosmogonic speculation.

Gurudev has devoted one whole part - Part V - of his wonderful and original book on the Bhagavadgita, to the study of " The Sublime and the Divine : A study in Comparative Thought " which he renames as a " Critique of Spiritual Experience, Intuition or Self-Realisation. " He has more or less exhaustively discussed the spiritual experiences of the sublime of the Western and Eastern mystics and has pointed out that through these experiences one nearly touches the Divinity. He says "The experience of the sublime seems to be almost transcendent and baffling even for the imagination to reach. Anaximander was not wrong when he regarded the Apeiron as his most fundamental category. The Pecos is a small conception, but the Apeiron brings us quite near to Divinity. In other works of mine I have already stressed this aspect of the element of

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18. A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy —  
R. D. Ranade - p. 64.

19. Ibid - p. 73.



Divinity in all cases of Infinitude as, for example, in the वेहद of Kabir and निर्वैलु of Kannada saints. I was very glad to find that when Professor Burch of America came to Nimbai, he stressed exactly in the same manner the divine aspect of Anaximander's Infinitude in one of his recent contributions to the American Review of Metaphysics." 20

Appreciating this Anaximander's recognition of the Divinity through Infinitude and comparing it with similar experiences of Indian saints is Gurudev's amazing contribution to philosophical thought in general and Greek in particular.

Anaximenes ( About 590-525 B. C. ) occupies third and last worth naming thinker from Ionian school. He did not agree with Thales in considering water as the first principle. He deduced that primeval matter is air. He was the first to attempt at explaining the process by which it gives rise to variety of things. Those processes are condensation and rarefaction. Great compression of air, a great amount of it in a small space, might account for example, their heaviness, hardness, etc.

In his chapter on Cosmology in Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy Gurudev has compared Anaximenes' theory of air as the origin of this universe with that of sage Raikva from Chhandogya Upanishad. He says, " In fact, Raikva's philosophy is like that of Anaximenes, the Greek philosopher, who taught that air was both the beginning and the end of all things." 21

The Persians conquered Ionia and the Ionian school could not any more contribute much to advance knowledge in philosophical ideas. Instead there was a revival of Orphism and similar mystery religions. This led to Pythagorean school.

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20. The Bhagawadgita - as a Philosophy of god - Realisation—  
Dr. R. D. Ranade - p. 292

21. A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic philosophy—  
R. D. Ranade - p. 79.

Pythagoras (About 570-500 B. C) was the founder of the above school at Kroton. In the beginning this school was not exactly a school of philosophy but one of religious reformers. Unlike the Ionian school it laid stress on 'form' to be found in nature rather than 'matter' like water or air, as the ultimate principle of things. Besides, Pythagoreans considered mathematics as the 'key' to the nature of reality.

The Oracle at Delphi was a very famous centre in Greece. People in difficulties approached this Oracle alike for individual or social decisions. This Orphic sect believed in the doctrine of "wheel of things" and transmigration of souls. Transmigration is nothing new to Indian thought. The Pythagoreans being influenced by Orphic sect, also believed in these two doctrines. But they added to these doctrines, "...—and in general the intellectual contemplation of the ultimate things of the universe would be of great help towards the 'release' of the soul. From this arose the tendency to develop science and philosophy." 22

The Puritanic ideas of this school resulted in their persecution. So the school lost its hold on the people. This occurred near about 435 B. C.

Gurudev, after giving an exhaustive list of parallel doctrines from Greek and Upanishadic philosophies, has unerringly deduced the theory of Independent Parallelism of thought, since borrowing or common origin of these philosophies cannot be historically proved. He has also pointed out as in philology so in philosophy, certain peculiarities of these thoughts, "... the pythagorean theory of Numbers and the Platonic theory of Ideas being peculiar to Greek thought, as the Upanishadic doctrine of Turiya and the Mimamsaka doctrine of the Spota are peculiar to Indian thought." 23

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22. Critical History of Greek Philosophy—W. T. Stace - 32

23. A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic philosophy—  
B. D. Ranade - 104-05.

The doctrine of Transmigration of soul, Gurudev has thrashed out thoroughly, and at the end he has given his own opinion on the same. He begins in these words: "The question of Transmigration may fitly be regarded as the crux of Early Indian Philosophy. We have come to see that the real source of a belief in transmigration among any people, under certain circumstances, lies in their own ethico-psychological development, and not in an unproven or unprovable inter-influence from one country to another. It is upon this fruitful hypothesis that we can see the upspringing and the continuance of the idea of transmigration among the Greeks from Homer downwards through Orpheus to Pythagoras in their own native land. It is upon the same hypothesis that we can see the development of the same idea among the Indian Aryans from the Rigveda through the Brahmanas to the Upanishads..."<sup>24</sup>

After tracing the evolution of the doctrine of transmigration in both the philosophical thoughts, Gurudev calls it an "insoluble problem" and explains further how it is so: "What becomes of the soul after death it is not given to man to understand, ... philosophically speaking, we are not much concerned with the actual stages of the ascent or descent of the soul but only with the idea of ascent and descent. And looking at the problem in this way, one is filled with a great deal of surprise and admiration, when one sees that the ideas of ascent or descent were placed on no less than a moral foundation. 'According as a man's works are, so does he become.' It is this moral backbone of the Upanishadic eschatology that gives it a great philosophical value."<sup>25</sup>

No treader on the path of God can afford to neglect the moral aspect of an aspirant's life. With this shield in hand, he has to proceed towards his goal. In the words of Tukaram 'it is the Satvaguna that gives power to pace the path of Paramarth.' While discussing Moralism in his work on the Bhagavadgita, Gurudev has referred to Pythagoras. To the

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24. A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic philosophy—  
R. D. Ranade - 145-47

25. Critical History of Greek Philosophy—W. T. Stace - 74,

latter, harmony was the highest principle. To Gurudev, 'the central thread of virtues is God-devotion.'

With intense God-devotion as explained by Gurudev and pure mind the aspirant can attain "impersonal immortality" here and now and need not worry about life after death.

Next we try to understand Herakleitos ( 535-475 B. C. ). Historically he is a contemporary of Permenides of Eleatic school to which we shall refer further in this article. Being an aristocrat, he looked down upon common people. He is known for his practical wisdom through his epitomes like "Man's character is his fate."

Herakleitos was thoroughly impressed by the changing aspect of this world. To him, "All is flux." For instance every day, he says, a new sun rises in the sky. Life exists in the struggle and antagonism between hostile principles. "Strife" he says, "is the father of all things." That is why Gurudev has called Herakleitos as a 'philosopher of war.' Both the opposite principles like good and evil, pleasure and pain, are necessary to create harmony in this world. So he blamed Homer for praying to God to end the misery from this world.

Along with this metaphysical theory of Becoming- "The at-oneness of 'is' and 'is not' being the meaning of Becoming,"<sup>26</sup> Herakleitos propounded a theory in physics, the eternally living fire as creator of this world. It is easy to see why fire appealed to him as the eternal principle because it is akin to the theory of Becoming i. e. perpetual change. To him the soul is fire. But there is no individual soul but one universal soul-fire.

Gurudev has written a special essay on Herakleitos which was first published in 1916 and later included in the collection of his essays. This volume was presented to him in 1956 on his seventieth birth-day. Describing Herakleitos as philosopher, who made other people weep, Gurudev ranks him as a scientist and not as a mystic, rather anti-mystic because he solely depend-

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26. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - p. 82.

ed upon dry light of reason. About his doctrine of incessant change, Gurudev credits him in the following words: " Anyhow ... we may say that Herakleitos broached for the first time an important scientific truth that nothing in this world is absolutely stationery, but that all things are perpetually changing, and that it is not the static aspect of things but the dynamic aspect that matters for science. " 26

Mentioning Fire as Herakleitos' base for change and reviewing the different interpretations on the same, Gurudev says: " Herakleitos understands by Fire a kind of world-forming force.....and he identified it in succession with Zeus and with eternity. It was the supreme principle of the world, from which various forms of the matter went forth, and to which they returned. Herakleitos has given us a very pregnant aphorism, which tells us the Way Up and the Way Down are one and same.....that from fire proceed air, and water, and earth in that order, which is the Way Down, and to fire they return in the reverse order, which is the Way Up. " 27

Mentioning that Kathopanishad and Chhandogyopanishad refer to fire, Gurudev points out their difference in the following words: " The difference however between the Chhandogyopanishad and Herakleitos is that while Herakleitos regards Fire as the very origin of all things, the Chhandogyopanishad makes Fire the first evolute from the primeval Being; while the Chhandogyopanishad does not insist upon the idea of change, of which Fire seems to be the very type to the change-loving mind of the Ephesian philosopher (Herakleitos.) " 28

Herakleitos thus arrives at the conclusion that all things are one, through his theory of Way Up and Way Down. Improving upon Anaximander and Anaximenes, Herakleitos " gives us the process by which the one becomes many, and the many one, in his important idea of Exchange, which is a clever anticipation of the modern idea of conservation of Energy. If

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26. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - p. 7

27. *ibid* - p. 8

28. A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic philosophy—  
R. D. Ranade - 80.



we understand thus, the two catchwords in the philosophy of Herakleitos, change and exchange, we may understand the whole of Herakleitos' philosophy." 29

According to Gurudev, it was Herakleitos, who for the first time formulated the Law of Relativism. This Law does away with differences of kind among things and substitutes instead differences of degree. It is not applicable to God, but only to man. Therefore, the Reality is Many and One at the same time to Herakleitos as interpreted by Plato to which Gurudev agrees. Further Gurudev has pointed out that there is no contradiction between Herakleitos' theory of periodic conflagration and theory of change. In fact the former is the necessary condition for change.

The credit of introducing the doctrine of the Word in a philosophical sense goes to Herakleitos. To him it meant the immanent Reason of the world. The Stoics—the school founded by Zeno in later years about 300 B. C. —made an improvement that the immanent Reason in the world produces a number of lesser immanent reasons in men. Philo, the Jew (30 B. C. to 50 A. D. ) called this doctrine of Word as Logos which meant to him, "the divine dynamic, the energy and the self-revelation of God. This was borrowed by St. John and improved in the sense that Christ was the Divine Word sent out by the Father as an expression of His spirit.

Another expression of Herakleitos which Gurudev has mentioned is : "the kingdom belongs to the child." This was "one of the central teachings of Christianity namely, in the doctrine of humility. 'Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (St. Mathew XVIII 3 )."

Taking a general survey of Herakleitos' philosophical contributions Gurudev says : "Herakleitos shines on the horizon of Greek philosophy like a solitary star of the first magnitude, suffering no peer near his throne, forming no school of thought,

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29. A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic philosophy—  
R. D. Ranade - p. 104

and yet, in his self isolation, exercising a potent influence on the whole course of Ancient and Modern Philosophy." 30

Next we shall turn to Eleatic school. The sect of this school was at Elea, a town in South Italy. They say that Eleaticism is the first true philosophy, since it is a search after truth. Four thinkers were responsible for the development of philosophy of this school. They were 'Xenophanes' the Theologian, Parmenides the Ontologist, Zeno the Dialectician, and Melissus the philosophical Mystic.

Xenophanes ( 576-480 B. C. ) attacked popular Greek religious beliefs. He opposed the old conception of gods as having human forms. To him God was divine, the only one, and he identified Him with the world. His proposition " All is one," was further developed by Parmenides.

About the controversy whether Xenophanes can be called the founder of Eleatic school, Gurudev puts it at rest, in the following words : since "God must be regarded as always abiding in the same place, and as not moving it at all, a way of speaking about the primary reality which is so characteristic of the whole Eleatic school. It is evident from these considerations that Xenophanes might be credited with having had the honour of being the Founder of Eleatic doctrine." 31

Aristotle has criticised Xenophanes in more ways than one. Gurudev contradicts and appreciates Xenophanes on the following grounds : (1) "To us Aristotle seems to be too much obsessed by his theory of fourfold causation" because " He finds in Xenophanes and the early Greek Philosophers generally a sad neglect of the problem of causation...(2) Xenophanes was a pioneer of moral education, and might fitly be regarded as having given lessons to Plato and Aristotle themselves...Aristotle is entirely blind to Xenophanes' importance for the humanities...As a great satirist of his age, as the moral instructor of his nation, as an apostle of shrewd common sense, Xenophanes stands unequalled.

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30. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - p. 9.

31. Ibid. - p. 20.

(3) Indeed it appears to us that the strain of Xenophanes' philosophy is even more monotheistic than that of Aristotle. Aristotle believed that the stars were divinities; Xenophanes, on the other hand, believed that there were no gods but God." His God is the one and the All. (Fairbanks, First Philosophers of Greece P. 67 fr. 1)... Aristotle entirely misrepresents the whole situation when he calls Xenophanes merely a listless observer of the Heavens, who one day looked to the skies and said that it was all God... The fact is... 'contemplating the universe as a whole,' who would not say in the spirit of that first physico-theologian, Xenophanes that 'the One is, namely God?' (Aris. Meta. i 5, 986 b. 25 )" <sup>32</sup>

Parmenides of Elea ( 540-480 B. C. ) is considered to be the most important thinker of the Eleatic school. He has given his philosophy in a didactic poem which is divided into two parts. The transitoriness of the world appealed to him most. His search for the eternal through this transitoriness, led him to deduce that : " only Being is " "birthless and deathless ... continuous One," " all is full of Being." As opposed to being, there is not-being. It is *not* at all. This he called becoming. The nature of Being he has described in negative terms. Ex nihilo nihil fit.

Thus arises the distinction of great philosophical importance in Parmenides, between Sense and Reason. The world we know is through senses. The senses therefore lead us to illusion and error; "The truth lies in reason and not in the world of sense." <sup>3</sup>

On this system of thought there was a lot of controversy whether Parmenides can be called an idealist or materialist. Prof. Burnet styled Parmenides as materialist for his views such as the Being being finite and spherical; Plato did not agree with this view and termed Parmenides as an idealist on the ground that the latter it was a concept. To put this concept into some form Parmenides described it in the above terms, global etc. But it is now an accepted fact that Parmenides is entitled to be called the Father of Idealism.

Gurudev points out that unlike the attitude of Aristotle towards Xenophanes, the former is more sympathetic toward

Parmenides. Though Aristotle appreciates his concept of Being, he says that there are loop-holes in his method. Gurudev has disproved the second statement of Aristotle and says that when Parmenides asserts "Being is to be spoken of absolutely," he is not wrong.

About the materialistic interpretation of Parmenides, Gurudev has exhaustively dealt with it after quoting an excerpt from the original Greek poem of Parmenides. He says: "The materialistic interpretation of Parmenides, based upon understanding the expression 'like a sphere' to mean 'spherical' is no less ridiculous.....If Parmenides regarded Being as *finite*, it was partly because he had not yet risen to the sublimer conception of Melissus (follower of Parmenides) who regarded Being as infinite, and partly because he was yet under the thralldom of the Pythagorean identification of infinitude and goodness, for which reason even Aristotle praises Parmenides as an acute thinker (Arist. Phys: iii6; 207 a 15). Then again, we have seen that Being was *like a sphere* in point of its perfection all round, as well as its substance in quality and we have *no reason to dub it corporal*. Being was evidently *motionless*, for whereunto could Being move? It was a plenum, not in the materialistic sense, but in the idealistic sense of *perfect*; it was in fact "the whole,.....so *pervading* that it left no gaps unfilled, for which reason also it was continuous." <sup>33</sup> Further Gurudev gives another excerpt from his poem to prove the idealistic interpretation of Parmenides: "Being is without beginning, and is indestructible. It is universal, existing alone, immovable and without end. Nor was it, nor will it be, since it, now is....."

In support of the idealistic interpretation of Parmenides, Gurudev offers the views of Aristotle and Plato. "Aristotle gives a fair objective presentation of Parmenides, even though he himself would not subscribe to the unity of being and thought... According to Plato, Parmenides is the father of Ontologism (Science treating principles of pure being)." <sup>34</sup>

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33. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - 27

34. Ibid - p. 32.



Gurudev has also compared Parmenides with Shankaracharya. "Shankaracharya's philosophy of the one Absolute Existence which is Being and Thought, *sat* and *chit*, at the same time, his recognition of Not-Being which is even a verbal equivalent of the word *Maya*, as being conceptually antithetical to the idea of Being, and as essentially non-existent, his explanation of the plurality of the world which is only apparent, his distinction of the phenomenal and the noumenal, the *Vyavaharika* and the *Paramarthika*, which recalls to our mind the Parmenidean distinction of opinion and truth,.....would go a long way in enabling us to call Shankara the Indian Parmenides..... We have mentioned the extreme similarity of the arguments in this place only in order to strengthen Gomperz's assertion that '..... the last traces of hesitation would be removed by the parallelism to Parmenides which we find in the Vedant Philosophers of India,' for then we could interpret the one philosophy in as idealistical sense as the other.'<sup>35</sup>

In his constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, Gurudev has dealt at length on Shankara's doctrine of *Maya*, Not-Being of Parmenides. Very few people are able to grasp the real meaning of the word *Maya*. Gurudev says that Shankara is not an idealist-nihilist and gives his own doctrine of Degrees of Reality. "Greater reality than the reality of the world of illusion belongs to the world of dream; greater reality of the world of dream belongs to the world of life; greater reality than the reality of the world of life belongs to the world of Self, or God, or the Absolute, which are all ultimately identical with one another. Every system of philosophy must needs take account of some sort of appearance. From the days of Parmenides, Plato and Plotinus to the days of Berkeley, Hegel, and Bradley, there has been the same cry. There is an extraordinary "moral" meaning in the doctrine of Appearance ( *Maya* ) which critics of that doctrine systematically ignore." Gurudev explains this doctrine through the words of Carlyle. It teaches us that in the drama of this world we are nowhere. The ego we carry is utterly meaningless. We have to play our part. But we do not see or rather



realise the Director of this whole drama of the Universe: "We have come from God and to Him we return."

Next we study Zeno (490-420 B. C, ) whom Gurudev has called an intellectual acrobat.<sup>36</sup> Zeno argued that multiplicity and motion of this world are not real. There is contradiction between these two. In Being there is neither multiplicity nor motion. Thus he supported Parmenides. From the se arguments of Zeno, Kant deduced the idea that space and time are mere appearances. Further he added that the real and infinity are beyond the comprehension of human facilities.

Gurudev credits Zeno as a first dialectic who with his clever arguments defended his master's-Parmenides'-idealistic monism: "The whole world has stood agape at the skilful performances of Zeno." Plato himself is indebted to Zeno for his method which "consisted in provisionally assuming the truth of an opponent's conclusion, and then deducing from it, either one absurd or two contradictory conclusions."<sup>37</sup>

"Aristotle tells us that Zeno was the first inventor of Logic." "The interest however," says Gurudev, "which Aristotle takes in Zeno is not primarily of the metaphysical kind...the merciless logic and the profound insight into science with which Aristotle meets the arguments of Zeno are not equally known."<sup>38</sup>

Gurudev has given in brief the arguments of Zeno against Motion, Multiplicity, etc. and Aristotle's refutation of the same.<sup>39</sup> The latter "has not been noticed, though it is well worthy of our admiration. In his criticism of Zeno's arguments Aristotle contributes three important ideas to the history of thought. They are concerned with the distinction between Relative and Absolute Motion, the Philosophy of the Infinite and the Philosophy of the Continuum."<sup>40</sup> The first of these three ideas relates to the field

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36. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - p. 42.

37. Ibid - p. 45.

38. Ibid - 46.

39. Ibid - 46.

40. Ibid - p. 48.

of mathematics. About the second Gurudev remarks, " ... it may be seen that even though 'Aristotle is shrewd enough to make a distinction between two meanings of the word Infinite, namely the infinite proper and the infinitesimal,...he did not see that the infinitesimals have to do with the finites no more and no less than the very infinites themselves; the two stand absolutely on a par so far as their relation with the finites is concerned." Here is an original contribution of Gurudev both on Zeno and Aristotle.

About the Philosophy of the Continuum, Gurudev says "Zeno wanted to uphold the continuity of Parmenides' Being, and was therefore obliged to prove the absurdity of Pythagorean notion of discontinuity before he could successfully defend his Master's position ... Aristotle goes beyond Zeno in supplying us with a positive definition of continuity...the first and the most complete definition of the continuous." <sup>41</sup>

Gurudev points out how Zeno anticipated Euclid in his definition of a point. Further this Zeno's definition of a point is consistent with his other doctrine of continuity of space. But Aristotle is both wrong and inconsistent in accepting the second doctrine of Zeno and not doing so about the first. Gurudev shows the importance of Infinitesimal Calculus in supporting the notions of infinity and continuity and answering Zeno's sophism.

Melissus ( -440 B. C. ) is the last thinker from the Eleatic school that we are going to consider, in this article. He has modified the doctrine of Being which Parmenides put forward. To Parmenides Being is finite while Melissus contended that it is infinite.

After disproving the criticism of Melissus by Aristotle and Prof. Burnet, Gurudev in a nut-shell gives the metaphysical truth of Mellissus in the following way: "The One is thus an eternal, infinite, homogeneous, incorporeal, painless, unchangeable complete, immovable Whole. It would be harder to conceive of a more irrefragable chain of philosophical truths, which follow by necessity on the assumption of single premise."

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41. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - p. 50-52.

Summing up his essay on "Aristotle's Criticism of the Eleatics" Gurudev concludes, "It must be said to Aristotle's credit that he thoroughly understood the idealistic character of the Eleatic philosophy, though it must also be said that he failed to extend to it his sympathetic appreciation."<sup>42</sup>

Herewith we conclude this presentation of Gurudev's contribution to early Greek philosophical thought. Plato and Aristotle have not been included in this article because they require separate presentation, Gurudev, like a true scholar, studied the Greek language itself and that enabled him to appreciate and evaluate all Greek thinkers by studying their works in original. In a studious manner he has shown how they were searching for the ultimate Reality which is the One and the Eternal. He is beyond Space and Time. Gurudev has also unmistakably proved that there is a parallelism of ideas in Greek and Indian philosophical doctrines. There is neither any inter-influence nor borrowing. Whether any of these Greek thinkers were mystics or only philosophers, it is not for the writer to say. It is a mystic alone who can understand another mystic or mystical inclinations in others. However, when a modern myitic of Himalayan height like Gurudev Ranade, traces the evolution of Greek thought and shows the parallelism between Greek and Indian thinkers, it is evident that the above mentioned Greek thinkers were groping for the ultimate truth and had glimpses of the Reality.

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42. Philosophical and Other Essays—R. D. Ranade - p. 70.

# Sri Gurudeva's Conception of God-Realisation.

**Sri D. S. Parmaj, M. A., LL. B., BELGAUM.**

During my student days in the Karnatak College, Dharwar about fortyfive years ago, I used to hear often glowing tributes being paid to Dr. R. D. Ranade as a Philosophy-professor of a very high order and also as a man of deep erudition and of many accomplishments as a scholar, as a teacher and as a thinker, as a Gurudeo then in making ( a Divine Preceptor ). As I was a student of English literature, I had no occasion then to read his writings on philosophy. Better late than never, I had the good fortune of going through his esteemed treatise on Bhagawadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation recently. So in the present discourse, I propose to set out in brief Gurudeo Ranade's line of exposition of this otherwise difficult subject of God-realisation. As Bhagawadgita, the song celestial, has attracted the attention and aroused the admiration of so many scholars in so many countries, Gurudeo has preferred to follow a comparative treatment of subject vis-a-vis certain other Schools of thought. As the same landscape presents different view points to different observers, the Geeta has presented different conceptions to different thinkers. Some western scholars like Lorinser and Weber have gone to the length of asserting that the author of Bhagawadgita has freely utilised the Christian scriptures, particularly the epistles of St. Paul and has woven Christian ideas and conceptions into his system and that the story of Krisna was taken over literally from the story of Christ. Garbe, however, criticises this theory of Lorinser and Weber as being more imaginary than real. Dr. Annie Besant is all praise for the Gospel of Geeta, while she asserts that the so-called three paths of Knowledge, Activism and Devotion are really one and they ultimately lead to the realisation of God.



Even amongst the Indian thinkers, there appears to be no complete unanimity regarding the basic teaching of the Geeta: The Gospel of Karma-yoga ( activism ), doing duty for duty's sake as being predestined by Divine will, is the be-all and end-all of the teaching of Geeta according to Lokamanya Tilak. Devotion and Knowledge are intended to serve only as means to achievement of action ( Karma ), which is the ultimate goal of life on which Lokamanya Tilak lays primary emphasis in his interpretation of Geeta. Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand has tried to equate Geeta with ( अनासक्ति योग ) Non-attachment gospel According to him, Geeta mainly teaches a view of detachment or renunciation, not in the sense of Sanyasa or asceticism, but renunciation of the fruits of action. According to Mahatma Gandhi, devotion, knowledge, and work are all dependent on *Anasati*, the principle of Renunciation of fruits of work: According to Mahatma, he, who renounces, really gains a thousandfold. According to Gurudev Ranade the originality or novelty i. e. the original contribution of Bhagawadgita is the God-realisation. According to him God-realisation is the supreme teaching of the Geeta, and as such it is one of the greatest works on mysticism.

Gurudev Ranade points out that Geeta is indebted to Upanishads, as the philosophic conceptions found in Upanishads are sought to be developed in Geeta. Self-realisation is emphasised both in Upanishads and Geeta. Gurudev points out that the theory of Autonomy as emphasised in both is to the effect that though we are born in this mortal world to do our duty, we are not expected to be completely entangled in the cob-web of our worldly life, but should be unaffected by the consequences of our duties. In Greek Philosophy a distinction is made between a Laughing philosopher, and a Weeping philosopher respectively corresponding to optimistic and pessimistic philosophy; Gurudeo observes that if Geeta stands for anything in particular, it stands for optimism, particularly spiritual optimism. It speaks of supreme happiness beyond the reach of senses and equates the happiness enjoyed by a Yogin or Mystic with that of Brahman

योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।

उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥ Geeta ( VI-27 )



Aristotle, a famous Greek philosopher, considered that such supreme happiness or Beatificatory contemplation is one of the characteristics of God and so it is the ideal at which our ethical life should aim. Aristotle prefers a life of contemplation to the life of activity. Life of contemplation is almost divine. Aristotle observes it is only when we are contemplating scientifically, philosophically and intuitively and on a higher level that our mind can go up to Divine Theoria. It is in such cases of impersonal contemplation that we can dispense with the society of others and our ultimate ideal then would be to live the life of God alone, even while we are living on earth.

In the Jain philosophic system also corresponding to the Doctrine of Yoga, the topic of contemplation called अनुप्रेक्षा assumes an important position. Anupreksha means Reflection or pondering on the Real Nature of human body and its other worldly environment as being transitory, by turning the spiritual search-light inward. It may not be out of place, if I recall what certain other western thinkers have said on this subject of meditation. Wedgwood, a meditationist, observes "Meditation by power of concentration creates a channel, through which the spiritual principle—that Real Man—may radiate the lower personality. It is the reaching out of the mind and feeling towards an ideal and the opening of the doors of the imprisoned lower consciousness to the influence of that ideal." So also another writer by name Clara M. Codd on meditation observes; "By process of meditation i. e. sustained thinking, the Light of the Mind held steadily shining on concentration yields the fruit in the form of understanding. Soul is the immortal man. He is the God in you, the hope of glory. Deep within us ever resides the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible. The original in us is not sin but Divinity. The thoughts and feelings are the Wings with which the soul tries to fly upward instead of revolving round the objects of earthly life. Meditation is a method of setting those wings free, so that one day they may attempt 'The Immortal Flight of the Alone to the Alone' and become forever one with the spiritual self."

Gurudeo Ranade, while explaining the famous Doctrine of Geeta in respect of "Duty for Duty's sake" कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते

मा फलेषु कदाचन । likens this to the *Doctrine of Categorical Imperative* put forth by Kant, another Western philosopher, according to whom it is the Supreme Rule to guide our conduct in doing a thing, because it is our duty to do so. Dr. Otto suggests that God of Bhagwadgita is the God of predestination. Prior to all our human will and work, God has already willed that a certain thing shall happen. This may be termed as '*the Doctrine of Predestination*'. This Doctrine is sought to be based upon the advice given by Lord Shrikrishna to Arjuna to regard Divine will alone as his imperative duty. सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज- (Geeta XVIII-66). This means the only duty enjoined is to reconcile oneself to the Divine Will and Power. This in short is the pith and marrow of the original Bhagawadgita according to Dr. Otto, all other things being later interpolations according to him. This Doctrine of predestination does not find favour with the Jain school, according to which the Law of Karma (Sow and Reap theory or Cause and Effect of our own commissions and omissions theory) fastens the responsibility of every act, good or bad, on each individual doer.

Gurudeo Ranade, being gifted with a contemplative mind of a very high order, firmly believed that it is the life of contemplation that takes us towards God. This is the underlying idea of Yogic teaching. Yoga means primarily power or process of meditation. According to Geeta the path of knowledge (Reasoning) involves renunciation, and Yoga means path of action, which involves disinterestedness. Renunciation and disinterestedness are identical according to Geeta in the final analysis. According to our Gurudev, Yoga is a *Vision of the self by the self i.e. self-vision*, and Kaivalya कैवल्य means a conception of spiritual liberation.

After examining the various views of different interpreters of mysticism underlying the Geeta, Gurudeo, himself a mystic, has paid glowing tributes to Jnaneshwar—a Maharastrian Saint, poet philosopher, and a Kannad Saint mystic of Nimbargi. Jnaneshwar points out poetically with a philosophic insight, the difference between the *Physical Sun and Spiritual Sun*. Just as at the dawn of the day, birds leave their nests and start on their

flights, individual souls, like birds, leave their nests ( i. e. bodies) when the Spiritual Sun dawns and go out on their spiritual pilgrimage. Intellect and Illumination are likened to a pair of charwak birds, who love each other but being separated at night by the river of difference cry out for each other in vain till the dawn, when they meet together in great rejoice. In this way, when the Sun of mysticism or god-realisation dawns, intellect and illumination meet in perfect harmony. The intellectual faculty and the mystical faculty, which had hitherto been separated, unite. The spiritual sun alone is the Ultimate Reality and when He rises and reaches the zenith, our physical or bodily existence merges in spiritual illumination. Complete annihilation of individuality leads to mystical unison and the mystic become identified with God.

Gurudeo Ranade observes that surrender of oneself, philosophically interpreted, means identification. According to him the expression *Nirwan* used in the Geeta means Supreme Bliss or Unison with God, though according to Buddhism it means annihilation of desire or of being itself. In Jain theology however, the expression *Nirwan* means complete freedom of any individual soul from the cycle of births and deaths and attainment of Supreme Bliss by the liberated soul in a changeless change. Gurudeo Ranade points out that liberation and enjoyment of peace, tranquility, and joy of god is of two kinds. One of them is जीवन्मुक्ति Liberation, while living, by God-vision, contemplation and realisation of God. That state of Beatification-Supreme Bliss-by deep meditation in a purely impersonal manner is itself our liberation even while living. 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 Liberated living being (जीवन्मुक्ति) ought to do and that is the teaching of Geeta. Geeta emphasises Divine self-consciousness and not human consciousness.

Geeta shows the relationship between disinterested action on the one hand and illumination or beatification on the other. Illumination puts a stop to actions and their effects. So also actions come to an end for a man who is merged in the beatific enjoyment of God.

आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते । Geeta (3-17):

The famous Doctrine of Equanimity (स्थितप्रज्ञ) of the Geeta means withdrawing our mind from the influence of senses just as a tortoise withdraws its organs within itself at will. When the mind becomes poised, senses cease to have any influence. An Equanimous man (स्थितप्रज्ञ) has equality of Vision towards all beings (समदर्शिनः). Gurudeo observes that mystical characteristic of a स्थितप्रज्ञ is that he can see God everywhere.

Gurudeo explains that the mystical experience called Bliss or Beatification being of a permanent nature is above our ordinary material happiness. Happiness is above what we call pleasure. Therefore, the Bliss of a saint or a mystic ranks far higher than what we ordinarily call sensual pleasure or earthly happiness. Though our body falls off the mystical experience continues. There is neither intellectual argument nor logical proof, which can either support or deny what the top-most spiritual aspirant (ज्ञानी) can experience. Gurudeo says that the heights, which such a spiritual aspirant has reached are known to himself. He also points out how the path of God-realisation is extremely difficult and one out of a million may be able to reach the highest spiritual end. In the words of Geeta, Illumination is the Ecstatic Vision of the Self by the self (आत्मन् आत्मानं पश्यति Geeta 6-20). In the words of Jnaneshwar it means "one must know without knowing, one must see without seeing. That is the Primary Being and having reached that stage there is no return. That existence, which exists in itself and for itself." In the words of Kannad Saint mystic of Nimbargi as Gurudeo points out, this God-realisation is the conception of the extraction of the self from the human body i. e. even while living, a mystic extracts his self from his body and sees it in its true nature in his internal consciousness, which may be termed as a Form of God, standing alone by itself without reference to body. Gurudeo opines that the problem of God-vision is only summarily tackled in the Geeta and not in details. Though in brief, it tries to bring out the relation of the sublime to the Divine philosophically.



Gurudeo Ranade, then as a Vice-chancellor of a University, had delivered a specially arranged lecture at Delhi on "Sublime & Divine as a study in comparative thought", and therein he has pointed out that Intuition is a faculty by which we can enter into spiritual life; one has to develop that supersensuous faculty, which rises beyond Reason and which puts us in possession of things unknown to Reason or Logic. Gurudeo points out the similarity in the philosophy of Kant and that of Geeta. Kant argues that man's inner self is so great and higher than any of the forces of Nature like earthquake, tempest etc. and that his mind cannot be conquered. There is sublimity in different forces of Nature. There is sublime experience, when Individual self rises even beyond God-vision. In his lecture, Gurudeo pointed out that Kant's perfected philosophy and the philosophy of Geeta both synthesise the moral, the sublime and the Divine aspects in a crowning philosophy of the spirit. These three streams finally merge in one consummate philosophy of spirit.



# Gurudev Ranade

## His Reflections on Religion and Social Order.

Prof. K. T. Jahagirdar, M. A.

We are witnessing the moral downfall in the present-day society consequent on the dethronement of religion and enthronement of some usurping idols. We are living in an age where we observe the spread of lawlessness, of drunkenness, the inordinate love of sensuous pleasures, of riches and other worldly vanities, the laxity in morals and the advocacy of theories that are the very negation of purity, of morality and of chastity.

God Himself has indeed been dethroned from the hearts of men and the modern man passionately and clamourously hails and worships the false gods which man's own idle fancies have fatuously created and his misguided hands so impiously exalted. The chief idols in the desecrated temple of mankind are none other than the triple gods of Nationalism, Pacifism and Communism at whose altars, governments and peoples, whether democratic or totalitarian are in various forms and in different degrees, now worshipping. Their high priests are the politicians and the worldly-wise, the so-called sages of the age. It is therefore, in the fitness of things to consider and ponder over the spiritual teachings of this great Seer and Philosopher of Nimbai, Dr. Ranade.

### Philosophy and Religion :

Dr. Ranade disagrees with those who try to rigidly exclude philosophy and religion from each other. He believes that philosophy without religion is like form without spirit, and that religion without philosophy is like spirit which cannot work without a form. It is in the supreme combination of form and spirit, of philosophy and religion that the true salvation of a

nation consists. He believes in a universal religion of humanity. He says that Bhakti does not consist in religious ceremonials, in pilgrimages and in formal idol-worship. It consists in love to God and through this, in love to man. He says that we can never love man so well as when we know that he partakes of the same divine nature which is in us. Love for humanity must be based on love for God. If it is not, it is bound to have a shaky foundation. Some people might indulge in literary studies in such a way as to stunt their moral powers ! To them God may seem distant and far away. Perhaps also they might be sinless and might not have any desire for righteousness. But all men who have sinned and those who have come to have an earnest desire for righteousness, wish from the bottom of their hearts to come nearer to God. So too, says Dr. Ranade, can a sense of eternity, the pangs of sorrow, the bitings of conscience, the vanity of human wishes or a keen social enthusiasm, bring man nearer to God. It is in such a state of mind that men begin to love God as his only guide and helper and it is in such a state that the whole moral world opens up before him. He says that in India we are rent by schisms and sects, as well as racial and religious differences. These can vanish only when a firm mystical philosophy of spiritual experience can be the only possible ground for a world religion. It is only under its influence that differences of all kinds might disappear. On a general survey of the spiritual experience attained by all the mystics, it might be found that the kernel of mysticism is at bottom one, though Indian Mystics may ring the changes upon one chord, the Christian Mystics on a second, and the Islamic yet a third. All those mystics constitute the musical band of God, and each contributes his note in such a way that the whole becomes a harmony, and a symphony wonderful.

### **Science and Religion :**

Dr. Ranade is not one of those who would condemn science for the sake of religion. He holds that there is a perfect reconciliation between the discoveries of science and the truths of religion. Science merely deals with the works of God. It supplements, instead of supplanting religion. But he would not have the mere scientific or the mere economic spirit prevail.

He says, "Let not an age of pure calculators prevail and let not the glory of India be extinguished for ever. Religion asks from you merely the consent of the heart, a mere touch of the love of God." But he is a firm believer in the manifold activities of a nation, supplementing, instead of contradicting one another. He holds that when a nation rises, it rises from all points of view. He says; "We must have scientists as well as philosophers, men who go in for action and men who sit down to contemplate, people who devote themselves to social regeneration as well as those who care for personal development."

He visualises an age in which the folly and tumult of strife that has, since the dawn of history, blackened the annals of mankind, will have been finally transmuted into the wisdom and the tranquility of an undisturbed, universal, and lasting peace, in which the discord and separation of men will have given way to the world-wide reconciliation, and the complete unification of the diverse elements that constitute human society. It is this stage which humanity, willingly or unwillingly, is restlessly approaching, a stage of world-common-wealth, the inevitable destiny of the peoples and nations of the earth. He regards this world as one country and mankind its citizens. He is against narrow parochialism and would say, 'let not man glory in that he loves his country, let him rather glory in this that he loves his kind.' All mankind may become the upholders of one order, the inhabitants of one city, based on the spiritual plane.

The principle of unity of mankind constitutes the central theme of his message in so far as all his social and humanitarian teachings, when carefully examined, converge on this fundamental doctrine or are even subordinated to it. According to him, there is no social goal higher than the attainment of unity of mankind at least in the world as it is constituted a present and there is no cause on earth which can claim any superior loyalty, sacrifice or devotion from the individual. It thus represents the highest degree of perfection in the present stage of the evolution of the society and the highest stage of maturity, which mankind has thus far reached.

“ The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship amongst men. That all nations should become one in faith and all men brothers, the bonds of affection and sincerity between the sons of men should be strengthened, that diversity of religion should cease, and difference of race be annulled. The fruitless strifes, the ruinous wars should pass away and the “ most great peace ” should come. ”

This consciousness of unity of mankind as a whole actually embodies the very spirit of the age in which we live. World inter-dependence is indeed, the outstanding characteristic of our present era. This is the most vital and binding of our social laws. It is precisely because our so-called leaders, in practically all realms of human activity, have failed to make an adequate application of this law to all our personal and social relationship that the world has become subjected to such frequent upheavals which every now and then threaten to disrupt its unity. Unity of mankind far from being a mere expression of a social tendency, a mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope, implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society.

Much against the general belief of people that Religion, instead of helping the cause of human unity, created tension and disunity, Dr. Ranade believes that if at all human unity will be brought about, it would be brought about, through religion and religion alone and that even in the past, it was not religion but rather irreligion that caused bloodshed and disunity: If we examine dispassionately the place of religion in human society, we shall see that the fundamental cause of disunity and disharmony in the world is the individualism of human nature. It is because of this individuality of volition that we find such a continual clash between the ideas, needs and desires of men: What is needed, therefore is some force capable of adjusting these conflicting interests and desires, and this is a task which religion alone can accomplish. By merging the wills of separate individuals in the will of God it establishes a supreme loyalty through which men find these interests



miraculously identified. By turning to that Essence of oneness, individuals who had hitherto been living in a state of perpetual conflict, find themselves transmuted into self-sacrificing, self-giving souls capable of communing together in absolute unity and with a perfect love. In this state of communion, they become "One soul in many bodies." This is a unity which the Love of God can alone establish in the world, and not until such a love completely imbues and permeates the hearts of men can mankind ever hope to achieve a world civilization that can be perfect and enduring.

It would be thus clear that Religion is the only force that can create in the individual a true consciousness of the oneness of mankind. Acting as a cohesive power, a unifying force, a solvent of individual and social differences transforming and enabling our inner emotions and feelings, through a genuine and constructive belief in God, it releases such spiritual forces, that can kill our baser instincts, and bridge the inner and outer differences that separate us from each other.

This principle of oneness of mankind should by no means be taken to aim at obliterating the legitimate diversity in human society. Unification of mankind is fundamentally based on the belief that such a unity can be achieved only if individual and social differences that are legitimate and valuable are maintained and even fostered. Dr. Ranade's conception of the world commonwealth can by no means be identified with the cosmopolitan ideas and doctrines of the Utopians, who in utter disregard of the complexity of human nature, seek to obliterate all existing differences, even those that are helpful to the growth and progress of civilization and to establish in their place a social order that is uniform and colourless. He recognised the usefulness of the geographical, ethical, linguistic and social differences in the world, but also emphasized the supreme necessity of subordinating them to the major collective interests of mankind.

Thus the principles of unity in diversity constitutes one of the basic elements of his programme for the unification of the world. His call is, primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices and does not aim



at the subversion of the legitimate allegiances and loyalties of the individual to his race or nation. His plan of unification of mankind has a two-fold spiritual and social character, implying first as it does a fundamental change of heart, a spiritual and moral regeneration which will inevitably pave the way and make possible the establishment of such institutions that are essential for bringing about unity and peace in the world.

He warns us that we should not blindly follow the western concept of liberty, equality and fraternity. He says "If India must rise, she will rise in a most peculiar way, not hitherto known to all history. She will combine the virtue of the West and the East and will rise superior to both. If the West and East are to meet, they will meet in India, and not in Europe. What a glorious prospect lies before India ! I see India flinging away superstition, sloth and intellectual inertia. I see her taking up the scientific spirit and the energy of Europe. I see her assimilating the excellences of both the East and the West, and rising in the scale of modern nations, preserving all the while the integrity and pristine purity of her spiritual self. "

# Sri Gurudeva & Sri Jnanadeva

M. S. Deshpande M. A.

## Highest Regard :

*Sri Gurudeva* Dr. R. D. Ranade had entertained the highest reverence for Sri. Jnānadeva along with four other great Saints of Bharat, Sri Kabir, Sri Tukārām, Sri Puraṇdaradās and Mahipati of Karnātak. All these Saints, according to *Gurudeva*, were Saints for humanity, not for a particular region or nation. Their message was universal, meant for the whole of humanity. They realised the Ultimate Reality and tried in their own way to spread their spiritual message among all the people, irrespective of caste and creed-high and low. This eternal message of theirs, if properly propagated throughout the world, is fully capable of bringing about harmony even between nations and races, ushering in the world an era of peace and goodwill.

In his great work on the Gita *Shri Gurudeva* has eulogised *Jnāneswar* in these superlative words : “ *Shri Jnāneswar* was not merely one of the greatest saints of Mahārāṣṭra, but also certainly one of the greatest interpreters of the *Bhagavadgīta* that have ever lived. The most distinguishing feature of his interpretation of the *Bhagavadgīta* is his unique combination of philosophy, poetry and mysticism. Its philosophy is of a high order, no doubt, but its poetry is of a still higher order. And when mysticism is combined with philosophical insight and poetical imagination, one can easily see how *Jnaneswara's* interpretation of the *Bhagavadgita* stands supreme. ”<sup>1</sup>

## Remarkable Resemblance :

The first and foremost striking resemblance that we observe in *Shri Gurudev* and *Shri Jnanadev* is their firm faith and deep

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1) B. P. G. 55,

devotion, their rare reverence and absolute resignation and complete self-surrender, to their respective *Sadgurus*. They genuinely felt that they were entirely the products of their *Gurus*' grace. They considered themselves to be mere instruments in the hands of their Masters and that their works were wholly and solely the results of the overflowing grace of their Masters. They spared no words to express their deep sense of gratitude in their supreme glorification of this grace. *Sri Jnanadev* tells us that it is on account of the all-powerful *Nivrttināth*, his Master, who resided in his heart, that every fresh breath of his has turned into a poem. "What is not," he asks, "the grace of the *Guru* competent to do?"<sup>2</sup> About his anonymous Introduction to the *Nitya Nemāvali*, *Sri Gurudev* writes: "The Introduction was got by Your Holiness, written by an ignorant person like myself. This would not have happened, if it had not got the support of your Self-realisation. Is there anything which cannot be achieved by Self-realisation?"<sup>3</sup>

Both *Gurudev* and *Jnanadev* were Mystics of a very high order. While *Jnanadev* was a Mystic from his very birth, *Gurudev* attained that status and became a mystic with a few years' *sadhana*. He had the good fortune of receiving the blessings of a great *Sadguru* early in his life and attained perfection by his intense *Sadhana*. Like *Jnanadev* he had superb spiritual experiences, as described in the following *Arati of Jnanadev*:

"When he had entered the Sanctuary, his bodily consciousness was lost. His mind was changed to supermind. All sense of boundness was then over. Reason came to a stand-still. Words were metamorphosed into no-words; and he saw his own Self. His eyelashes ceased to twinkle. Distinction between night and day was gone. The whole universe was alight, and was filled with the resonance of God. He was merged in an ocean of Bliss, and his beatification was ineffable."<sup>4</sup>

The great mystic heights reached by them had granted them a universal outlook as a result of which they had become sufficiently broad-minded and liberal. Hence "to *Jnanadev Saivism*

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2) M. M. P. 55. 3) R. L. L. P. 69. 4) M. M. P., 12 (Preface).

and *Vaiṣṇavism* were identical, not to speak of different kinds of *Bhakti* in *Vaiṣṇavism* itself...God may be meditated upon either by the *Saivite* name or *Vaiṣṇavite* name. ...It matters not to him what deity one worships, provided one worships rightly and earnestly”<sup>5</sup>. *Sri Gurudev* also maintained that “a real mystic is he who is neither a *Saivite* nor a *Vaiṣṇavite*.” ... Elsewhere he states : When a philosopher talks about spiritual experience, he is neither a *Hindu*, nor a *Muslim*, nor a *Christian*. He is a citizen of the world and for the matter of that, a citizen of the spiritual world”<sup>6</sup>.

### Practical Philosophy :

These two great mystics were also great Philosophers Their philosophy was not merely an intellectual speculation-not merely theoretical, but was thoroughly practical as it paved the way to and was based upon their personal spiritual experience. *Sri Gurudev* used to tell us that his philosophy was the philosophy of *Sri Jnānadev* and his interpretation of the Gita was almost the same as that of *Jnānadev*. Both the interpretations were mystical. While his interpretation was philosophico-mystical, *Jnānadeva's* interpretation was poetico-mystical.

The metaphysics and ethics of both was theonomic. It led to and culminated in the development of mystical attitude. Says *Sri Gurudev*, “Intelligence without the moral backbone might only degenerate into the cleverest form of chicanery, and a mystic without morality..... might only be a hideous creature who is a blot on the spiritual evolution of man. And again, just as morality to be ratiocinative, must be firmly linked to the intellect, similarly, for its consumation, it must end in mystical attitude, which alone is the goal and end of the life of man.”<sup>7</sup>

Their's was also the philosophy of synthesis. They had both inherited the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gita* and other former saints. They had tested the veracity of the former doctrines in the light of their personal spiritual

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5) M. M. P. 42. 6) E. K. M. P. 2. 7) C. S. P. 211.

experiences. "What we experience," says *Sri Gurudev*, "what we feel and what we realise, that alone should be our philosophy" <sup>8</sup>. So they had propounded the theories which they had found to be correct for the benefit of the future aspirants. The breadth of outlook attained by them had granted them insight to reconcile the claims of diverse theories by assigning each its proper place in the scheme of thought and satisfactorily resolve their mutual conflicts.

The nature and relation between God, World and Souls have been the subject of bitter controversy among different schools of thought. Some contended that they were identical in essence while others maintained that they were partially or entirely different from each other. As pointed out by *Sri Gurudev*, "It is only the mystical view of Reality that will come as a reconciling factor between these different attitudes and different doctrines about God, the world and the self." <sup>9</sup> Hence all such antinomies could be reconciled by these great mystics in a proper manner.

Let us see how one such antinomy has been resolved by them. Our world has been considered as real by some and unreal by others. In fact both these views are present in the *Gita* as well. *Sri Gurudev* and *Sri Jnānadev* have reconciled this antinomy by declaring that the world is both real and unreal. With God it is real and without God it is unreal. The content of the world viz. God, is real and eternal, while its forms and names are unreal, non-eternal, ephemeral. To a realised Saint the world is the ecstatic dance of the Divine Light (*Cidvilās*) while to ordinary persons it is the terrible death-dance of mortal misery. (*Māyā-vilās*). *Sri Jnānadev* has described the world both as full of immortal delight as well as full of mortal misery and has exhorted the aspirants to give it up at once and seek to realise the immortal Bliss of the Lord: "to get thyself hastily from it and go by the path of *Bhakti* so that thou mayest reach the Divine Home." <sup>10</sup>.

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8) B. P. G. R. 194. 9) B. P. G. P. 186. 10) B. P. G. P. 64.



It must be remembered that mere imaginary contemplation on the conception of *Cidvilās*, will not enable us to enjoy its actual Vision and Bliss. It is only when we cross the terrible *Māyānadi*-the Stream of Illusion-with the help of the sure boat of Guru's Grace by holding the rudder of devotional meditation that we would enjoy the blessed glimpse of *Cidvilās*-the Divine Delight in the world. Thus *Māyāvilās* and *Cidvilās* have been reconciled by them:

### Pathway to God :

Similarly the Pathway to God utilised and preached by them was also identical. The '*Pantharaja*' or the Royal Road to God-realisation, of *Jnānadev* was only one like the Pathway of Gurudev. The *Yogas* of *Jnāna*, *Dhyāna*, *Karma* and *Bhakti* were, according to them, merely avenues to the main Pathway and not independent Paths. This great Pathway consisted mainly of intense devotional meditation on the Name of God, imparted by a realised *Sadguru*, preferably in the company of Saints or *Sādhakās*. When this meditation becomes sufficiently one-pointed and soulful, it develops an attitude of complete self-surrender in the *Sādhak*, awakens his intuition and enables him to have brilliant spiritual experiences culminating in the effulgent Vision of the *Ātman* and the enjoyment of His Supreme Bliss.

*Bhakti* is the soul of this Pathway. "*Bhakti*", according to *Gurudev*, "an unexplained and inexplicable love of God, is a fundamental requirement." As the *Gita* also asserts, "it is only through one-pointed devotion to God that one may be able to know Him, see Him and enter into Him." <sup>11</sup> *Sri Jnānadev*, the originator of *Bhakti* school in *Maharashtra*, also tells us that God can be attained by *Bhakti* alone. <sup>12</sup>.

Both of them have entertained identical views on the glory of Guru's grace, the value of Name, soulful meditation, company of Saints, need of absolute self-surrender and grandeur of spiritual experiences and Bliss. The doctrine of *Asymptotic Realisation* of *Jnānadev* was highly appreciated and extolled by

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11) B. P. G. 254. 12) M. M. P. 211

*Gurudev* as his original contribution to the philosophy of mysticism. "A curve and an axis approaching each other infinitely and meeting at infinity is the essence of *asymptotic approximation*. What we find in the case of an aspiring mystic is that he goes on asymptotically approaching God..... The devotee attains to Godhead, falling just short of His entire Being.....Even though the devotee may reach unison with God, yet he remains a devotee. The Saint remains a Saint so long as he has to discharge his bodily functions." This is, according to *Gurudev, Sri Jnāndeva's* doctrine. There is also unanimity as regards the nature of Spiritual perfection. Perfection, according to them is gradual. "A man who starts on his journey must not expect to reach the end at once...So, initiation and realisation should not be spoken of in the same breath. A gardener might sprinkle water on the trees and plants, but it is only after the spring sets in that the trees and plants bear fruit." 13

### **Saints' Blessings to Society :**

About the blessings of saints to society, both these Saints have expressed identical views. *Sri Gurudev* has stated : "One has only to remember that it becomes the mission of such a realiser to spread the Gospel of God whenever and wherever it becomes possible for him to do so. One God, One World, One Humanity should be his maxim, theo-polity his doctrine. Whosoever has realised the unity or presence of God can never but direct his life in such a way that the greatness of God becomes not merely understood but also achievable." 14 *Sri Jnānadev* also has echoed the same sentiment when he writes thus : "As the Sun destroys the blindness of the world, opens temples of lustre, and moves on encircling the universe, similarly the man, who bears love towards all, unloosens those who are bound, helps those who are sunk, and relieves those who suffer and are miserable. Day and night, his primary aim is to achieve the happiness of the human kind, and only secondarily does he care for his own interest." 15 His following prayer to the Lord amply discloses his overflowing love for human welfare and happiness. Just listen :

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13, B. P. G. P. 72. 14) B. P. G. P. 136. 15) M. M. P. 91.

“ Let universal friendship reign among 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 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 marks; they are suns without any tormenting heat. May all beings be endowed with all happiness and have incessant devotion to the Primeval Being.” <sup>16</sup>

Such is the close affinity between the spiritual life and teaching of the two great Saints-Jnāneshwar and Gurudev Ranade.




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16) M. M. P. 139.

### Abbreviations

- B. P. G. - The Bhagavatgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation.  
 C. S- - The Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy.  
 F. K, M. - Epitome of Karnatak Mysticism.  
 M. M. - Mysticism in Maharashtra.  
 R. L. L. - Dr. Ranade's Life of Light.

# A Vindication of Indian Philosophy

R. D. Ranade

No one who has taken the trouble to observe the course of events and opinions in India during the last six or seven years, can have failed to notice that there have been two opposite, almost antagonistic, streams of thought in what might be called New India itself; one, the spiritual, the other, the materialistic; the first bordering on the superstitious; the other culminating in intellectual nihilism. There are healthy elements in both these activities; but the superstructure in either case has been most inartistically raised. If a true temple to "national activity" is to be reared, we must demolish the uncouth structures, and raise out of their materials a building, both artistic and solid, calculated to attract the attention of our contemporaries by its artistic skill, and to go down to posterity on account of its long-enduring elements.

We propose in this article to restrict our attention to the latter part of the scheme—the exposition of the defeats in the materialistic construction of Indian activities. From times immemorial, in this ancient land of ours, there have not been wanting men, who have poured out all their vehemence on the philosophical and spiritual activities of India. Brihaspati, the founder of the Charvaka school, made it a point to attack everything in Indian philosophy and practice, equally whether it was good or bad. And we owe a debt of gratitude to him, since he showed us where our defects lay. He showed us the absurdity of counting the forms of religion as everything, and the spirit as nothing. The great Buddha showed us the vulnerable points of our sacrificial system, and it was owing to him that our sacrifices became more humane. In modern times also, a wave of materialism is spreading side by side with the wave of spirituality, and if we want our spiritual activity to be really healthy, we must learn its defects from the

avowed materialists. And because we are unable to do justice to the writings of all such in the course of a short article, we may select Mr. Har Dayal as a typical instance of men who have rebelled against spiritual activities.

And when I say "rebelled", I use the word intentionally. I would request my readers first to go over Prof. Har Dayal's article on the 'Wealth of the Nation' in the July (1912) number of the Modern Review; and then to compare the sentiments expressed in that article with those expressed in the July (1911) number of the same magazine in an article on "India In America"; and then also to read the article on "Indian Philosophy and Art in the West" by the same writer in the same magazine of April 1912. It would really be a great lesson to the readers of these articles to observe how a man can entirely change round within the course of twelve short months! The Har Dayal of July 1912 seems to be scarcely the Har Dayal of July 1911! I propose briefly to analyse his psýchological development and then to make such remarks of my own as would show what I feel about the subject;

And I would scarcely have undertaken the project, if Mr. Har Dayal had been a reviler like other revilers of the Upanishads and Indian spirituality. The very fact that he is quite unlike them prompts me to break a lance with the American professor. He has travelled far and wide, and has tasted of the intoxicating drink of Western Civilisation. He has been all over Europe, he has been in America, and has observed their various institutions. He therefore speaks from personal experience and actual contact. In his own words, "he has seen the silver lining," which is not visible to so many of us, who are spending their lives in India. In the second place, he has a wonderful command over English prose: he seems to be a master of antithesis, and like all other masters of antithesis, he often contradicts himself. Thirdly, he is a man deeply read in English and also in Indian Philosophy: and he knows the merits and defects of either. Fourthly, because he holds with me that the enduring wealth of a nation consists "in the intellect and the character of its men and women," and no other economist would allow this. Fifthly, because his writings are read all over India by the rising generation with extreme avidity: and I do not consider that the



sentiments he has expressed in his article on the "Wealth of the Nation" should be allowed to fall in the hands of the youth of India, without at the same time giving an equal opportunity to an opposite opinion to meet the very readers, upon whose minds his articles have made a deep impression. And lastly because the souls of the ancient seers of India, whom he has treated with scant courtesy, and indeed has not failed to attack without provocation, call upon a young Indian, who knows what to prize most in their teachings, to take up their cause and fight for honour, if not also for duty.

In the latest issue of the Modern Review of August, 1912 I see a note by Mr. H. V. Divatia, who quarrels with Prof. Har Dayal, simply because he has condemned all philosophy and all metaphysics, which he does not want him to do. But is there no champion of Indian philosophy forth-coming? Is there none to convince Mr. Har Dayal that there are points in Indian Philosophy, which are of perennial interest, and which will sway the minds of all thinkers in all ages and countries? And reader, will you believe me if I say that such a champion is Mr. Har Dayal Himself! Har Dayal against Har Dayal—a sight for the Gods to look on.

Let us see what the writer says in different issues of the Modern Review, first on 'philosophy' itself. In the July number of 1912, he has spared no word in his vocabulary to denounce Indian Philosophy. The "barren metaphysics" of India has "elevated sophistry to the rank of an art"! Indian Philosophy is nothing but "fantastic word towers for solid piles of thought-masonry. India is playing with the toys of childhood in mature age". He speaks of the intolerable twaddle of the Shastras, and denounces contemptuously the so called "ineffable joys of trance or Samadhi." He plays with the text of the Upanishads "that by knowing which everything is known," like a child playing with fire. He supposes that the Upanishads are a bundle of "absurd conceits, quaint fancies, chaotic speculations;" and that a linking for them, which scholars like Paul Deussen conceive is nothing but a "mania for what is effete and antiquated." He compares the six systems of philosophy, which Max Muller unfortunately chose as prominent and not the only ones, to a desert, and the Vedas to the Dead Sea!

We might retort to all this with the very epithet which he has bestowed on the Upanishads,-"verbal jugglery." For let us see what the same writer says elsewhere: "Now of all the treasures of Hindu history, one of the most precious is our philosophy," ( p. 420 April, 1912 ). Is that really so? "All European scholars know that India is rich in metaphysics." "India can lay Europe under a deep debt of gratitude by introducing her philosophy as a subject of study in Western Universities" ( p. 421 : April. 1912 ). Our philosophy deservedly ranks very high in the estimation of thinkers ... Our philosophy takes the Western mind captive on account of its variety, its boldness, its thoroughness, and its clearness." ( p. 422 : April 1912 ). Can anything be more conclusive proof of how even great men can turn black into white. But let us proceed further: "I see that those old thinkers perhaps exhausted the possibilities of human thought in the field of pure metaphysics" ( p. 422 : April, 1912 ). "India can offer to the world two things, which are sufficient to pay for everything that she receives-her system of philosophy, and her ideal of a religious life ..... Wisdom and Virtue in exchange for the secrets of manufacture and mechanical science - it is too generous an offer." ( p. 11 : July, 1911 ). But reader, these are his opinions of July 1911, and not of July 1912. Can you conceive of a more thorough - going change ?

I might multiply instances; but I fear I might thereby tire out the patience of the reader. I suppose I have shown how the writer has abnormally developed in his contempt of Indian Philosophy on account, perhaps, of his American influence. I could understand a man who asserted that Indian Philosophy was not worth studying at all; but I cannot understand a person who, in one breath, raises it to the skies, and in another consigns it to perdition,-and all this perhaps to secure antithesis and beauty of language, but at the pitiable sacrifice of truth. Who would deny that there is wordiness in our philosophy ! But who would say that there is none in any of the European philosophers ? A student of comparative philosophy must know that philosophy can always reach a certain limit-thus far and no further : Just consider a philosopher, whom Mr. Har Dayal asks us to study, who says that "if there is no god, it would be necessary to invent him," and a poor peasant, an illiterate, uncouth, rustic fellow, of the

type of those peasants whom Christ, for example, preached to, who in the innocence of his ignorance, and in the strength of his faith, supposes and knows that God exists. How many of the so-called European 'philosophers', pray, had realised God, supposing that such realisation is possible; and if they had not and if they spoke merely from intellectual conceptions, how very inferior must they be to a poor Nicodemus, or to poor Chokha Mela, who, in the degradation of his caste, yet held communion with God? But I fear we are treading sacred ground, and no quarrel can be possible on this stand-point with our American Professor.

I agree with him in so far that he considers much of our Indian philosophy to be wordy: but I also hold that all philosophy is wordy. What can a layman make of the 'substance,' 'attributes,' 'modes' of Spinoza's philosophy? What is Hegel's philosophy to a non-philosopher but an array of words? There were people, who, before the time of Har Dayal, have called philosophy by the very name with which he chooses to call it; a mere net-work of words, a great desert! Again, the form which has been given to our philosophical treatises by the introduction of imaginary objections and feigned answers, exactly corresponds to the form of the mediaeval philosophy of the schoolmen; the same imaginary objections, the same subtlety of argument, the same cobwebs of discussion. But when this is said, let the enemy make the best of it. In and behind these tiresome discussions, there is a pith and a marrow which is the heart of philosophy: It is this inner pith which must find expression in different forms, according to the times for which it is meant. Thus it would be most uncharitable to condemn Indian philosophy, as it would be equally uncharitable to condemn the schoolmen. The forms in which they are expressed are forced upon them according to the necessity of the times. It is always upon the past that we must build up the present, and those who despise their ancestors will themselves be despised by their posterity. "We speak of the errors of the past," says James Anthony Froude: "We, with this glorious present which is opening on us, we shall never enter on it till we have learnt to see in that past not error but instalment of truth, hard-fought-for truth, wrung out with painful and heroic effort. The promised land is smiling before us, but we

may not pass over into the possession of it, while the bones of our fathers, who laboured through the wilderness, lie bleaching on the sands, or a prey to unclean birds. We must gather relics, and bury them, and sum up their labours, and inscribe the record of their actions on their tombs as an honourable epitaph ”.

I would take the liberty of impressing the truth of this most deserving passage on the attention of the writer. And yet, for considerations not of prudence but of justice, I may bring home to his mind the great truth which has been evolved through the entire course of the Upanishads, which he hastily calls “absurd conceits, quaint fancies, chaotic speculations”. Much sooner, and with greater justice, may we call the Greek Philosophers a set of fools, because they explained the Universe on the theories of Fire, Air, Water, or Earth. It is on account of the very fact that the Rishis differed from one another in their speculations, and also formed some conceptions about the origin of the Universe, which were certainly better than none, that they deserve the respect and attention of every dispassionate thinker, who does not judge of the past times by the canons of the present, and who sees the thread of an evolving idea through the entire course of the so-called “chaotic speculations”. To quote J. A. Froude again : “Ptolemy was not perfect, but Newton had been a fool if he had scoffed at Ptolemy. Newton could not have been without Ptolemy : nor Ptolemy without the chaldees.” And however different might be the ideas of the Rishis themselves, yet they gradually evolved out of their speculations this great truth of truths : that there is an Atman, and that He can be realised; that this Atman is God : that the Universe, like the human body, is a covering of this Atman, and is, in fact, the Atman himself.”

Upon this great truth stands or falls the whole philosophy of India. However different might be the different moulds in which this great truth is put, this is the great motor idea of all orthodox Indian philosophy. There might be systems which, like Buddhism, maintain the theory of No-Soul. When Ananda asks the Buddha what was meant by the phrase “the world is empty,”



Buddha answers "that it is empty, Ananda, of a self, or of anything of the nature of a self" (See Mrs. Rhys Davids' Buddhism, Home University Library, p. 52). I agree with Mr. Har Dayal when he maintains that in a discussion of Indian systems of philosophy, we must include all those 16 systems of philosophy which are given in the Sarva Darsana Samgraha, and even more, and not the Six systems only as Max Muller has done. I suppose that the time is coming when, as anticipated by the late Max Muller, a new class of Sanskrit scholars is coming into being who, after their study of European philosophy, are devoting their attention to their own native systems in order to place Sankara or Ramanuja or Kapila by the side of the great philosophers of Ancient and Modern Europe. It is time that Sanskrit should come to be known to European Scholars on account of its rich treasures of philosophy, than merely by its philological, antiquarian or anthropological interest. It is time that the resemblances between Neo-Platonism and Yoga, between the philosophies of Spinoza and Berkeley and Sankaracharya, between Kant's idea of Duty and that of the Bhagavadgita, between the claims of both Tukaram and the Christ as their being the Sons or the Deputies of God, or even God himself, and other similar problems should be brought to light and discussed. It is only when, as I said, the pith of our philosophy is exhibited in modern garb that the world will come to know of the worth of Indian philosophy. Then, and not till then, will critics like Mr. Har Dayal see the intrinsic worth of a seemingly lifeless, soul-less philosophy.

So much with regard to purely philosophical matters. Coming, more or less, to persons, who were the main cause of the spread of Indian ideas in America, I mean, Vivekananda and Ramatirtha, and one far greater than either of them, Ramkrishna Paramahansa, the veiled attacks which Mr. Har Dayal has made against all three mentioning everything about them except their names, will be apparent on the first reading to every one who has made even a partial study of the movement they set on foot: The attacks which he has made in the number of July 1912 are wonderful, because they are veiled; but still more wonderful is the way in which he has, in former issues, stated the very opposite of them. "Contemplation in isolation," says the writer in July 1912 "is one favourite method.



of spending time adopted by India's sons... They fall into the vacuous abyss of contemplation and inaction. They have established monasteries in remote nooks in the mountains in order to realise the Brahman. They practise all sorts of mysterious postures and other funny devices of a crude mysticism. All their stock and store consists in the Vedanta Sutras, the Upanishads, and the sonorous monosyllable Om. This last word seems to do duty for all history and science. Whenever a saint has nothing to think about, he takes refuge in Om..... How strange it is that a capacity for swooning away should be considered the mark of wisdom ! It is very easy to lose consciousness if one has strong emotions, and a feeble intellect! That is why ladies faint so often on the slightest provocation..... No wonder that books and laboratories are despised, for no knowledge is needed to make one swoon away at intervals." This is the most suggestive passage that ever was penned. He refers to the Mayavati-Ashram, to Vivekananda, to Ramtirtha, with whom "Om" seemed to do duty for all Science, and to Ramkrishna Paramahansa, who is reported by M., his disciple, to have swooned away at frequent intervals. The whole army of modern saints have been brought to the guillotine !

As I said, let us turn to the author's former writings and see how very glaring are contradictions of which he is guilty. He contemptuously refers in the above passage to the contemplation in isolation, which brings on inaction. But here is what he said in the issue of July 1911 : Wherever he wandered in the continent of Europe, "I have always turned towards the dream of my love, that sacred tapovan and cradle of Hindu spirituality, where all Hindu aspirants from Kapila to Swami Ramtirtha, have gone to get wisdom and insight by communing with Nature and their own hearts, a veritable training ground for the spiritual grants of India; but here in the West, it is all noise and show and conventionality". Forsooth, he longs for the solitude of the 'tapovan' then! He admits that in solitude, one can commune with Nature and one's heart ! He admits that Ramtirtha repaired to the Himalayas to gather virtue ! He admits in the words of Milton that solitude is the nurse of Virtue, where Virtue plumes her feathers which were "all-too ruffled in the bustle of active life" ! Yet another extract ! "As well tame a tiger or bind the

wind as get an American to retire to the mountains for meditation! He cannot understand that the hidden sources of all true life lie far away from the Senate, the market-place, the theatre, the stock-exchange and the Church.”(July 1911). We may, therefore, be justified in throwing back upon this Shylock, false, contradicting, overassuming wrangler the very words which he threw at the innocent Bassanios “These be thy gods, Oh Israel !

Let us, moreover, look to other passages in the issue of July, 1911, wherein he is voluntarily praising Vivekananda and Ramkrishna and Ramtirtha, whom he is condemning in the issue of July, 1912. The beneficial effects of his (i.e. Vivekananda's) preaching are visible on every side, America is always on the alert for a lesson in religion from a Hindu” ( P. 6. July, 1911 ): Again, he respectfully makes mention of “full-size portraits of Paramhansa Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda, executed by loving American disciples” ( p. 7, July 1911 ). And last and the most positive : “ Ramtirtha was the greatest Hindu who ever came to America, a real saint and sage, whose life mirrored the highest principles of Hindu spirituality, as his soul reflected the love of the “Universal Spirit”, whom he tried to realise” (P. 9, July 1911).

What would readers say of this writer, who blows hot and cold with the same breath ? Did he ever form beforehand an accurate conception of what he was going to say ? If he has ‘ evolved ’, it is a terrible evolution indeed ! At any rate, he is an object-lesson in abnormal psychological development, which, in this case, has taken place at an almost electric speed !

Two more points to be cleared up before we finish the review of Prof. Har Dayal's articles: He talks about the “Yoga-craze” and the “ Bhakti-mania ” as being the powerful sources of the wastage of moral power in India: What does he mean by the Yoga ? If he means by the term Yoga “Hatha-Yoga” as it is ordinarily understood I agree with him. But if he means by the Yoga the Yoga as it is taught in the Bhagavad-gita, I beg the liberty of entirely dissenting from him. Indeed Yoga and Bhakti, Philosophy and Religion, Karma and Jnana

are so intensely connected with each other, that by separating the one from the other, you make both impotent. I dissent from Prof. Har Dayal and the late Mr. Max Muller when they say that philosophy and religion must be rigidly excluded from each other. I believe that philosophy without religion is like form without spirit : and that religion without philosophy is like spirit which cannot work without a form. It is in the supreme combination of form and spirit, of philosophy and religion, that the true salvation of a nation consists. Similarly with regard to Yoga and Bhakti : Yoga is the form, Bhakti is the spirit. For, says Lord Sri Krishna :-

“Of all the Yogins, I suppose he is the most intent upon me, who, with his heart fixed on me, worships me with faith”. Yoga, in my opinion, may be defined according to its derivation as a positive, persistent and final determination to seek out the truth - of whatever kind it may be. Such a determination necessarily requires solitude in the initial stages, in order that the virtues necessary for an active life may be gathered in the secrets of retirement. Such a solitude is the fountain-head of energy and strength, virtue and joy. Activity to be productive, must be fed by retired thought. The history of all religions confirms it. The great Buddha retired to solitude, and it was in solitude that he received his illumination - The Lord, to escape company. The late Mikado of Japan was a proverbial recluse; and yet, wonders the Times of India, he was the backbone of all the activities of his nation. Solitude is not, as Prof. Har Dayal says, meant for inaction : on the contrary, it is the nurse of supreme action. The true Yoga must admittedly be the Yoga of service : the Karma-yoga : but the human faculties require to be fed in solitude, and in a transcendental and most fruitful ‘inaction’! “As oft as I have been among men”, says Seneca, “I returned home less a man than I was before”. And in order that this should not be the case, one must needs have recourse to solitude and contemplation.

Moreover, is it not wonderful to find how people come to opposite conclusions from the same premises ? We find Mr. Har Dayal condemning the people of India, because their Vedanta

leads them to inaction. "They become altogether useless for any purpose that one may appreciate". Contrast with this the remarks of another hot-headed, hasty, generaliser- I mean Mr. Ramsay Macdonald: "It (i.e., the Gita) is the gospel of action, of action, stern and terrible done by the body and the passions, whilst the possessing soul is at rest in the presence of the eternal .....Bathed in this ocean of self-surrender, and ever filled with the music of the Divine Voice, the Indian's heart beats with ecstasy, and then goes forth to do his work. There is no limb of the vernacular press.....so dangerous, so seditious, as the song of the blessed one" (The Awakening of India : Popular Edition : p. 120 ). Can anything be more absurd, more glaring, more misconceived than these hasty, immature remarks of a raw labourite? Yet, as Aristotle says, the truth lies between the two extremes and I would recommend Prof. Har Dayal as well as Mr. Ramsay Macdonald to read the remarks of his adversary in order to become more level-headed, and more like a man! Let them not father their own ideas upon the text which they see!

I now come to another important discussion : Mr. Har Dayal's contemptuous treatment of the Bhaktas. "For one Chaitanya", says he, "it ( i. e. Bhakti ) gives us a thousand sentimental, weak-minded irresolute devotees, who are good for nothing in any practical work for righteousness.....It gives them a factitious object of devotion instead of teaching them that every suffering child is Krishna, and every sorrowful brother-man is Rama. They worship the stars and suns, but they forget their brother-man...try to think and look in words : others try to weep and dance. And all the while, ignorance, poverty and disease march triumphant through the land". Yet another extract : "Teach the people that the old gods are dead. What is there at Benares but hideous temples, fat bulls and fat priests? What is there at Puri but Cholera and waves idly breaking on the beach?" Now, pray, why does he wax so eloquent? What level-headed man would believe that god is only in Benares and nowhere else? Have not saints like Tukaram said centuries ago

" wherever you go, you find stones and water :  
but god is with good ",



“ verily, verily, the good people are the gods :  
the images are a mere pretext ? ”

Where, then, was the necessity of such an eloquent discourse from Prof. Har Dayal ? People have known even before the times of this writer where god was to be found. When he talks of the “ funny devices of a crude mysticism ” and the uselessness of pilgrimage, he is, like Ixion, merely embracing clouds : hence, the dire brood of his centaur-like ideas, fitting in our midst.

“For one Chaitanya, ” he admits, we have a host of irresolute devotees. But, reader, mark the words for one Chaitanya, He does acknowledge that Chaitanya was a great man! But when has history shown that great men have sprung up in myriads ? A great man arises out of countless mediocrities, and so is the case even here. When there is a Chaitanya or a Tukaram, a Sankara or a Christ, thousands of inferior persons must prepare the ground for him ! Again, he asks us to love every suffering child as Krishna, and every sorrowful brotherman as Rama ! Has he not borrowed this expression from Ramtirtha whom he himself condemns; for does not Ramtirtha talk of the “Starving Narayanas” ? Moreover, would we ever deny that Bhakti includes the “love of humanity” ? Does not Tukaram implore God to lead him through the service of his feet to the service of mankind ?

“Give me the service of Thy feet and the worship of humanity, irrespective of the pride of caste or colour. ”

Moreover, is it not wonderful to find that this same writer should have admitted that “ Voltaire, Rousseau, Marx ( the modern Rishi ! ), Darwin, Lavoisier, Cuvier, Laplace, and Caxton were not personally as noble and pure as St. Bernard, St. Francis, St. Xavier ” ? ( p. 49 July 1912 ). If personal purity does count for anything, and if social regeneration must come through personal development, then the philosophers he idolises were certainly below the mark ! Moreover, is it not an irony of fortune that the same writer who condemns the



pilgrimages, and the Ganges, should himself fall a victim to the popular idea : " Time, the mighty architect, the healer of all wounds, and the avenger of all wrongs, will lead our efforts to final success after our ashes are mingled with the eternal waters of the holy Ganga " ( P. 11, July 1911 ). He considers the Ganges as holy, then ! and its waters as eternal ! Can anything be more superstitious ? Yet, these are the weaknesses of great minds !

But I will not merely construe texts : I must say what I feel on the point on my own account. I believe that Bhakti does not consist in religious ceremonials, in pilgrimages, and in formal idol-worships : it consists in love to God, and through this, in love to man. We can never love man so well as when we know that he partakes of the same divine nature which is in us. Love to humanity must be based on Love to God : if it is not, it is bound to have a shaky foundation. It is the Love which we bear to God that inspires us with Love to man : and those who love man otherwise love him accidentally and not essentially. People like Har Dayal might indulge in literary studies in such a way as to stunt their moral powers : God may seem distant and far away. Perhaps also they might be sinless, and might not have a new desire for righteousness ! But all men who have sinned - and let he, who is sinless, contradict this - and those who have come to have an earnest desire for righteousness, wish from the bottom of their hearts to come nearer God. So too can a sense of eternity, the pangs of sorrow, the bitings of conscience, the vanity of human wishes or a keen social enthusiasm bring man nearer God. It is in such a state of mind that he begins to love God as his only guide and helper, and it is in such a state that the whole moral world opens up before him. If he does not care for the vanities of the world, he might be excused : he cares for the immense gains of moral life. Those critics, therefore, who would assault an innocent Bhakta, must not shut their eyes to this all important side of man's activities - moral development. It is no use carping at a man simply because he has chosen to devote himself to moral advancement, which, he considers, must necessarily come through a love to God. It is here that personal purity matters a great deal : and it is here that the

philosophers, like those whom Har Dayal has mentioned, are weighed in the balance and found wanting !

We have hitherto expressed our opinions on the manner in which Prof. Har Dayal has inveighed against Indian philosophy, Yoga, and Bhakti, and have, we believe, tried to show that there is another side to the question. Indeed, I must not be supposed to hold that India must be flooded with philosophers, Yogis, and Bhaktas : far from it. Prof. Har Dayal, on the other hand, wants to fill our nation with scientists and economists. "To the preacher", says Prof. Har Dayal in another place "the world is full of sinners ! to the cobbler, it is full of shoes" : we might add in a similar style that to Prof. Har Dayal, it is full of 'economists'. I am a firm believer in the manifold activities of a nation, supplementing, instead of contradicting one another. I hold that when a nation rises, it rises from all points of view. The history of England at the time of Elizabeth, or the history of Maharashtra at the time of Shivaji, amply bears out the fact that when a nation rises, it attempts all enterprises. We must have scientists as well as philosophers; men who go in for action, and men who sit down to contemplate; people who devote themselves to social regeneration as well as those who care for personal development. As Prof. Har Dayal has himself said elsewhere : "I need not impose my dream on all. Moral energy takes myriad forms in its manifestation.....You may as well find fault with the rose for not being a violet, or quarrel with the cuckoo, because she is not a nightingale. Art, Literature, Science, Politics, War, Exploration Religion—each one of these appeals to some one, and he begins to love it with his whole heart and soul. Let us not be narrow and onesided in our judgements " ( p. 10, July 1911 ). If he had just remembered this when he penned his article of July 1912, I would not have felt it necessary to make this long vindication.

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