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**SARASVATS**

**Tale Of An Enterprising Community**

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## One

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### *Source Material.*

On the west coast of India lies a long strip of land, hundred *yojanas* long and three *yojanas* wide, bound by sea on the west and the *Sahya* mountains on the east, reclaimed by Bhargava Parashurama when he was banished by Kashyap Muni to settle in the extreme end of *Aryavarta*. A historian should neither be intimidated by legends in ancient texts nor be bewildered by the deterioration of the ideals enshrined in classification of the society, based on attributes and performance of actions, nor be shocked by perverse norms paraded as *Yuga Dharma*, because of his firm conviction that the fundamental *essence* of *Dharma* is ever inviolable, only the external *form* changing with period, places and persons.

Though *Sarasvats*, like many others claim to be Brahmins, it is hazardous to expect in *Kali Yuga* that functions assigned to *Brahmins* like ‘*Worship of the Luminous ones, of Teachers, of the men of wisdom, purity, uprightness, self-restraint, austerity, learning, serenity of mind, speech, action, performance of action without expectation of any rewards . . .*’ would be fulfilled by them in entirety. But this should not prevent them from reflecting about their attributes and whether the functions performed by them are commensurate to them. During the efflux of *Time*, some may need to be re-appraised and compromised temporarily in times of distress, as contemplated by *Dharmashastras*, while propounding the principle of *apaddharma*. But complete unconcern or disregard or unconcern can neither be justified nor be condoned for *Sarasvats*, if they claim to be *Brahmins*.

This book is, therefore, addressed to those bold ones who can reflect and question the *brahminhood* foisted on them, when they are known and recognized more for their commercial enterprise than for their wisdom. When wisdom is discounted and wealth becomes the yardstick, a *Brahmin* should wake up and the *intellegensia* among them cannot sit silent saying what is not seen does not concern. Life is, what the Mind makes it to be. Therefore, if the *brahminhood* of the

*Sarasvatis* is to be restored to justify its pure and noble heritage, then Mind needs to think and reflect consciously without being blinded by their technological achievements and material success.

This Book is neither meant to be nor is the history of the *Sarasvat* community; it only attempts to place on a canvas the problems which they have faced, many appearing hazy, indistinct and confusing. It is hoped that what appears unclear will be clarified by men of wisdom who know the facts better, instead of standing on the fringe watching the society slide down to doom. Initiated by the counsels of the wise, the young ones may rise up being initiated with a vision in their eyes and enterprise in their arms. Admitting that all that is old is not necessarily good and all that is new is also not necessarily bad, one should understand the present in the twilight of the past to fashion a bright future. Religion is not blind acceptance of scriptural authority nor questioning the credentials of the religious institutions, practices and customs is rebellion. Because wisdom needs to be reaffirmed. What is needed, is an inquiry in beliefs, faiths and the assumptions, so that one may open the gates to the unknown. One would fail if he remains silent when he should be vocal.

Man cannot be free of beliefs; if he rejects one, another one takes its place. Man nevertheless can claim clarity born out of reflection, even if successful solution may appear uncertain. Error lies in assuming accumulated information to be same as wisdom. Only discrimination transforms information to wisdom, inquirer to be a thinker, inquirer, seer to rejuvenate history and charter the future.

Historian cannot afford to be a compiler of information from various sources but has to be a commentator as well. If he relies on scriptures and legends, on travelogues, on archeology, philology, philosophy, it does not mean that he necessarily accept them all, as complete and conclusive evidence. In scriptures one often finds authentication of what archeology has revealed later. Since scriptures primarily rely on symbolic and mystical suggestions, one needs to sift facts from myths, history from legends. One need not necessarily be right and all others be occasionally be right. Antagonism needs to be replaced by compassion to each other's customs and manners, beliefs and religious practices to justify the claim of the *Vedic* scriptures - 'वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्'.

The *Vedic* scriptures and *Brahmanas* have been immense source of historical events. Some Marxist historians like Dr. D.D. Kosambi believe that the *Vedic* scriptures '*deal overwhelmingly with Yajna blood sacrifices . . . Such monstrous occupation with unlimited ritual killing proves that the society had begun to exhaust all the means*

of subsistence', further pontificating that 'When Upanishads were added to supplement the various Brahmanas, no direct acknowledgement was made of any change . . . The Yajna was now cited primarily for some mystical philosophy with generally fantastic interpretation, not for original blood and gut performance . . . No reference was made to Buddhism or Any other anti-Brahmin religious sect. This led many to believe that the oldest Upanishads must all precede Buddhism'. The word 'Many' possibly having some reference to the pre-Karl Marx Marxists intellectuals.

Further according to the intellectual Marxist scholar, Krishna was late intruder in Mahabharata, and 'great deal of doctrine later palmed off in Krishna's name was surreptitiously borrowed from Buddhism . . .' his only regret being that 'The serene and limpid presentation in the simplest words and plain logic which characterises early Buddhist discourse is not found in the teachings foisted upon Krishna'. It became impossible for Dr. Kosambi to expect from Krishna any 'serene and limpid presentation in the simplest words and plain logic which characterizes early Buddhist discourse' especially when Krishna in the learned Marxist's opinion 'The many-faceted god is the like inconsistent, though all things to all men and everything to most women . . . husband to innumerable goddesses, most promiscuously virile of bedmates . . . toughest of the bullies in killing his own uncle Kamsa, in beheading a guest of honour like Shishupala and at some one else's fire sacrifice; the fountain-head of all morality whose advice at crucial moments of great battle . . . nevertheless went counter to every rule of decency, fair play or chivalry. The whole Krishna saga is magnificent example of what a true believer can manage to swallow, a perfect setting of opportunism for the specious arguments of the Gita'. The psychological poverty of the intellectual Marxist did not stop here, only to conclude with his specious remark referring Ganapati as 'the elephant-headed Ganesh, son of Shiva or rather of Shiva's wife'. With such intellectual background, it is not surprising that he should have taken as Gods, the great (?) leaders like Lenin and Stalin.

It is often claimed that 'Mahabharata contains all that is to be known ; what it does not contain, is not worth knowing'. But it was not composed by one person to at one time, though it is ascribed to Vyasa. It started as Jaya, the record of internecine war between two Arya groups, one of the supported by the non-Arya communities. Later it was expanded with additional material as Bharata and finally when Bhargavas added their own legends and religious thoughts it became Mahabharata. Speaking of these additions, Dr Sukhtanakar says in his book *Bhrigus and Bhargavas, a text of historical study*, 'This epic

*poem was at a critical stage of the history appropriated by the Bhrigus (who had certainly specialized in Dharma and Nitisara and probably also developed leanings towards Vishnuism) with the idea of developing in to a vehicle of popular instruction and edification combined with entertainment’.*

*Ramayana* was another scripture which according to Sri Aurobindo, was written by Valmiki ‘*in a political and social atmosphere resembling that which surrounded by Vyasa . . which to the pure and delicate moral temperament of Valmiki, imaginative, sensitive, enthusiastic shot through with rays of visionary idealism and ethereal light, this looseness and violence was shocking and abhorrent . . He took refuge, therefore, in a great past age of national greatness and virtue, distant enough to be idealized but near enough to have sufficient materials of a great civilisation’.* The puranas are very important in as much as they have made the abstruse philosophical concepts accessible to the less qualified people by bringing the divine element to the emotive level of human consciousness. In addition I have relied primarily on *Skanda Purana*, with full understanding that it is not a composite document a bundle of additions made from time to time.

Information from anthropologists like Rice, Guha, indologists like Cunningham, Bhanadarakar, philologists like Hoernle, Marshal, Beames, Chatterjee, Katre and also archeologists like Marshal and others have helped me to be dispassionate where unintentional bias may intrude. Temptation to give extensive extracts from books is resisted. References are made to the views of many authors, though it has not been possible to accept their conclusions as well.

Therefore, temptation to be swayed by poetic imagery or by the religious fervour is resisted, with an intention to be guided by these wise words. It is fully realized that a human being cannot be freed from beliefs; if he rejects one another will wait on the sideline for acceptance.

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## Two

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### *Problems in Writing History of a People.*

Anthropologists commence evolution of human life from Africa and moving there from to other places, establishing communities primarily on the banks of rivers. As centuries passed, Nature and Environment fused racial groups, through biological selection, leading each group to claim pride of possession of their land, racial identity, heritage and civilization. Interaction was biological necessity, cultural, intellectual, ethical and moral integration was consequent reality. In lands enriched by rivers, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Hebrew, and Iranian, Indian and Chinese civilizations came to rise.

In this process, *Time* is an important element for integration and assimilation, transforming 'ancient' civilizations to 'modern' ones. *Existence* is perennial and change continuous, without there being a 'mother of all civilizations', each adding to the grandeur in vibrancy of spiritual, ethical, moral and cultural ideals. Human nature is essentially same, to whichever place and period it may belong. It is individual ego and parochial mind that separates and divides human ethos, one society claiming superiority over others. Ancient Egyptians considered only those born in Egypt as 'people', the rest meriting no such description, ascribing the decline in their civilization not to their inability to assimilate the best what others could offer, but to the perfidious influence of 'strangers from outside (who) have come into Egypt', 'Foreigners (who) have become 'people' everywhere' (Admon - Quoted in *Before Philosophy*). As far as Jews were concerned, ' . . . assimilation was not characteristic of Hebrew thought. On the Contrary, it held out with peculiar stubbornness and insolence against the wisdom of Israel's neighbors' (H. and H.A. Frankfurt in their book 'Before Philosophy'). For them, Israel was the world and the seven tribes were the chosen ones. They believed that ' . . . for our sakes thou

(the Lord) madest the world. As for the other nations . . . they are nothing and like unto spittle' (Leviticus 20). The same thought became Christian consciousness, making Jesus, the sole son of God, through whom alone deliverance is possible. For Muslims, Mohammed was the culmination of this tradition claiming for himself to be last of the Prophets to whom the true religion was revealed by the Lord.

According to A L. Basham many semi-nomadic tribes descended from the great *steppe land* spreading westwards, southwards and eastwards. They became the ancestors of the Greek, Latins, Celts and Teutons, assimilating with earlier inhabitants of Anatolia become the *Hitties* of Mesopotemia, then moving southwards became the *Kassites* and the *Mittanis*, mixed with the locals of Assyria and Sumer, the territory of twin rivers, some worshipping gods with names like *Indra*, *Uruvana* (*Varuna*) *Mitira* (*Mitra*) and *Nasatya*. Those who shifted to the Iranian plains, called themselves the *Avestans* and those settled in the land of five rivers in India, the *Aryas*.

When Egyptians were constructing their Pyramids and Mesopotamian constructing cities and tending agriculture, Sumerian were following Hammarubbi's codes, Babylonians, Assyrians and Chaldeans were devising their magic, sorcery, and witch craft, here in the land watered by *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* rivers, a distinct and highly urbanized civilization was prospering. Though these people on Sindhu valley were materially advanced, they lacked understanding of the Nature, giving scant attention to ecology and natural balance between men and nature. The destruction of the luxuriant forests for bricks required for building dams and urban houses, granneries and fortified cities was to lead to the eventual destruction of their urban civilization.

When the *Aryas* came to down to be settled in the land of five rivers in India, they had to fight these already settled people for settlement and survival of lives and their culture. *Rigvedic scripture* contains account of many struggles with *dasas-dasyus* the uncultured, ignoble, godless, repugnant, dark racial tribes speaking indistinct speech, worshipping *linga* and *yonis*, crude, gross in conduct, interfering in cosmic laws, in spite of their visible material advancement.

We are more concerned with the tribes who considered themselves as noble, cultured and therefore exclusive preferring to remain aloof from the earlier settlers of the regions. *Rigveda* contains many allusions to their lives prior to the descent in Iran, which shows their rapport with Nature. The soundless silence of the surroundings and their own sensitive outlook made them receptive to '*the things seen*' and '*the things heard*'. They were the *Seers* who listened, reflected and meditated. When such persons speak, their *speech*

becomes the medium for the *Will of the Cosmic Energy* unifying the *Will* and *Speech* in individual *Action*, lifting the human perception to divine enlightenment. In India from the beginning till perhaps the western materialistic influence overwhelmed the mind and soul, evolution, whether human, animate or inanimate, was never been seen as merely physical phenomenon, every effort being made to see every event, object, thought, speech or action to spiritual dimension.

Indian history is not the collection of merely the temporal events but the events perceived in the context of spiritual expressions using faintly remembered and recollected legends and myths as symbols or examples for narrating also the spiritual truths behind the temporal events. Unlike the western concept of history which is largely the documentation of physical, temporal events and psychological thoughts, the Hindus never exhibited any such sense of history, leaving the western Indologists to search for history in the maze of myths and legends, form the *Rigveda*, *Upanishads*, *Brahmanas*, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and numerous *Puranas*. None of these could be taken as historical documents, even though from the events used in them as examples for narrating spiritual principles, historical models could be structured.

Indians dealt history as indicator of spiritual rather than temporal evolution of human beings. *Time* was not measured in terms of seconds, minutes, hours, months and years but in *eras* - युग, which determines the change in generational character, shaping the future of human beings. Therefore, passing from one *era* - युग into another is not *a moment in Time* but *culmination of series of momentous events*. *Atharvaveda* compares *Time* with horse that trots and had to be controlled with seven reins (the five organs of senses, the Intellect and the Mind); only the poet can mount *Time-horse* - “कालो अश्वो वहति सप्तरिभः . . . ताम् आगेहति कवयो विपश्चितः” *Time* does not stand still, *Mahabharata* speaking of the destructive and creative functions of *Time*. ‘कालः पचति भूतानि कालः संहरते प्रजाः ५ कालः सुप्तेषु जाग्रति कालो हि दुरतिक्रमः ५’ - *Time* devours the past, puts an end to the creation, wakes up those in slumber. *Time*, verily, is the vigorous One.

The four *Yugas* do not suggest passage of number of years, but culmination of important events. The *Satya yuga* is the primary stage when human spirit was pure and unsullied. *Vedic* effervescence was the result which ended when *Sarasvati* river, the symbolizing the effulgence of human spirit disappeared from *Aryas*, people becoming more concerned with physical needs and temporal conveniences, commenced their emigration to the east. *Krita yuga* commenced thereafter and ended with the termination of arrogant *Kshatriyas* by

Parashurama and death of King Sagar of *Ikshavaku* dynasty who was one of the associate of the *Bhargava*. The *Treta yuga* followed, the high point of this *yuga* being the prominence of *Ikshavaku* dynasty in Ayodhya under *Dasharathi* Rama. The *yuga* ended the day when *Rama* on completion of his *avatara*, departs. By the time *Dvapara yuga* came, the northern India was completely dominated by *Aryas*, with many non-*Arya* people equally dominating the life. There was large scale admixture of racial groups, which contributed to enlargement of the War theatre to include people from even the southern India. Its high point is the internecine conflict between the *Kauravas* and *Pandavas*, both the descendents of once a great *Paurava* dynasty, in which Krishna played an important role. The *yuga* closes when the *Yadava* family in *Dvaraka* comes to end and Krishna completes his *avatara*. The present *Kali yuga* then commences and is till in operation.

In ancient times, there was a balance between temporal and the spiritual life, with the awareness of different races of 'the Earth that bears people speaking varied languages, with various religions rituals, according the places of their abode, enrich me with wealth in thousand streams like a milch-cow that never fails' the human race seen as one big family - 'वयुथैव कुटुम्बकम्', sharing noble thoughts from all quarters - 'आ नो भद्राः क्तवो यान्नु विश्वतः'. With the passage of time as diverse racial influences came to intermingle in the society, the earlier *Arya* values became neglected and the moral force giving way to materialistic outlook. In *Kali yuga*, the leadership of the society passed on to commercial segment, *Vaishyas* and *Shudras* having upper hand with the rise of material advances. Earlier, temporal life was not divorced from spiritual one. Even as they prayed gods presiding over the forces of nature, for success in battles, prosperity and contentment in life. Though in later days *Puranas* spoke of the seven *dvipas* – continents - in which the world was divided, they rarely spoke of the people residing therein, their entire concentration centred on *Bharatavarha* – 'प्रतीच्यां च नदीनाथः सिन्धुः शखागणैः सह | वहति पोच्चलद्वीचिरार्द्रयन् सततं स्थलीम् || उत्तरां शोभयन्नाशां नगराजो हिमालयः | देवीं भूतिं समालंब्य स्थितो गौरीगुगुगिरिः || दक्षिणां दिशालम्ब्य वीचिभिस्ताडयन् तटम् | राजते लवणाम्भोधिर्दुर्धर्षो लोकदुस्तरः || सोऽयं विस्तीर्णभूभागो नानारत्नविशोभितः | नानावृक्षलतौर्णो नानागिरिनदीयुतः || नानापशुगणैर्जुष्टो नानोक्षनिषेवितः | आर्याणां पुण्यभूमिः सा भारतवर्षमुच्यते ||' – where the best of the rivers flow in hundreds of streams, in the north is spread the radiant Himalayan range, king among mountains, in the south is the expansive salty sea, such is the huge mass of land, shining with numerous gems, endowed with many trees, creepers, herbs, many valleys and rivers, various animals, this is the auspicious land of noble men.

The narrow view became further accentuated in *Kali yuga*, Hindus becoming more and more orthodox and inward looking, though inter-action between different races had brought new concepts, new legends and myths to the people. Around 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Alexander came to India from Greece and brought *Ionian* influence on Indian art, culture, martial arts etc. and also took with him impressions of the Hindus as people given to spiritual thinking. And history as we know came to be evolved. *Shakas, Kushans, Scythians* who came later also left their impression of Indian society. While many of these races absorbed the religious views of the Hindus, rarely one finds an Indian traveling to alien lands and bringing his impressions of them, their customs and cultures.

The Jews and Christians who entered India centuries earlier kept themselves aloof practicing their faith in their own enclaves. In the early years of Islam too, when the fabulous Hind was the source of interest for the traveling Arabian merchants, Al Burani an intellectual Muslim accompanied the Muslims adventurer like Muhammad Gazni (11<sup>th</sup> century) who came to India to plunder the fabulous wealth of the temples and of the rulers. Al Burani was not averse to study the *Vedas, Upanishads* and other scriptures, customs and manners of India, but he regretfully noted that '*The Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. They were haughty, foolishly vain, self conceited and stolid . . . If they traveled and mixed with other nations they would soon change their mind, for their ancestors were not so narrow minded as the present generation is*'.

The inquiring mind of the Hindus became obscured by ego-sense, thoughts become crystallized, the spiritual sense losing its vibrancy to sectarian beliefs, faiths and religions. The classification of the society according to attributes and performance of work came to be replaced by classification of society on the basis of birth. Even as various thoughts breezed internally or externally from outside the frontiers were absorbed and assimilated various thoughts and philosophies, the missionary zeal of Islam changed the Indian attitude entirely making them more and more inward looking, refusing to consider let alone accept alien thoughts.

The poetical freedom available to the authors of *Mahabharata, Ramayana* or *Puranas*, cannot be discounted while preparing a viable and reasonable historical document, with a compassionate sense of inquiry and un-biased desire to understand events. Absence of evidence does not mean absence of facts. For Indians, deficiency of evidence did not create problems. If one can

accept the symbols, myths and legends as working hypothesis without accepting or rejecting them as fictional, then one can source history from scriptures. One must unshackle minds from bondage of the traditional assumptions and revert to the moments of silent solitude to listen *'the sound of one hand clapping'*.

Pragiter prepared the genealogical history of many of the Aryan families on this assumption. His effort should be appreciated and understood instead of treating his righteous disapproval condescendingly, when he remarked *"Ancient Indian history has been fashioned out of compositions, which are purely religious and priestly, which notoriously do not deal with history, and which totally lack the historical sense. The extraordinary nature of such history may be perceived, if it were suggested the European history should be constructed merely out of theological literature. What would raise a smile if applied to Europe has been soberly accepted when applied to India"*.

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### Three

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#### *Arya Settlements in Konkan.*

History is the record of the past events and ideas for reference in the present life, for planning the future course of action. But what goes as 'history' is often the record of intellectual and emotional response to the events experienced and perceived. Knowledge is too vast for human mind to understand, leading one to accept what appears as reasonable and rejecting others. History tends to end up being limited to what is read, seen and heard than what can be referred as first hand experience.

Time is like a flowing river, where only the thing that is constant is internal *essence*, the external *form* constantly changing. Therefore, it is said that no one can dip in the same water twice, because its *form* changes, though every one claims to have experienced the essence of the river. Even so, human *essence* has remained same, though the *form* changes through action, interaction, assimilation and evolution, from savage to what appears as civilized. Many racial groups entered India but no racial form, be it *Negrito*, *Proto-Austroloid*, *Dravidian*, *Mongolian* or *Arya*, has remained constant without changing to constitute a diverse tapestry of Indian ethos.

Among the racial groups, the *Negritos* left literally no traces, except few, *proto-Austroloids* and *Dravidian* races made striding impact on material excellence in to a supremely urbanised civilization. *Aryas* who followed were primarily nomadic, influenced and nurtured in nascent forces of Nature and not being familiar with the urban civilization, were initially averse to the material opulence, preferring to establish their genius on intellectual and spiritual foundation. Being very much unlike the urbanized non-*Arya* settlers, the *Aryas* were reluctant to be influenced by their thoughts and customs, till the natural forces made them source unreservedly many fundamentals from *Austrian* and *Dravidian* races, making Indian Civilization a comprehensive

product of universal integration of cultures. *Vedic* scriptures, as collated by Vyasa, represented not exclusively the *Arya* culture, of the rulers and not of the defeated ones, but a composite document in which the influence of the social, cultural and religious perceptions (*Darshanas*) of both *Arya* and non-*Arya* races found place.

Colonel Wilford observed in *A Comparative Essay on the Ancient Geography in India*, appearing *Asiatic Journal of Bengal* that, 'The oldest name of India that we know of, is Colar, which prevailed till the arrival of the followers of Brahma, and is still preserved by the numerous tribes of aborigines, living among woods and mountains'. Gustav Oppert sees to have endorsed this view in his book, *The Original Inhabitants of India*: 'Indeed most tribal names of inhabitants of India will be shown to refer to mountains . . . The two special Gauda-Dravidian terms of mountain are mala . . and ko . . Both kinds of expressions are widely used and prevail through out India. Hence are derived the names of the mallas, Mala, Matavas, Malayas . . and of the Kolis, Kodullas, Kendas, Gondas, Ganadasm Kuruvas . . I shall in future call those tribes whose names are derived from mala, Dravidians and those names derived from ko, Gaudians.' Gunjkar makes a suggestion that just as from Koli or Kol the place Kolvan is derived, and from Gond people the word Gondavana is derived, similarly the word Konkan may have been derived from Ko, being the name of the original people settled in this area, as also commended by Gustav Oppert.

The coast had access to sea-faring Sumerians, Assyrians known as Asuras and Phoenician, known as Panis, the traders who traveled to far-off places from Harappa or Hariyupia. In later days, Pultarch refers to many of the ports on the west coast calling India as Kolarin. When Vararuchi was mentioning the Prakrit languages of his time, he assigns to the residents of Sahya mountain, the Paishachi language.

Bhargavas were familiar both with the sea going traders like *Panis* and who were sea going *Austroloid naga* traders known as *dasyus* and the *Dravidians*, referred to as *dasas* or *danavas*, earlier when they were in *Iran, Assyria and Sumeria*, from whom they gained their knowledge of building sea-going ships, fast running horse chariots or skill in sorcery and magic, which made them to be feared among the rest of *Aryas*. Rajawade also refers for identical reasons, the *naga* settlements as *Tala, Atala, Patala and Rasatala*. With the assimilation of many *nagas* with the main *Aryas*, some like Vasuki, Shesha, Ananta came closer to *Aryas*, while others like Takshaka, Karkotaka, Kaliya

remained hostile. In *Mahabharat*, Balarama refers to one *Nagatavarma* as pilgrim centre, where in a temple dedicated to Vasuki, thousand of *rishis* worshipped him. Yadu's descendent Mahishmant established his capital *Mahishmati* in the banks of Narmada river, wresting it from Karkotaka *naga*. *Skanda Purana* refers the town Nagve as *Nagavyaha*. The territory south of *Gomantaka* was known as *Ahikshetra*, which came to be transformed as *Haiva*. The *naga sampradaya* becomes powerful as one reaches Kerala.

Dr. S.K. Chatterjee remarked 'It has now been generally admitted . . . that in certain matters the Dravidian and Austric contributions are deeper and more extensive than that of the Aryas', Dr. S. Radhakrishnan concurring 'The Vedic religion absorbed, embodied and preserved the types and rituals of other cults. Instead of destroying them, it adapted them to its own requirement. It took so much from their social life of the Dravidians and other native inhabitants of India that it is difficult to disentangle the original Arya elements from others'. Dr. D. D. Kosambi expressed a discordant note that 'The Aryas were not civilized as compared with the third-millennium urban cultures which they attacked and often ruined'.

Many theories about migration of the Aryas to Indian sub-continent have been put forth. During British rule, it was fashionable to portray Aryas as cultured and highly civilized community, who invading India and defeating the non-Arya barbarian settlers established highly cultured settlements. In the beginning of the twentieth century, when anthropologists, archeologists, linguists and social researchers placed before the public their findings based on racial, social, linguistic evidences, with excavations of Sindhu valley and Sarasvati river civilizations, it came to known the the early settlers were not barbarians but highly developed urban settlers.

Philologists have generally commenced their study of *Prakrit* dialects on the premise that all of them had origin in *Sanskrit*, the refined language of the *Vedic* scriptures. It was scarcely considered whether there should not have been a natural or *prakritic* form of speech, commencing from gibberish of the apes to a communicable form of the humans, before the language could be formalized and termed as refined or *sanskritic*. When A.F.H. Hoernle, who was one of the pioneer philologist of Indian languages, took up the study of the *Prakrit* languages of India, he unconsciously espoused a dramatic theory in his book *A Grammar of Eastern Hindi*, stating that in remote past, when *Aryas* first descended from north-west *Kandahar* (*Gandhara*) their only *prakritic* form of speech was *Magadhi*. It gradually reached towards South and the East. When the second wave

of Aryas, whose *prakritic* form of speech was *Sauraseni*, descended from Kashmir and Ladakh in the north, they settled in the area watered by *Sarasvati*, breaching like a wedge into the area settled by earlier Aryas, gradually pushing them and their speech farther towards the east. Based on these observations, he reasoned that 'two great immigrations of people of the Arya stock into India (which) took place at different periods, both speaking essentially the same language, though in two different varieties'. Dr.S.K.Chatterjee endorsed Hoernle's view. Grierson, while conceding that the two groups spoke different dialects, did not agree with his theory of two-fold entry. Chanda and Risley, anthropologists also came to the same conclusion, when they opined that the *Dolichocephalic* i.e. the long-headed Aryas used to nomadic life, responsive to the sound of silence amidst the surrounding nature and the expansive space above, with freedom to thought and behavior, descended first from the cold climate of Siberia in the plains of Iran, where seeing the urban society which was contrary to their life style, ventured further through difficult terrain of *Hindukush* mountains settled in the plains of Punjab. Here too they confronted people equally coarse, strange and unfamiliar but being aggressively proud of themselves as the noble one – *Aryan*, they fought their way and destroyed the urban life of the people, speaking diverse speeches and practicing, what they considered, obnoxious unnatural, inferior and therefore, ignoble faiths and beliefs. To this *Arya* group belonged the *Bharatan* Tribes consisting of *Kshatriyas* like *Vadhrasravas*, *Divodasa*, *Pijavana* and *Sudas* and *Brahmins* like *Vasishtha*, *Grtismada*, *Kanva*, *Dirghatama* and *Vishvamisra* belong to this group and spoke *Magadhi*.

The *Brachycephalics* i.e. the short-headed Aryas descended via *Ladhak* and *Kashmir*, to settle in the region bounded by rivers *Sarasvati*, *Drishadvati* and *Apayu*. Their fight was against the elements of Nature, the Himalayan snow, blizzard and mountainous terrain and did not encounter any urban society. During their travels they experienced grandeur of the mountains, silence of the snows, swiftness of the flowing rivers and people who though appeared as mysterious, were yet not unfriendly, living a nomadic life which was not very much unlike their own earlier life. Therefore, their first impression of the people *en route*, was friendly, favourable and desirable. Though no less proud than the *Aryas* who had traveled crossing the *Hindukush* mountains, they were nevertheless inclined towards the local population, whether the dwellers in the misty mystical and ethereal Himalayas like the *gandharvas*, *apsara* and *kinnaras* or the urban settlers like the *dasas*, *dasyus* or *danavas* living in the plains.

These *Aryas* were primarily *Kshatriyas* speaking *Sauraseni* speech. Pururavas, Ayu, Nahusha, Yayati and the five sons - Puru, Anu, Turvasu, Druhyu and Yadu were prominent among them. In the absence of a priestly class in their group, they depended on *Angiras*, *Atharvan* and the *Bhrigus*, who like them were also closer, while in Iran, Assyria and Sumeria, to the *non-Arya* settlers. *Pururavas* married the *apsara*, *Urvashi*, Ayu married *danava* princesses *Prabha*. Yayati married *Sharsmistha* *Vrishaparvan danava's* daughter and also *Devayani*, the daughter of *Shukracharya Bhargava*. When *Sudas* of *Bharata* tribe had replaced *Vishvamitra* by *Vashishtha* as the family priest, *Vishvamitra*, though a *Bharatan*, felt insulted and joined the ranks of the *Pauravas*. His sister *Satyavati* was given in marriage to *Richika*, a *Bhargava*. In *Dasarajnya* battle, which was fought between *Sudas* and *Yayati's* sons, *Vishnavmitra* became their guide, and *Bhargavas* assembled the *non-Arya* tribes to align with the five sons *Yayati*. The battle was so ferocious that the *Bharatans* called the *Pauravas* as *dasas* and sought the grace of *Indra* to defeat them.

Apart from these two groups, there was the third group, who are referred in *Vedic* scripture as ancient seers. There are the *Atharvan-Angiras-Bhargavas* were proud, yet unbiased, unprejudiced tolerant people, more universal in outlook, mingling freely with the *Aryas* as well as the *non-Aryas*. While in Iran *Atharvans* were priests of the fire worshippers and devotees of *Varuna*, accepted as *Ahura Mazda*, or *Assara Mazas*. For the *Avestans*, *deva* was not acceptable and *Indra*, who defeated the *Asura* and *Dasa* forts and towns of *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations, was not the principal God, honoured by the *Aryas* of the *sapta-sindhavas*.

*Bhargavas* were primarily the most dynamic among the trio, traveling farther perhaps to *Summeria* and *Assyria* and learning from then their knowledge in sorcery, witch craft, magical spells and occult powers, learning from the *Phoenicians*, the art of construction of sea-going ships with many oars, skill in navigation and construction of fast moving horse driven chariots, at the same time spreading their spiritual thoughts and gods to them. All these knowledge made the *Bhargavas* 'omniscient as well as omnipotent supermen . . . by virtue of their rigid austerities and magical or spiritual powers . . . walking on earth. . . greater than mere gods' as *Sukhtankar* refers them in '*Bhrigus and Bharatas - A historical study*'. The visit of *Narada*, the wandering minstrel to the *Shveta dvipa* and bringing *Pancharatra* Philosophy to *India* may due to such interaction.

According to *Sukhtankar*, *Bhargavas* incorporated many of their legends in *Mahabharata*, '*The epic poem (Jaya describing in*

detail the Bharata War), was at a critical stage of the history was appropriated by the Bhrigus (who had specially specialized in Dharma and Nitisara and probably also developed leanings towards Vaishnavism) with the idea of developing the epic into a vehicle of popular instruction and edification combined with entertainment'. Dr S. K Chatterjee endorsing this view said 'There should be . . . no hesitation in concluding that in . . . Mahabharata there is conscious, nay deliberate weaving together or rather stitching together of the Bharata legends with Bhargava stories'.

*Veda* means eternal and immutable wisdom comprising social, cultural, temporal and spiritual culture of the entire world contributed by all diverse creatures, animate or inanimate, to whichever stage of evolution they may belong, expressed in diverse places and periods making it undoubtedly a comprehensive aggregate mass. It is what is called the *universal righteousness*, the *perennial principles* – सनातन धर्म. The Seers have 'seen' and recorded a fragment of the effluence of that *supernal wisdom (Veda)* without human effort – 'सुप्त प्रयत्न विना प्रकटितमूत'.

Majority of the hymns were no doubt inherited by the *Aryas*, as their inheritance when they entered India, some of them also having been 'seen' by the non-*Aryas* who had come under the *Arya* influence in India. Being individual expressions, having personal and emotional character, they were expressed initially in the *prakritic* form of speech of the Seer, which as pointed out by Hoernle seems to be either *Magadhi* or *Sauraseni*, with their regional variations. As time lapsed, the hymns contributed by diverse racial groups belonging to diverse *milieu*, gathered in abundance. Earlier hymns became more and more distant and obtuse. As time lapsed, the hymns gathered in abundance, becoming difficult for recollecting, remembering and reciting, though the mass made Indian life and philosophy the symbol of composite comprehensive, continuity of human thought.

The hymns acquired the sanctity of mystical, spiritual and cultural heritage of the *Aryas*, and therefore needed a more mature, sophisticated, noble and cultured medium to justify what was perceived in supra-conscious Mind. For that purpose, *Krishna Dvaipayana* used *Sanskrit*, which by the time the *Dvapara Yuga* had set in, had acquired the *sanskritic* cultured, noble form. He felt that since it was impossible for human beings to remember all of them due to the decrease in the intellectual and power of remembrance, he collected

few representative hymns from the great mass, arranging them in *Mandalas*, according to the Seer families, in four groups *Rig, Sama, Yajur* and *Atharva*, hence known as *Vyasa*, the coordinator, the arranger.

Since the language was cultured and intelligible only to the learned and qualified, the hymns were not only not accessible to the common people but also to those who were not properly initiated and qualified for receiving the wisdom. Further, even though *Vedic scriptures* use *Sanskrit* as the language, it is not referred by that name but as *Chhndas*, which means concealed 'छन्दयिति ते छन्दम्'.

Aurobindo explaining the need for such concealment says: ' . . . the *Rigveda* is itself the one considerable document that remains to us from the early period of human thought of which the historic Eleusinian and orphic mysteries were the failing remnants, when the spiritual and psychological knowledge of the race was concealed. . . one of the leading principles of the mystics was the sacredness and secrecy of self-knowledge and the true language of the Gods. This wisdom, they thought, unfit, perhaps even dangerous to the ordinary human mind or in any case liable to perversion and misuse and loss of virtue if revealed to vulgar and unpurified spirits. Hence they favoured existence of an outer worship, effective but imperfect, for the profane an inner discipline for the initiate, and clothed their language and words and images which had, equally, a spiritual sense for the elect, a concrete sense for the elect, a concrete sense for the mass of ordinary worshippers'.

*Rigvedic* seer also mentions that, 'When it was desired that the objects be assigned with names, *Vak* was sent as the earliest of all utterances, through *Brihaspati*, the first and the foremost. The Speech that was best and stainless, was revealed, along with the divine mystery' and what scripture further said, 'In four groups (*Para, Pashyanti, Madhyama* and *Vaikhari*) has *Vak* been classified, all of which the men of wisdom are aware of. In the first three groups are hidden the mystical secrets and men speak only in the fourth classification". *Brihaddevata* also pointed out that only he who knows the true meaning of the hymns alone can know the luminous gods – 'ऋचो ह यो वेद स वेद देवानाम्', and he who does not know them, in what way can the hymns help - 'ऋचो अक्षरे परमेव्योमन् यस्मिन्देवाधि विश्वे निषेदुः / यस्तन्नवेद किं ऋचा करिष्यति |'. *Yaska* refers them contemptuously as pillars carrying the loads 'स्थाणुरायम् भारहाराः'.

Since *Vedic* scriptures were mystical in *essence* and mysterious in *form*, they were not easily intelligible unless they were initiated. Therefore, six subsidiary supports were provided - शिक्षा (*phonetics*), कल्प (*rituals*), व्याकरण (*grammar*), निरुक्त (*etymology*), छंद (*metrics*) and ज्योतिष (*astrology*).

In an over-view, *Rigvedic* hymns and later *Brahmanas* appear to contain primarily the account of the conflicts of the *Aryas* and the non-*Aryas*. But a closer study will reveal that the events have been used as symbolic data and suggestions to demonstrate conflict between enlightened forces and the un-enlightened ones. The temporal symbols have nevertheless been of assistance in the investigation in archeology, regarding the historicity of the events, especially of the *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations with opulent and dramatic clarity.

While the *Bharatans* under *rajanyas* like Vadhrasravas, Divodasa, Pijavana and Sudas with their *Brahmin* priests like Vasishtha, Grtismada, Kanva, Dirghatama and Vishvamitra lived in the plains of Punjab, then known as the land of *sapta sindhavas*, the *Pauravas* with *rajanyas* like Pururavas, Ayu, Nahusha, Yayati and his five sons - Puru, Anu, Turvasu, Druhyu and Yadu lived in and around the *Sarasvati* river.

Neither *Bharatans* nor the *Pauravas* were close with the *Atharva-Angiras-Bhargavas*, though respected as ancient seers. Their proximity, especially that of the *Bhargavas*, with non-*Aryas* along with their knowledge of sorcery, witch-craft, skill in ship building, had distanced them from the mainstream of the other *Arya* groups settled in the land of *sapta sindhavas*. For a long time even their sacred scripture, *Atharvaveda*, was not accorded the status as *Rig, Sama, Yajurvedas*, were given. The first three alone were referred as *Trayi Vidya* and *Atharvaveda* being referred as *Kshatram*. It was only in later times that it received recognition as the fourth *Vedic* scripture. *Bhrigus* and *Angiras* were credited having brought from heavens *Agni* and establishing it in *Brahmavarta*, which on that account became divinely ordained place for performance of sacrifices, the people residing there on that account being noble and austere. When *Atharvans* and *Angiras* in later times shifted their settlements to *Brahmavarta*, *Bhargavas* continued to settle in *Bhrigukaccha*, on the west coast of Inida. Chyavan whose name is found in *Rigveda* and Shukracharya as presiding priests of the non-*Arya* communities and the marital relation with *Pauravas* brought these two groups closer in later generations.

When *Sarasvati* river started disappearing from the earth and the *Sind* and *Rajasthan* started becoming deserts, the *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations collapsed, contributing to vast migrations of *Aryas* and the non-*Aryas*. The victorious *Aryas* had destroyed enterprise and the will of the non-*Arya* communities, leading them to

disperse on all sides of the land, even crossing over the *Vindhya* mountain range towards unknown territories south. *Aryas*, themselves emigrated towards east along the northern banks of river Ganga, under the leadership of Videha Maghava and guided by Gotama *Rishi*, till they reached river *Sadanir* (modern *Gandaki*) in present Uttar Pradesh. *Ikshvaku* established his settlement in Kosala with *Ayodhya* as the capital. While his eldest son, Vikukshi continued to rule in Kosala after him, his second son Nimi founded his settlement named *Videha* across the river *Sadanir*, with *Mithila* named after his son Mithi Janaka, as his capital. All the subsequent rulers of Videha came to known as *Janakas*. Sita's father Janaka was one of the famous for his wisdom during *Upanishadic* times. Dand, the third son, established his own settlement in distant place known as *Dandaka*, which in later times became an inaccessible forest known as *Dandakaryaya* due to Chyvana's curse on the King. Even as *Bharatan Aryas* emigrated to the east, even so *Pauravas* began emigrating towards the territories in the south western regions, due to their close association with *Bhargavas* and *danaavas*. Earlier, after *Dasarajnya* war had ended, Yayati had distributed his empire among his sons – Puru, the favorite son, continuing to rule over *Madhyadesha*, in the southern half of *Ganga-Yamuna doab*. Turvasu got the south-west territory around Rewa and Druhyu the region north of Chambal and south-east territory west of *Yamuna* river. Anu received the northern portion of *Ganga-Januna doab* and Yadu was given the area around Chambal.

When *Atharvans* and *Angiras* departed to settle in *Brahmavarta*, *Bhargavas* continued to settle in *Bhrigukaccha* (the modern Bharuch). *Sarasvat* community owes allegiance to *Sarasvat muni*, son of Dadhichi of the *Angira* family, whose birth is recorded in *Mahabharata*. Once when Dadhichi was performing austerities on the banks of *Sarasvati*, Indra, frightened of his intense austerities, dispatched Alambusha, the celestial damsel to bring impediments in his austerities. Seeing her, the sage is said to have lost control and semen spurted from him. *Sarasvati* which was flowing by gathered it within her womb and gave birth to a son. Dadhichi who was pleased with noble deed done by the river blessed her that the son will henceforth be known in the worlds as *Sarasvat*, after her, and become famous as a great ascetic, full of *jnana* (empirical knowledge) and *vijnana* (supernal wisdom).

When *Aryavarta* in later days faced draught and *Brahmins* started deserting *Brahmavarta*, even *Sarasvat* all set to join the exodus, mother *Sarasvati* implores with not to leave *Brahmavarta* but remain to preserve *Vedic* wisdom. When the drought comes to an end and

*Brahmins* return to *Brahmavarta*, not remembering the *Vedic* wisdom, Sarasvat *muni* initiates them again. *Sarasvats* are, therefore, beholden to Sarasvat *muni* as patron, Parashurama Bhargava as the guardian, establishing their first settlement in *Gomantaka*.

Yayati having assigned Yadu, his son, the area around Chambal, his descendents in later days extended their rule to Gujarat-Saurashtra, after destroying the *rakshasa* power in that region. Yadu had two sons, Kroshtri and Sahasrajit, with *Bhargavas* as the presiding priests. Kroshtri after seeking peace with Sagar of Ayodhya, temporarily settled in Vidharbha and after Sagara's death his descendents reclaimed much of the territories which they had lost. Kratha-Bhima, who was a ruler of this dynasty had four sons. Of them Andhaka ruled Mathura and his son Kukura was the father of Ugrasena, whose grandson by his daughter Devaki was Krishna. His son Kamsa who dethroned the father was killed by Krishna, which angers Jarasandha of Magadha, whose daughter was married to Kamsa. When Jarasandha started harassing people of Mathura and Gokula, and Mathura, Krishna emigrated to the western side sea shore in Saurashtra 'with his favourite companions, passing through the territories of *Kuru-Jangala*, *Panchala*, *Surasena* along the river *Yamuna*, to *Brahmavarta*, *Kurukshetra*, *Matsya* and *Sarasvata* (possibly in *Rajaputana*), *Marudhanva* reaching *Anarta* (Saurashtra) beyond *Suvira* and *Abhira*'. He established a new capital in Dvaraka. Though the Yadavas did not have much contact with *Sarasvats*, *Bhagavat Purana* (I.10) records that Krishna visited *Gomantgiri*, to take shelter from repeated harassment from Jarasandha. All this was, of course in the last days of *Dvapara Yuga*.

Yadu's other son, Sahasrajit was more resourceful and his *Haihaya* dynasty dominated the west coast of India. His son Mahishmant established his capital at *Mahishmati*, on the banks of *Narmada* river, driving Karkotaka *naga* from that region. Chyavana Bhargava was his priest and advisor. *Haihayas* acquired the skill and expertise to construct fast moving horse-drawn Chariots and many oared sea-going ships, from *Bhargavas* for which they received enormous wealth as *dakshina*. Mahishmant's son Bhadrashrenyan extended the domain to Kasi in the Gangetic *doab*. His son Kritavirya being arrogant and insolent, demanded from *Bhargavas* the return of the wealth given to them by his ancestors. On refusal, Kritavirya harassed them and forced Bhargavas to emigrate to *Madhyadesha* for safety. It was here that Chyavan's son Urva was born. Urva's son

Richika married *Kanyakubja* Kings's daughter Satyavati. He attempted to punish *Haihayas* with the help of *Kshatriyas* inimical to them, but without much success.

Arjuna was the most powerful of the kings in *Haiyahya* dynasty, having many multi-oared ships, which made people refer him as having thousand arms – *Sahasrajuna*. He was a great devotee of *Dattatreya*. He defeated *Ravana* the king of *Lanka*, and also stopped *Narmada* from flowing when *Chitrarath*, the *Gandharva* king was taking bath in the river with his entourage. He was contemporary of *Richika's* son *Jamadagni*, who was comparatively sober and not given to anger. The *Haihaya* princes once on a hunting expedition visited *Jamadagni's ashrama*, when the *rihi* was in deep contemplation. Seeing him not responding to their arrival, the arrogant *Haihayas* behaved with insolence, beheading him in the process. Seeing this dastardly act, *Parashurama*, *Jamadagni's* youngest son vows to exterminate *Haiyahya* clan.

He forms a confederation of the *Kshatriyas* who were inimical to *Haihayas* under the leadership of *Sagar* of *Iskhvaku* dynasty. Seeing the vehemence of *Parashurama* and terrible loss of *Kshtra* power from *Aryavarta*, *Bhargava* ancestors plead with him not to destroy all the *Kshatriyas*, lest the *Aryavarta* may descend in disorder. Heeding the advice, *Parashurama* stops his battles.

He performed the *shraddha* ceremony for his ancestors and offered blood of the slain *Kshatriyas* as oblation, standing in the middle of the five pools known as *स्यन्त पंचकम्*, which was all that had remained of once mighty river, *Sarasvati*. Thereafter, he offered the lands conquered by him as *dakshina* to Sage *Kashyapa*, the presiding priest. *Kashyapa* who was aware of *Parashurama's* rage, thinks it wise to banish him from *Aryavarta* saying 'गच्छ तीरं समुद्रस्य दक्षिणस्य महामुने | न ते मद्दिपये राम वास्तव्यमिह कर्हिचित् ||' – go to the southern shore of the sea coast, O great *Muni*, for you can no more settle on the land gifted to me. *Parashurama* departs to the western sea coast, with which he was already familiar being near enough to his traditional home in *Brighu-kaccha* and yet distant from *Dandakaranya*, where the non-*Aryas* not believing in *यज्ञसंस्था* were settled.

As one belonging to sea-going clan, *Parashurama* was familiar with the long strip of land, extending from *वैतरिणी* river in the north (near present day *Daman*) to *सुव्रतमण्य* river in the south (being the present day river *गंगावली* in North *Kanara*) and was named *शूर्पारक*, since it had a shape like winnowing board. The northern part was named *अपरान्त* and the southern one as *गोमन्तक* which according to *Skanda Purana* was उत्तमम् (best), व्यवस्थितम् (well-established), क्षेत्रं जवधिकम् (land endowed with grains),

सर्वतीर्थान्वितम् (endowed with all sacred streams), विमलम् (auspicious), निर्मलम् (pure), तीर्थमुत्तमम् (best of the sacred streams), auspicious and equal in purity as *Aryavarta*. Sagar, the king of *Kosala*, was the associate in Parashurams's battles and *Krita yuga* is said to have come to close with his death. Therefore, the reclamation of the land by Paashurama could have been during the closing period of that *yuga*.

Later for performance of sacrifices and for offering oblations to the ancestors he brought the ten Brahmins families from the *ashrama* of Sarasvat *muni* in *Trihotra* known as *Brahmavarta*, who were वेदवेदांग पारंगतः and मंत्र औषधी तपो योगबलेन जीतालन्ववः, and settled them in *Gomantaka* which was suitable place for their livelihood (भोजनार्थम्), for performance of sacrifices (यज्ञार्थम्) and for offering oblations to ancestors (श्राद्धार्थम्). भोजनार्थम् - suitable place for livelihood means reclamation of the land, draining the sea water swamped over the lands, making it fit for agriculture and also clearing the same from dense forests. During those days, the Kunbi tribes were settled which formed the bulk of agricultural work-force.

Apart from these members of Yadu's dynasty we also come across in *Mahabhart*, three others belonging to *Yadava* family - Padmavarna, Sarasa and Harita. They were not as powerful as Haihayas or the Yadavas of Dvaraka, having established their small settlements in the distant southern and eastern part of Konkan. Padmavarna had his kingdom *Padmavata*, with *Karavir* (modern Kolhapur) as the capital. Sarasa was settled in *Banavasi* in North Kanara district, with *Kraunchpur* being his capital. Harita had his small kingdom in an island (probably the *Anjadiva* island, near *Karwar*) where Madguras (*Mogers* as they are now known) collected sea shells. These places were not far from *Ahi Kshetra*, *Haiga* or *Haiva* (in Kannada (extending up to Kerala in the south), which also came to be added later as *Parashuramasrishti*, spurred by the first of the settlements established in *Gomantaka*.

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## Four

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### *Sarasvat Settlements in Konkan.*

Among all the *Sarasvat* settlements in Konkan, only the first settlement of the ten Brahmins families from *Brahmavarta* is shrouded in legends and myths. The first settlement was with a definite purpose providing means of livelihood (भोजनार्थम्) in a strange and distant place equal in purity and auspiciousness as *Aryavarta*, for offering oblations to his ancestors (श्राद्धार्थम्) and for performing religious sacrifices (यज्ञार्थम्). All subsequent settlements were factually migrations, due to religious, economic and social reasons.

#### *The First Settlement*

According to *Mahabharata* and later *Skanda Purana* records that when Parashurama was exterminating the arrogant *Kshatriyas* from face of the earth, his ancestors seeing the horrendous consequences of his anger, they counseled him to calm down and not destroy all *Kshatriyas*, lest *Aryavarta* be without *kshatra* protection. Listening to the sage advice, Parashurama stopped the killings. Thereafter, he performed the श्राद्ध ceremony for his father and ancestors, standing in the five pools known as स्वमन्त पंचकम्, offered blood of the slain *Kshatriyas* as oblation to them. Then he offered to Sage Kashyapa, the presiding priest, the lands conquered by him as *dakshina*. The sage being aware of Parashurama's anger, and to safeguard *Aryavarta*, banished him to settle in the land beyond the end – Aprant, saying 'गच्छ तीरं समुद्रस्य दक्षिणस्य महामुने | न ते मद्दिपये राम वास्तव्यमिह कर्हिचित् ||' – go O great *Muni*, to the southern shore of the sea coast, for you cannot live on the land gifted to me.

The banishment deprived him of the sacred and auspicious land for performing his sacrifices and for offering oblations to ancestors. Therefore, he reclaimed a long strip of land (or as the poets describe it – demanded the land from the sea) on the west coast of India, which because of its shape came to be referred as शूर्पाक, with अपरान्त in the north and गोमान्तक in the south. Searching further for a place, equally pure and auspicious as *Aryavarta*, for performing sacrifices and for offering oblations to ancestors, he brought *Brahmin*

families belonging to the ten *gotras* of ‘भारद्वाजः कौशिकश्च वलकौडिन्यकाश्यपाः ॥ वसिष्ठो जमदग्निश्च विश्वामित्रश्च गौतमः | अत्रि दशरथश्चैते स्थापितास्तत्र चैव हि ॥ from *Trihotra* or *Brahmavarta* – ‘त्रिहोत्रनिवासिनश्चैव पंचगौडान्तरे स्थिताः’ Brahmins families who were ‘उत्तमा राजपूजिता सुदर्शनाः सदाचाराश्चतुराः सर्वकर्मसु’ belonging to each of the *Kautsa*, *Vatsa* and *Kaundinya gotras* were settled in *Kushasthali* (Kuthal) and *Keloshi*. Of the balance families, six families each were settled in *Mathagram* (Madgaon), *Varenya* (Verne), *Lotli* and *Kudasthali*. In *Chudamani* (Chodne) ten families and in between *Dipavati* (Divadi) and *Gomanchala* total twelve families were settled. Thus in all sixty-six families were settled, with the settlements coming to be designated as *साल्पटि* or or present *Salcete*.

Thereafter, in the reclaimed land, he established temples dedicated to Hari Hareshvar, Mukteshvar, Valukेशha, Banaganga, Kushasthali, and Madgaon and in Gomanchala, consecrated images of *Mangesh*, *Mahalakshmi*, *Mhalasa*, *Shantadurga*, *Nagesh*, and *Saptakoteeshvara* for the benefit of the devotees.

#### *The Identification of Trihotra*

While there is unanimity about settlement of Brahmin families in *Gomantaka* by Parashurama, there have been controversies about the identification of *Trihotra* in the phrase ‘त्रिहोत्रनिवासिनश्चैव पंचगौडान्तरे स्थिताः’. In India in the absence of any historical narrations, normally scriptures are sourced for historical events. But these events need to be accepted with circumspection and not as unimpeachable evidence, because though subsequent expansion of the frontiers of knowledge have validated many of the claims contained in scriptures, one must be careful to sift reality from imagery.

*Sarasvati* was important river even in pre-*Vedic* era, though it acquired divine status in the hands of *Aryas*. Earlier, with many fortified cities and agricultural fields of non-*Arya* communities spreading over the banks, the river played an important role in economic life of the non-*Aryas*. The river was used for navigation by *Panis*, a non-*Arya* community, for transporting food and commodities to distant Sumer, Assyria and Mesopotamia. In *Rigveda* we find it mentioned that *Divodas* of *Bharat* tribe seized the control of river from the hands of non-*Aryan Panis*, who had kept it captive as an important trade route. From that time it became an auspicious river for *Aryas*. When the non-*Arya* communities used the dense forests indiscriminately for the construction of bricks for their cities, granaries, canals and forts much of its forest cover was lost in the area, depriving

the lands from monsoon rains. Water source becoming scarce, the rivers ceased to flow in abundance and land was transformed increasingly to a desert. *Sarasvati* river was not an exception; once flowing copiously it became pale reflection of the earlier mighty river. The legends attributed the disappearance of the river to the excess of sins among people. With the destruction of their cities and the forts by the *Aryas*, the *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations of the non-*Aryas* came to an end and they dispersed to other parts of India. The *Aryas* too finding the lands watered by the five rivers or by *Sarasvati* no more fruitful also emigrated towards east, details of which are to be found in *Shatapatha Brahmana*. It was thus at the closing period of what was known as *Satya yuga* or *Krita yuga* that the river *Sarasvati* disappeared from the place of the earth, culminating not only the end of *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations but also emigration of *Aryas* from area watered by *sapta-sindhavas*.

It is against the backdrop of these events, substantiated further by studies and new evidences emerging, that one should reappraise and reconsider R. B. Gunjekar's suggestion in *Sarasvati Mandala* (1884) that *Trihotra* is *Tirhut* in Bihar, which appears to be founded entirely on tonal resemblance between the words and not supported by any other scriptural, literary, historical or archeological evidences. For a long time in spite of immense stride in archeology, anthropology and linguistic studies, Gunjekar's erroneous identification was accepted generally and even by M. Govind Pai, V. N. Kudva and Chandrakant Keni and many others. The alternative suggestions made by Talmaki, Jaiswal, Saletore, Priyolkar, Sonde, Suryakant Kamath and others, in the light of subsequent researches in anthropology, archeology and linguistic studies and comparative documented narratives, did either not receive any attention or not even considered.

The statement 'त्रिहोत्रवासिनश्चैव पंचगौडान्तरे स्थिताः' contains two important clues - त्रिहोत्रवासिनः, residents of *Trihotra* and पंचगौडान्तरे स्थिताः residing within the all-inclusive region known as *Panch Gauda*. The word *Trihotra*, *Trihotrapura* and *Gaudapradesha* are not found in any earlier scriptural or historical records but only in *Skanda Purana*, composed in later times and further enlarged with many regional interpolations.

During *Vedic* period, the territory bound by river *Sarasvati*, *Drishadvati* and *Apaya* was sacred for performance of sacrifices. The name ब्रह्मावर्त is first found in *Manusmriti*, as divinely created - देवनिर्मितम् and people residing there as engaged in the wisdom of *the Prime Existence* - सत्, therefore, सदाचारी. It is most probable that during

*Brahamana* period, when *Sarasvati* began drying up and *Arya* communities commenced their emigration towards east, *Prayaga* and *Varanasi* replaced ब्रह्मावर्त in importance as auspicious places for performance of sacrifices. Thereafter, the territory of ब्रह्मावर्त came to be known more as *Trihotra*, the place bound by three rivers than by the earlier name and people dwelling there as *Trihotrapuravasi*.

Etymologically, त्रिहोत्र is made of त्रि meaning three and होत्रस् (*variant of श्रोत्रस्*) meaning stream or flowing water, as in – ‘नदत्याकाशगंगायाः श्रोतस्युद्गमादिग्गजे |’ (RV.I.78). Thus, त्रिस्रोतस्, त्रिहोत्रस् and ब्रह्मावर्त is the territory bound by three streams - *Sarasvati*, *Drishadvati* and *Apayu*, the place where *Angira* and *Bhrigu* established the sacrificial fires brought from heavens, provided an auspicious place where even gods could perform sacrifices – ‘देव वै सत्रमसत ऋद्धि परिमिताम् यशकामया’. *Mahabharata* mentions ब्रह्मावर्त as the most auspicious and sacred centre of *Brahmannical* resurgence and when *Brahma* was performing sacrifices on the bank of *Sarasvati*, she appeared flowing in seven pure streams – ‘सुप्रभा कांचनाक्षी च विशाला च मनोरामा | सरस्वती चोषवती सुरेणुर्विमलोदका ||’, conceived as an allusion to *Rigvedic sapta-sindhavas*, which earlier were associated with *Sindhu*, *Sarasvati*, *Shutudri* (Sutlej) *Vipasa* (Beas), *Parushni* (Ravi), *Askini* (Chenab) and *Vitasta* (Jhelum).

According to *Mahabharata*, once when sage Dadhichi was performing his austerities, Indra being frightened of its intensity, sent celestial damsel *Mahabharata* mentions To bring distraction in his concentrated penance – तपस् he sent Alambusha, the celestial damsel. Seeing her beauty, Dadhichi becomes passionate and semen spurts from him. He loses his concentration while river *Sarasvati* accepts the semen within her womb and a son is born to her. The Seer blesses the river for the foresight in preserving his supreme energy and tells her, ‘प्रसूतानि महाभागे सरसो ब्रह्मणः पुरा | जानन्ति त्वां सुरथेष्टे मुनयः समशितव्रताः || मम पिंयकरी चापि सततं प्रियदर्शिने | तस्मात् सारस्वतं पुत्रमदद्या वरवर्णिनी || तवैव नाम्ना प्रथितः पुत्रस्ते लोकभावनः | सारस्वत इति ख्यातो भविष्यति महातपः ||’ – You who were born of सरस् (stream) of *Brahma*’s मानस (mental impulse – therefore मानसरोवर). Therefore seers named you *Sarasvati*. Since you have given birth to my son, you will always be adorable and the son will be known after you as *Sarasvat* and be famous in world as a great *tapasvi*. The child remained on the banks of *Sarasvati* river performing great penances. When ब्रह्मावर्त was facing a long period of drought and famine, *Brahmins* took flight and seeing that even *Sarasvat* is ready to follow, mother *Sarasvati* implores him – ‘न गंतव्यमितः पुत्र तवाहारमहं सदा | दास्यामि मत्स्यपंवरानुष्यतामिह भारत ||’ – do not depart from here my son, I will provide you, fish as food.

Sarasvat stayed preserving wisdom of the *Vedas*, and performing sacrifices. When the *Brahmins* returned, finding them without any wisdom of the scriptures due to efflux of Time, he again initiated them. Later generations continued to recall this great deed and Ashvaghosha the great Buddhist recalls in *Buddha Charita* 'साम्खतश्चापि जगद नष्टं वेद पुनर्यं ददृशुर्न पूर्वं |'. *Sarasvat* community owes its origin and intellectual wisdom to such a great sage *Sarasvata* and to his mother *Sarasvati*. Does the present generation of the *Sarasvats* still draw inspiration from the great Patron, deserving still to be referred as *Sarasvats*; that is another question.

The dwelling place of the patron being ब्रह्मावर्त it logical that the *Brahmins* families should have been brought by Parashurama from that place for settlement in *Gomantaka*. This is the place referred as *त्रिहोत्र* *त्रिहोत्रक* or *त्रिहोत्रपुर* and the residents as *त्रिहोत्रवासिन्ः*. S. S. Talmaki made two alternative suggestions that *त्रिहोत्र* could either be त्रिगर्त, a group of three villages in *Shivalik* hills in *Himachala Pradesh*, where, in ancient times, त्रि - होत्रि *Brahmins* performed sacrifices or could have been sourced from तिर > होत = तिरहोत, meaning low or river based land as against तिर > भोत = तिरभोत, a high or mountainous land like Tibet.

*Gomanchala Mahatmyam* of *Skanda Purana* recalls the austerity performed in *Krita Yuga* by *Brahma* with the blessings of *Mangirish* and consecration by him the wonderful *linga* in *त्रिहोत्रक* - 'पूर्वं कृतयुगे पुत्र ममाज्ञया विरिचिना . . तपः कृत्वा त्रिहोत्रके मांगिरीशप्रसादात्तु कर्माधीनं जगत्कृतम् || . . . ब्रह्मणा स्थापितं लिंगं मांगिरीश महादभुतम् पर्वते सत्कृते तत्र देशत्रिहोत्रपूर्वयोः ||'. The need, therefore, arises to identify *Mangirish* and *Trihotraka*. When *Aryas* first descended in the plains of Punjab, their settlements were spread from Afghanistan in the west, the North West Frontier, West Punjab, parts of Sind in Pakistan and East Punjab and Rajasthan in India, with *Sindhu*, *Sarasvati*, *Sutlej*, *Beas*, *Ravi*, *Chenab* and *Jhelum* as the familiar rivers. *Ganga* and *Yamuna* were at the outpost of their settlements. *Kosala* and *Videha* do not find place in *Vedic* literature but only in *Shatapatha Brahmana*. Therefore, *त्रिहोत्रक* where *Brahma* performed his austerities could have been ब्रह्मावर्त, where as mentioned earlier even gods performed their austerities and perhaps cameto be referred as ब्रह्मावर्त and could have been so called from that time onward because *Brahma* performed his austerities there.

*Latayan Shrauta Sutra* says that *Sarasvati* disappeared at *Vinashin* from face of the earth, flowing thereafter unseen by any one - 'सम्यक्ती नाम नदी प्रत्यक् सोता प्रवहति तस्या प्रागपरभागौ सर्वलोकप्रत्यक्षौ मध्यमस्तुभागः भूम्यन्तर्निमग्नः प्रवहति नासौ केनचित्दृश्यते तद्विनशनमुच्यते |'. This was possibly during the closing period of *Krita yuga*. Only when the river was drying up that the *Aryas*

commenced their emigration towards east along the northern bank of river *Ganga*, with Videha Maghava carrying *Agni*, the sacrificial fire in his mouth and purifying the lands for *Arya* settlement, till he reaches river *Sadanir* (the modern *Gandaki*), without sanctifying the river itself. Ikshvaku, the eldest son of Manu Vaivasvata establishes his settlement in *Kosala* with *Ayodhya* as capital. When Videha Maghava asked *Agni* where he should settle the reply was '*In the region stretching out to the east of this (Sadanir) river*'. Therefore, Videha Maghava establishes his rule across the river and names the settlement as *Videha* having established his rule across the river, known as *Videha*. *Mithila* the capital comes to be named after his son *Mithi*. Janaka, father of *Sita* and referred often in Upanishads in conversation with *Yajnavalkya*, was born in this family after many generations. He is said to have remarked 'अनन्तं वत् मे वित्तं यस्य मे नास्ति किञ्चन मिथिलायाम् प्रदीप्तायाम् न मे किञ्चित् प्रथयते ।' – Infinite indeed is my wealth of which nothing is mine. If *Mithila* is burnt, nothing that is mine that is burnt. For many generations, the river *Sadanir* stood as the dividing line between *Kosala* and *Videha*.

*Tirhut* is associated with *Videha* but *Tirhut* or *Tairabhukti* is neither referred as nor identified with in *Skanda Purana* as *Trihotra*, *Trihotraka* or *Trihotrapur*. One finds from *Mithila Khanda* of *Brihad Vishnu Purana* also refers to *Tirhut* as *Tairabhukti* and never as *Trihotra*. '*Trikhandasheshakosha*' of *Purushottama Deva* makes reference of *Tairabhukti* – 'गंगातीरावधीगता यद्भावो भान्मुक्तिः नाम्ना सैव त्रिभुवन विश्रुता तिरमुक्ति ॥'. Relying on *History of Mithila* written *Shyama Narayan Singh*, *Priolkar* pointed out this error in *Shree Shantadurga Chaturshashtabdi Mahotsava Grantha*. Some times, the deity *Mangesh* in the temple presently in *Mardol* is said to have been brought by *Parashurama* from *Monghyr* in *Bihar*, deriving the name *Mangesh* from a mythical story of *Parvati* pleading *Shiva* with words pronounced indistinctly as 'मांगीश त्राहि' instead of 'मांगीश त्राही' and therefore, the name *Monghyr* in *Bihar* from *Mangirish*, an unconvincing exercise in philological perversity.

At the time when the western strip of land was reclaimed by {*rashurama* settled *Brahmins* in *Gomantaka*, the region south of *Videha* and beyond were not yet purified by the sacred fire and the *Kikatas*, who lived there were, according the *Yaska* and *Sayana* the non-*Aryas*. *Keny* identifies them with *Dravidians* in his article '*Origin of Magadha*'. They were stranger to the wisdom of the *Vedic* scriptures, *Vishvamitra* asking *Indra* : 'What useful purpose can your cows (source of wisdom) serve among the *Kikatas*? They neither draw milk (wisdom) nor mix it with soma (to attain bliss).' In later times, this

southern region came to be known as *Magadha*. Therefore, it is pathetic to make out a case that *Tirhut* and *Monghyr* in *Videha* to be, by any stretch of imagination, the places from where either the *Brahmins* or *Mangesh* deity were brought by Parashurama for settlement in *Gomanataka*. *Trihotra*, therefore, is no other place than *Brahmavarta* on the banks of river *Sarasvati*. The sooner one removes the blind spot from the mind-set of the *Sarasvat* community; the better it would be for them to be conscious of their glorious heritage. \

### *The Identification of Gauda pradesh*

Similarly, the identification of *Gaud* in 'त्रिहोत्रवासिनश्चैव पंचगौडान्तरे स्तिथाः', with *Gaud* or *Gaur*, the capital of Sen Dynasty during 1060 A.D. in Bengal also requires to be reappraised. Imaginative theories solely based on few similar sounding words both in Konkani and Bengali languages and similar dietary preferences for fish have led some to conclude that the *Gaud Sarasvata Brahmins* were brought by Parashurama for settlement in *Gomantaka*. But neither mythical accounts nor philological similarities can bring about rational and reasonable conclusions.

We have observed that the victorious *Aryas* and the defeated non-*Aryas* emigrated towards east in mid *Krita yuga* with the flow of the river *Sarasvati* decreasing and the lands becoming inhospitable resulting in the collapse of *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations. *Ikshvakus* established their rule in *Kosala* with *Ayodhya* as the capital and *Videha* Maghav ruling in the region across the river *Sadanir*. The *Krita Yuga* is said to have ended with the death of king *Sagar*. In later days, *Bhagiratha* a descendent of *Sagar*, is credited to have brought divine *Ganga* from heavens, which shorn of poetical imagination, means that during his period, *Ganga* came to acquire sanctity as sacred river and *Prayag*, where the three rivers *Ganga*, *Yamuna* and mythical *Sarasvati* meet as त्रिवेणी संगम and *Varanasi*, as the abode of *Shiva*, replacing ब्रह्मावर्त as the sacred pilgrim centres.

With all these events transpiring, ब्रह्मावर्त lost its spiritual relevance, *Prayag* and *Varanasi* replacing it as the place for performing sacrifices. *Ayodhya* became the spiritual and cultural centre of the *Aryas*. According to the genealogical tables prepared by *Pragiter*, *Parashurama* is several generations prior to period of *Dasharathi Rama*. When *Janaka* ruled *Mithila* and *Yajnavalkya* used to visit his courts it was the closing period of *Treta yuga*, because with the passing away of *Dasharathi Rama* the said *Yuga* is said to have come to close. *Dikshitar's* view as expressed in his article '*Aryanisation of Eastern*

India', Arya settlements reached Kamarupa in Assam only when Krishna defeated Narakasur in *Dvapara yuga*.

*Skanda Purana*, is credited to be one of the later *Puranas*, with many legends of *Brahmannical* emigrations to South India, included in *Sahyadri Khand* in later centuries possibly in post-Buddhist environment in north India when many *Brahmins* immigrated to south and western India ruled by Hindu kings. During this period the *Brahminnacial centres* were segregated as belonging to the southern or northern part of *Vindhya* mountains - 'महाराष्ट्रान्ध्रद्विडाः कर्णाटश्चैव गुर्जराः | द्विविडाः पंचधा प्रोक्ता विंध्यदक्षिणवासिनः || सास्वताः कान्यकुब्जा गौडोत्कलमैथिलाः | गौडा पांचविधा प्रोक्ता विंध्यादुत्तरवासिनः ||. Thus पंचगौडाः are the five settlements of *Sarasvat*, *Kanyakubja*, *Gauda*, *Utkala* and *Maithili Brahmins*. Identified with the regions they had settled - *Sarasvats* in the extreme north-western corner on the banks of *Sarasvati*, *Kanyakubjas* in Kanauj in the south-west corner, *Utakal* in the south eastern-corner in Orissa and *Maithili* in the north-eastern Mithila or in north Bihar, forming an arc around *Ayodhya* or *Gaud pradesh* in the centre. Therefore, all these *Brahmannical* settlements came to be described as पंचगौडान्तरे स्थिताः, the five settlements around *Gaud Pradesh*.

Hence the *Sarasvats* described as 'पंचगौडान्तर्गत' were not brought from *Gaud* or *Gaur*, the capital of Sen Dynasty in Bengal but from ब्रह्मवर्त or *Trihotra* on the banks of river *Sarasvati*. When Parashurama brought *Brahmin* families for settlement in *Goamantaka*, not *Magadha* was not a part of *Brahmannical* influence, let alone the distant *Anga* and *Vanga deshas*, associated with *Bengal*. The *Sarasvats* who are presently designated as *Gaud Sarasvat Brahmins* are those who were brought first from ब्रह्मवर्त or *Trihotra*, to be distinguished from the *Sarasvats* who soujourned later south-westward from Kashmir.

Dikshitar also expresses in his article '*Aryanisation of Eastern India*', that *Arya* settlements reached *Kamarupa* in Assam only when Krishna defeated Narakasur in *Dvapara yuga* and the eastern territories named as *Vanga* and the western part as *Anga* came under the influence of the *Aryas*. In *Krita Yuga* *Aryas* had not reached Bengal and therefore they could not have been brought by Parashurama from that far off region. Pandit Jwala Prasad Misra mentions in *Jatibhaskara*, that Virasinha, the King of Kanauj had sent *Kanyakubja Brahmins* to Bengal only at the request of Adisura of *Vanga desha* as late as 1097 AD. This fact is not only accepted by Bengali *Brahmins* but also taken note by Cunningham when he said, '*Although Gauda be the name of Bengal, yet the Brahmins who bear that appellation are not*

*inhabitants of Bengal but of Hindustan proper. They reside chiefly in the subha of Delhi; while the Brahmins of Bengal are avowed colonists of Kanauj.*

Therefore, associating *Gaud Sarasvatas* with *Gauda* or *Gaur*, the capital of Sen Dynasty during 1060 A.D. in Bengal is neither based on scriptural, historical or geographical considerations and hence a great error.

#### *The Second Settlement:*

*The second settlement* of *Sarasvats* in *Gomantaka* was with an intermediate stay in north Gujarat. When pre-*Vedic* urbanized and enterprising non-*Aryas* emigrated towards the southern banks of river *Ganga*, they emerged as dominant economic power with the newly found iron ore and coal mines in Bihar. The last Hindu rulers of Magadh were *Nandas*, who came to be replaced by *Chandragupta Maurya*, born of a *Shudra* or possibly a non-*Aryan* woman known as *Mura*. During that period many non-conforming thinkers, who did not accept the *Vedic* scriptures, came in the forefront like *Pashupatas*, *Kalamukhas*, *Lakulisa*, *Kapalikas*, *Shaktas*, and *Aghoris*. But of all these, the influence of *Mahavira* and *Gautama Buddha* seems to have been of far reaching importance to the future of *Vedic dharma*. In *Vedic* period, the *Paris* were in the forefront as prosperous traders. When *Buddha* communicated his teachings to the masses, without distinction of race or caste, the non-*Aryas* were the first to join his congregation – *Sangha*, rebelling against the dominance of Brahmannical system. The non-*Aryas*, emerging as economic power and awakened to new consciousness under *Buddha's* and *Mahavir's* teachings, claimed equal share in spiritual functions as they had in temporal ones. *Brahmins*, who behaved as if they were the exclusive custodians of *Vedic* wisdom and sole presiding priests on sacrificial performances, saw in such move, economic power slipping from their hands. Therefore, they first branded *Buddha* and *Mahavir* and the protest against them as anti-*Vedic*. *Asoka* with his missionary zeal spread *Buddha's* teachings far and wide. It is recorded that when *Buddhism* was at its peak around 197 B.C. even 15,000 *Jains* had to migrate to southern and western parts of India from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Orissa under *Bhadrabahu*. If *Jains* could face such uncertainty, would *Brahmins* be far behind?

When *Kanishka* (120 BC), the *Kushan* king too accepted *Buddhism*, becoming instrumental for systematized *Mahayana* sect, with large scale influence of Hindu ritualistic forms, the *Brahmins*

reluctant to accept *Buddhism* were forced to migrate either to Kashmir region or to south which were under Hindu rulers. Swati Gupta records in *Migrant Brahmanas in Northern India* that at the height of *Buddhist* influence, between Kanishka's rule and the death of Harshavardhana around 646 AD, *Brahmin* influence in North India was waning and with the decline of Imperial *Guptas* (475-1030 AD), many *Kanyakubja*, *Maithili* and *Utkala Brahmins* migrated to Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Konkan, receiving grants from *Palas*, *Rashtrakutas*, *Gurjara Pratiharas* and *Parmaras*.

During this period, three *Kanyakubja* Brahmins - Devasharma of *Vatsa gotra*, Lomasharma of *Kaundinya gotra* and Shivasharma of *Kaushik gotra* traveled to *Ramaeshvar* in south India and on their return journey visited *Gokarn*, finally landed in *Gomantaka*. Finding the place peaceful and auspicious they chose to settle there. Devasharma and Lomasharma settled in *Kushasthali* and Shivasharma in *Keloshi*, assimilating with *Sarasvat Brahmins*, as sugar with milk. Dr. J. D. Cu'nha assigns this event to have taken place after the lapse of 1090 years from the first settlement in *Gomantaka* of *Sarasvats* by Parashurama (*The Konkani & Konkani Literature*). During the last quarter of 5<sup>th</sup> century many *Brahmins* migrated to the west coast, under rulers like Mayursharma of *Kadamba-kula* (345 AD), *Maitrakas* of Vallabhi, *Chalukyas* (8<sup>th</sup> century), Solanki King of Siddhapur, Gujarat. Mayursharma is said to have bemoaned, '*Alas ! In this age of Kali, Brahminhood is helpless against power . . . So with his arm, skilled in handling Kusha, Samidha and other ingredients of sacrifice he now has to grasp the shining weapons of war desiring to conquer the worlds as well*'.

From sixth century onwards there was constant movement of Brahmins from place to place, even in the southern part of Konkan in search of security and recognition. In 749 A.D. Ganga King Saripurusha II and in 749 A.D. Prithvi Kongani Maharaja gave grants to 120 Brahmins of Angiras, Bharadvaj and Vashishtha *gotras* in Belur village, Mysore. An inscription dated 1113 A.D. of *Chalukya* King, Tribhuvanamalla Deva refers to one 'मारस्वत महोदय श्रीमत् सोमेश्वर', who participated in discussion on *Shaiva siddhanta* in Sisugutti. Another stone inscription dated 1155 A.D. found in *Panch-Lingesvara* Temple in Kotekeri, near Barkur, South Kanara, refers to another Kashmiri *Sarasvat*, Mallkarjuna Pandit, born in Pajjera, Kashmir and an expert in administration of Pravarapura, the ancient name for Srinagar. Kashmir has an interesting religious and geo-physical background. Billions years earlier, the land south of Himalayas was said to have been part of the African continent. Due to geological upheaval it

became separated from the African mainland, and drifting towards Asia pushed with tremendous force that the southern portion of the then Asian continent, lifting the land to create the huge Himalayan range, giving a new form to the entire topography. On the western side in Kashmir, a huge lake was formed, which in Hindu mythology is referred as *Satisaras*, *Sati's* lake named after the consort of Shiva. Kashyap *Muni* is said to have drained the excess water in later times, making dry land available for human habitation. Since then Shiva has been the presiding deity of the mountains, the howling winds *Maruts* being his companions. The innumerable streaming rivers formed his sweeping tresses and the *nagas* becoming the garland around his neck, a mythical reminder of the *Nagas* who were the devotees of Shiva since their time dotting Sindhu Valley and Sarasvati civilizations. Sati or Sharada became the motherly goddess described as '*Kashmirpuravasini Sharadadevi*'. Because of this association with *Shaivism*, Kashmir became the mother goddess and the rulers being considered as part-manifestation of Shiva. – 'काशीराः पार्वती तत्र राजा ज्ञेयो ह अंशजः'.

When *Sarasvats* settled in Kashmir, both the river *Sarasvati* and her celebrated son *Sarasvat* came to be a part of the regional religious ethos. – 'सखतीम् महामायाम् काशीरपुरवासिनी शतदेवसमंतात् साखत महामुनी'. The Kashmiri *Sarasvats* were familiar with the west coast of India as the land of *Bhargavas* and as celebrated *Dvarakapuri* of Sri Krishna. Kalhana, who wrote *Rajatarangini*, the first historical document of a living ruler, refers to these *Sarasvats* in Kashmir. Lalitaditya Muktipada ruler of Kashmir (600-736 A.D.) speaks of the many places on the west coast of India. In *Vikramankdeva Charita*, Bilhana describes his travels to *Anhilwad* (Patan) and *Somanath* from Kashmir via *Mathura*, *Kanyakubja*, *Ayodhya*, *Prayaga* and *Varanasi*. When he visits *Dvaraka*, he finds it inhospitable and sails from *Verawal* to *Honawar*, in North Kanara. After visiting *Gokarna* he proceeds to *Rameshwar* and later to Kalyan, in Andhra Pradesh where Parmanandi, the *Chalukya* King honours him as *Vidyapati*.

While the initial *Brahmin* emigrants to the west coast of India were granted *agraharas* – lands in Kaira district, as in the case of *Maitrakas* of Vallabhi. *Chalukya* Kings followed granting lands around 737-740 AD to one Kanchala, son of Govinda. In 926-927 AD, we find grants being given for maintenance of the temple of goddess *Dashami* in Kanaduka, in Sanjana in Gujarat. *Rasamala* (10<sup>th</sup> century) refers to the grant given to *Kanyakubja Brahmin*, Durgacharya, son of Durlabhacharya by Mularaja I, the Solanki Kings of Sidhapur. In addition he encouraged such emigrations by inviting many *Sarasvat*

*Brahmins* from *Naimisharanya*, Chyavana's *ashrama*, Prayag, Kanyakubja, Varanasi, Gangadwara and from Kurukshetra for performing sacrifices on the banks of river *Sarasvati* in his kingdom, which according to Alburani was joining sea 'at a distance of a bow-shot east of Somanath'. Hemachandra Suri (12<sup>th</sup> century) also refers in *Dvarasya Kavya* to such settlement of *Sarasvats* in Srithala (Sidhapur), saying 'Along the city of Anhillapura flowed *Sarasvati*'s clear waters rendering the earth and air pure. Here live *Brahmins* equal to *Vasishtha* or *Vishvamitra*, who could produce warriors from fire-pit'. When Chamundaraja, King Mularaja's son offered to give lands for their continued stay in his kingdom, they replied, 'O King we are not capable of conducting affairs of the state, why then should we receive it as gift which only leads to destruction? Parashurama, the son *Jamadagni*, gave the land to us (*Sarasvats*), defeating the *Kshatriyas* twentyone times'. Even then, they stayed in Sidhapur as desired by the king. The Kadi grant of 986-987 makes reference to the place as 'निजभुजोपराजित मारस्वत मण्डल'. Solanki King Karna had married Myamalladevi the daughter of Goa-Kadamaba King Jayakesi. When in 1125 .D. Jayakeshi's successor Chattaya visited Sidharaj Jayasimha, his counterpart in Sidhapur on his way to Somanatha, in *Saurashtra*. The contacts continued under Hoysala King Vira Ballala (1173-1220 AD).

There is every possibility that some of these *Sarasvats* from Sidhapur migrated further down to *Gomantaka*, who were the ancestors of the present *Chitrapur Sarasvats*, whose strong affinity to Kashmir makes them the obvious immigrants from Gujarat, giving an identity, distinct from other *Sarasvats* settled in *Gomantaka* earlier. *Chitrapur Sarasvats* are referred as '*Bhanaps*', which is commonly understood as having been derived from one of the prominent person भानप्पा or *Bhanappa Odeyar*, in the community, who also was the governor of Barkur in 1451. Poet Linganna refers him as *Gajanpur Bhanappa*. He is said to have gifted the village Kangavalli to *Sri Shankara Bharati*, the Pontiff of *Shringeri Math*.

This derivation is a misconception. The word is derived from Sanskrit word 'भानु' meaning light, lustre, and king, sovereign. It is also the name of Shiva, who as the column of Light when he divulged his form to Vishnu and Brahma. Therefore, *Bhanu* or *Bhan* represents one who is illustrious, noble and man of wisdom. *Kashmiri Brahmins* and those in *Himachala Pradesh* use the word '*Bhan*' to suggest noble descent, as in the case of *Suraj Bhan*, *Brija Bhan* etc. Therefore, the *Chitrapur Sarasvats* having come from Kashmir and being ardent *smartas* also came to use the word as '*Bhanaps*'. Possibly *Bhanappa*

Odeyar himself may have been named by his parents after Shiva, who is भानेश्वर, the luminous Lord. Therefore, the deity in Sri *Katyayani* temple at Aversa, near Ankola should be addressed as भानेश्वर and not बाणेश्वर, erroneously associated with Parsshurama's shooting the arrow – बाण from here to claim land from sea or with the transfer of the idol from *Banavali* in *Gomantaka*. Being *shaivites*, these Sarasvats were devotees of Mangesh and Shanatadurga as *Kuladaivats* and for a long period also accepted *Kavale Matha* as the *Guru-pitha*. We will come later to their emigration to Kanaras consequent to the Portuguese Christian conversions and persecutions.

***Hitherto the emigrations were from external regions to Gomantaka. Now comes first of the migrations from Goamantaka to external regions.***

### *The First Emigration*

***The First Emigration*** was entirely due to the exigencies of *Time*. The mystery of *Time* was revealed in *Atharvavedic* seer who said, 'कालो अश्वो वहति सप्तरश्मिः . . . ताम् आरोहन्ति ऋवयो विपश्चितः ।' – *Time* is a horse with the trail of seven luminous rays. Only the sensitive, daring and the wise surmount over that unruly horse. *Brahmins* were never allergic to wage battles or receive enormous amounts as *dakshina*. In earlier eras, we find *Brahmins* like Vashishtha, Angira, Bhargavas, Vishvamitra great seers as well as great warriors with large retinue. But in *Brahmana* period, their attention was more and more on priestly duties, fighting wars being left to the *Kshatriyas*. But in the post *Vedic* era, with the assimilation of non-*Arya* communities within the *Arya* fold, the entire balance of power shifted in favour of the *Vaishyas* as traders and financiers and *Shudras* as laborers rich in economic well being. When individual enterprise of the emerging *Vaishyas* and *Shudras* overshadowed the *Brahmannical* superiority, *Varnashrama* ceased to have the earlier momentum and a *caste* system replaced the *classification* of society according to attributes and performance of duties. Wealth became the determining standard for social recognition. The non-*Arya Vaishyas* and *Shudras* with diverse backgrounds posed a problem for *Brahmins* and *Kshatriyas*.

Faced with a peculiar challenge to their earlier dominant position, *Brahmins* codified a new set of Dharmashastras, invoking the principle of *Apaddharma* under which *Brahmins* were permitted to undertake professions which were till then assigned to the lower classes. Finding it economically more profitable to preside over trade and commerce than on performance of sacrificial performances,

*Brahmins* and *Kshatriyas* chose to be traders. *Sarasvat Brahmins* in *Gomanataka* were not exception to these influences. In pre-Vedic period, west coast of India was under non-Arya influence, *Panis* the trading community, using the ports for transporting goods to distant countries like Sumer, Assyria, and Mesopotemia etc. during *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations. In the beginning of Christian century, Goa had become a great port, which Greeks referred as Melinda and for Arabs it was Sindabur. *Maurya* Empire under Asoka had extended their rule with *Girnar* in Saurashtra and *Sopara* as a trading centre. It was from *Sopara* that Asoka's brother led the missionaries to Lanka. Thereafter, the rulers were Hindus among whom *Bhojas* ruled for over 300 years. Around 10<sup>th</sup> centuries *Kadambas* became the rulers in *Gomantaka* with their capital at *Chandrapur (Chandor)*.

From the Vedic period onwards, there have been close relationship between Brahmins and Kshatriyas, many *Brahmins* like Vashishtha, Vishvamitra, Shukracharya, Gotama, Bharadvaj and others adorning the position as family priests as well as advisors in state matters. The first *Sarasvat* migrations to avail such positions outside Gomanataka was to North Konkan between 810 to 1260 to the courts of Shilaharas. In their courts, many *Sarasvats* like Sangalmai, Annapai, Simhapai, Nagalai, Rudrapai, Mahadevai Prabhu, Somanai Prabhu, Laxmanai Nayak, Laxmanai Prabhu, Chhittamai Prabhu, Vesu Padwal, Laxman Prabhu, Vasugi Nayak, Anant Pai Prabhu, Udai Prabhu, Mai Nayak, Daad Prabhu, Bebal Prabhu prospered as Prime Ministers, Treasurers, administrators. Lakshman Nayak or Lakshman Prabhu constructed *Valukeshvar* Temple in Mumbai and renovated the *Sapta Kotishvar* Temple in Gomantaka. One Chhittamai Prabhu was a renowned astrologer and expert in 'यज्ञ याजन अथ्ययन अथ्यापनादि शट्कर्मनिरतः'.

This was the time when the principles of *Apaddharma* appeared most attractive. Therefore, when along with *Sarasvat Brahmins* many *Vaishya* compatriots also accompanied them to North Konkan, they could not remain un-influenced in a strange land. The copper plate inscription of 1094 A.D. in *Balli* refers to one Baban Shet, son of Durga Shet and his brother Dhanam Shet, as those who had accompanied *Sarasvats* to *Shilahar* Courts. As compatriots, it was natural to *Sarasvats* to help them by granting concessions and exemption from payment of custom duty, when their ships embarked the ports of Thana, Nagaon, Sopara and Chaul. The close relationship with the rich *Vaishyas* from same region and speaking same language, came to be cemented in combining the commercial relationship. *Sarasvats* started taking interest in trade and commerce. Inscription of 1172 A.D. also refers Mahadevaiya Prabhu, Somanaiya Prabhu,

ministers of King Mallikarjun as associates of Babanna Shreshthi (Shet). *Brahmical* wisdom and *Vaishya* shrewdness brought them success which they could use later in their relations with local princes as well as with foreign merchants.

The interest taken in the North Konkan percolated to Gomanataka, and Sarasvats became more and more interested in trade and commercial enterprises. Therefore, it was not alien for Sarasvats also to take up similar functions in generations to come. We find many *Brahmins* like Devpai, Shriyapi, Dampai, and Mahalpai were ministers under Guhalldeva, the king of *Chandrapur*. Kadambas benefited from their advice in their trade in spices and horses, during their rule in Gomantak with Chandrapur as their capital.

When in 1000 A.D. *Yadava* King Bhillama II of Devgiri extended his rule to *Gomantaka* he took many *Sarasvat Brahmins* to Nasik where Mahalpai, Indpai, Devpai, Allapai, Vikkapai and others were given land grants and with the defeat of Somadeva, the last *Shilahar* ruler of North Konkan in 1271 A.D. occasioned mass migration of *Sarasvats* to Devgiri, amongst whom Maideva Pandit described as 'तत्यादपदोपजीवी श्रीमान् महाप्रधान सर्वाधिकारी महापरम विश्वामी राजनायक नारायण श्री माधव पंडित' became great administrator and warrior during Singhana's rule. His grand father Devasharma was described as 'वेदवेदांग परागः श्रुति अध्ययन संपन्नः सत्यवचनी जीतेन्द्रियः काश्यपो देवशर्मा बाह्यगो ब्रह्मवित्तमः यजुशाम् परागो दान्तः शट्कर्म्म निरतोऽभवत् '. In 13<sup>th</sup> century, Achyuta Nayak, a *Sarasvat*, as the governor of north Konkan under Ramadeva *Yadava*, was known as able administrator and a liberal donor. He granted lands to many *Sarasvat Brahmins* like Khetal Prabhu, Naran Prabhu, Anant Prabhu, Vacchu Nayak in places like Salcette, near Mumbai while others like Mahalpai, Vachhapai, Vikkapai, and Dandapai received land-grants in Sangamner district.

Under *Yadavas*, *Sarasvats* prospered, Hemadri or Hemad Pant being an important *Sarasvat* administrator in the court. He introduced the accounting system known as *Shenvayi* system for keeping records and collect of land revenue. When Pandharpur Vithal temple was renovated by Hemad Pant many *Sarasvats* like Sripati Dannayak, Konkan Kesavdeva, Senavai Lakhmidvai, Senavai Chandavai, Dalavai Kumaruputra, Lad Harideva and others contributed handsomely as could be seen from the names that adorn the चौयाशी लेख - stone inscription preserved in the Temple of the eighty four donors.

In 1294 A.D. Allauddin Khilji defeated Ramdeo's son Shankardeva and his son-in-law Harpaldev and Devgiri Empire came finally to an end in 1318 A.D. Since 12<sup>th</sup> century Muslim incursion was minimal in the south. In 14<sup>th</sup> century led Muhammad Bin Tughlak

and Allauddin Khilji spread their tentacles in Goa and in 1312, *Kadambas* temporarily shifted to Chandor, till that place too was reduced to rubble and their rule came to an end in 1352.

The *Bahamanis* were slowly extending their rule towards the sea coast, controlling the port at Dabhol in Ratnagiri. Under Allauddin, Hindus of *Gomantaka* suffered religious persecution leading to the destruction in 13<sup>th</sup> century of the ancient *Saptkotishvar* Temple by Yusuf Gurgi. This perhaps led to the first exodus of *Sarasvats* from the sacred land to Malabar Coast in the south, with which they were already familiar with trading outposts. A later Dewan of Cochin recalls in 1858 '*The traditions exist regarding the first immigration of Konkarnies into Cochin to leave their native country Conkan with their idols in 1294 A.D., having obtained grants of land and assured promises of protection from His Highness the Raja of Cochin, they settled in Cochin's Conkanastha Mahajanam*'.

The *Vijayanagar* empire founded by Harihar and Bukka in 1354 A.D. brought hope to the people of *Gomantaka*. Madhava Acharya or Madhava Mantri, a *Sarasvat Brahmin*, earlier migrated from *Kashmir* to *Gomantaka* from Kashmir, was employed in *Chandragutti* ruler. When the ruler died intestate in 1335 and Marap, the younger brother of Harihar and Bukka, usurped the throne, Madhava Mantri after brief stint under Marap, finally shifted to *Vijayanagar* as minister, administrator and warrior. He extended *Vijayanagar* rule to *Gomantaka* driving the Muslims from the region and from the port of Dabhol in 1366. He renovated *Saptkotishvar* Temple, earlier destroyed by Muslims and became instrumental for the revival of *Vedic* study, collecting ancient scriptures from various parts of India and editing them with commentaries under the supervision of his brother Sayana. A stone inscription of 1368 at Sikarpur describes him as wise *Brahmin* and brave *Kshatriya*. He served *Vijayanagar* Empire for 38 years, making it a great bastion of Hindu religion and culture, making good the damage under Muslim rules. Vasant Madhava and Mai Shenai Wagle were two other *Sarasvats* who distinguished themselves in *Vijayanagar* Empire. Vasant Madhava granted lands to Nageshi Temple in Goa. Mai Shenai Wagle was a minister of Chikkaray Odeyar, a fiduciary of Bukka I for thirteen years from 1366.

*Vijayanagar* Empire collapsed in 1565, when the regional administrators of Mohammed Shah Bahamani, defeated the ruler in a battle in Talikote and declared themselves independent. With that Hindus felt again insecure, though Adil Shah of *Bijapur* (1482-1518), under whom *Gomantaka* came, was sympathetic towards them, his mother being earlier a Hindu. Sabaji Anant, a *Sarasvat* who, under the

Nizams, was Governor of Daulatabad fort, foiled Aurangzeb's attempts to invade Hyderabad, seeing a young prince on that throne. As a result, he earned encomiums as *bahut chatur*, very shrewd, from that time known as Sabaji *Chature*. He re-organized administration, revised assessment of land measurement and improved agriculture helping farmers with loans.

The Hindu revival came when Shivaji established his *Hindavi Rajya* and first made inroads in *Gomantaka*, taking over *Bicholim* and *Perne* in 1664, by which time the Portuguese had already made their presence felt in *Gomantaka*. In 1683, when Sambhji captured Bardez and Salcette, Portuguese collapse seemed imminent, and were saved when Muslims too came on the border forcing Marathas to retreat. By 1739, Portuguese and Marathas entered in a treaty which brought some peace in *Gomantaka*. Portuguese had to face revolt known as Pinto rebellion by local Christian population felt slighted by the partiality of the rulers. *Ranes*, the erstwhile rulers of *Satari* also organized as many as 14 unsuccessful rebellions spread over 150 years against Portuguese. About the Portuguese rule we will come later. With the first incursion of Maratha rule by Shivaji in Gomanataka, Hindus came under the influence of Maratha culture, playing under *Marathas*, *Sarasvats* playing important role in administration, their earlier experience under the Shilahars and Devgiri Yadavas having made them familiar with Maharashtrian rulers. Their experience in trade, commerce and knowledge of foreign languages gave them an edge over other *Brahmins* under *Marathas* in trade and commercial negotiations with the Portuguese, Dutch and English traders. Shivaji and his immediate *Mavala* followers being primarily warriors, much of the management of the Kingdom was with *Brahmins* like Chitpavans, Karahde Brahmins and *Kayasthas*, in which *Sarasvats* too shared. Many *Sarasvats* like Ramoji Shenai Kothari, Tuka Shenai, Narayon Vithal Sinai Dumo, Pitambar Shenai, Naro Rama Mantri, Lakhba Anant Lad and Ranchhod Krishna Shenai adorned high positions under Maratha rule.

Yet their contributions did not receive perceptible recognition and honour under Maratha rule especially from *Chitpavans*, who had taken over as the Peshvas or from other Brahmanis like *Deshastha* and *Karhades*. No stones were left unturned to humiliate *Sarasvats* even earlier in the eyes of Shivaji and subsequently with Peshvas. *Bharat Itihas Samshodhaka Mandal* gives an instance how Shivaji was misguided referring *Sarasvats* as *Shenvis*, clarifying that they were *Brahmins* earlier but becoming outcasts due to famines – 'एते कौकणाः श्रेणवीति नाम्ना प्रसिद्धास्तु पूर्व . . . वात्स्या एव स्थिताः परं तु अवृष्ट्या दुभिक्षादिना भ्रष्टचाराः जाताः

]. As if this was not enough, one Madhava Karhade ridiculed *Sarasvats* in his book *Shataprashnakalpalatika*, as those who after their bath, catch with their sacred thread fish for food – ‘शणमूत्रेण चाकृष्य स्नानोर्ध्वं मीनमेवच | गृहित्वा भक्षते यस्माच्छणवीत्यभिधा तु सा |’. While *Chitpavans*, *Deshastha* and *Karhade Brahmins* considered themselves inhabitants of Maharashtra, *Sarasvats* were treated as outsiders. Even their *Brahmin* attributes were questioned and *Sarasvats* were treated as *tri-karmi Brahmins*, while all others were *shatkarmi Brahmins*. In spite of such vilification, *Sarasvats* continued to prosper in Maharashtra, which led them to make interpolation even in sacred literature like *Ekanathi Bhagavata* by changing the words ‘कास्त आणि सात्वत | इत्यादि प्रवृत्ति समस्त | शुद्ध अनुमलोज |’ to ‘प्रवृत्तिकास्त आणि सारस्वत | इत्यादि नांवे जे वर्तत | ते जाण समस्त अनुमलोज |’, suggesting *Sarasvats* to be ‘*Anumaloja*’, i.e. born of mixed castes.

When Nana Phadnavis was appointed as advisor to Shahu Maharaj, the importance of the *Chitpavans Brahmins* led to the vulnerability of other *Brahmins* and *Kayasthas*. The insinuations did not seem to deter *Sarasvats* and they were happy to bask under Maratha rule, without any regret or compunction. Their success as Warriors, able administrators and shrewd negotiators in trade and commercial dealings with foreign merchants, which brought them material success seems to have made them immune to such insults or possibly it may not have struck them even to lodge strong protests. They were completely overwhelmed by Mharashtrian influence that they not only accepted their language, but also their age old customs, manners, dress with *pagadi* etc., even changing the costumes of their deities, making them look like some पुणेरी *Brahmin*.

*Chitpavans* as pure *Brahmins* considered it below their dignity even to dine with *Sarasvats* whose eligibility as *Brahmins* was doubtful in their eyes. Justice Ranade refers in his book ‘*The History of Marathas*’, that when Baxi Bahadur Jivabadada Kerkar, the great *Sarsavat* warrior on his return from one of his successful battle with Nizam, wanted to invite the *Peshva* for lunch, the *Peshva* is said to remarked ‘*these people are Shenvis, how can their request (for partaking food) be granted ?*’. But only after the shrewd Nana Phadanavis counseled him, ‘*What does it matter if they are Shenvis? Jivaba’s wishes must not balked. He has handled his sword well*’, the *Peshva* bit a piece of fruit. Jivabadada Kerkar, instead of feeling humiliated, exulted saying ‘हेतु पूर्ण जाहला’ – purpose is fulfilled.

It is, indeed, strange that those who pride themselves as the inheritors of the wisdom of *Sarasvat Muni*, the savior of *Vedic* wisdom should feel honoured when their masters (?) partake food with them. Possibly the long period spent in serving as advisors in administration

for others, fighting as warriors in battles for others made them succumb to the lure for power, prestige and prosperity.

### *The Second Emigration*

The Second emigration was in two stages. **The first stage** was consequential to the lack of wisdom and foresight among *Sarasvats*. Their over-confidence in their *Brahmannical* intelligence and commercial shrewdness, fueled further by the increasing desire to protect one's wealth instead of one's land, culture and religion was to become the prime cause for their downfall and abject surrender, which was not unlike the *Brahmannical* trait of attributing when chips fall, every thing to *Karma* and to one's own intelligence enterprise when the going is good. Indian history is replete with innumerable instances where Indians have fought Indians goaded by others to serve their own individual interests. It was so when Alexander came to India, it was so when Muslims invaded and enslaved India, it was also so when the Dutch, the Portuguese and the English powers came and conquered the natives. No one reads history, since in their struggle to achieve economic prosperity in the present, they have no time to look back on what is past. When human being loses wisdom and equanimity of Mind, it is the senses that take control and determine the course of action.

When the Portuguese came to India it was to trade and not to rule. But they saw the imprudent attitude of indigenous leaders, who would rather invite strangers to solve their problems than settle it among themselves, it would have been imprudent on their part to gorgo a god-sent opportunity to have a stake in the land. They dug deep in Indian soil to establish their firm base. In *Gomanataka* too they came solve disputes between Hindus and the Muslims, but stayed to rule once one party was removed from the scene. Sacred *Gomantaka* became '*Goa Dourado*' - the *Golden Goa*, to be looted and plundered, for their King and for the Church. The region slid from ancient Vedic values to a sorry state of servile society. Form spiritual heights, the society degenerated temporal attachments.

The earlier Adilshahi rule had brought the *Navayat* Muslim traders from Bhatkal to Goa and this created uneasiness and fear in the minds of Hindu traders, who saw the tradepassing from their hands to the Arab traders. Mhal Pai, a rich merchant and a Sardesai in Adilshahi court became the leader of Hindu traders. But since they had no wherewithal to confront Muslim domination, they sought the assistance of one Timoji Nayak, an illiterate and unreliable brigand warrior from

Honavar, to fight the Muslim rule and safeguard the Hindu economic advantage. Timoji Nayak, though illiterate was no fool and suggested that help of the Portuguese stationed in Honaver to fight the enemy who had stronger support. In his own mind, Timoji seems to have seen an opportunity to rule Goa once the land was freed from Muslim rule, since Portuguese appeared to be interested only in trade, carried over by the assurance which Albuquerque, the Portuguese commander had given to Vijayanagar King saying that '*The King of Portugal commends me that to render honour and willing service to gentile kings of this land and of the hole Malabar; and they are to be well treated by me; neither am I to take their ships nor their merchandise, but I am to destroy the Moors with whom I wage incessant war*'.

For Mhal Pai, no words could have sounded sweeter and comforting than these and no lies could have been whiter than those spoken by the white man. But the temporary consolation, sooner than expected, turned out to be one long permanent nightmare. In 1505, Albuquerque entered the sacred territory with superior arms and drove Adilshahis out of Goa. Mhal Pai who had received him with open arms and with closed eyes did not see the dangers lurking on the sidelines. With Muslims out of the region, the Portuguese found *Mandovi* waters sweet and the weather conducive. Timoji's dreams to be the ruler Goa were shattered and he had to leave with monetary compensation. But for Mhal Pai, seen as dangerous ally, banishment from Goa was only his reward. Remorseful, he left to distant Cochin, with his family, friends and retainers. As a trader, he was familiar with Cochin, where already sizeable *Sarasvat* population, with established enterprises, was giving stiff competition to Arab and Jew traders.

Seeing the leaders banished, rest of the traders becoming cautious, led a deputation to Albuquerque seeking protection under Portuguese rule. With Portuguese rule assured, Albuquerque fortified the port and established godowns. Soon missionaries entered Goa to convert the Hindu heathens to Christian religion. In the beginning, Hindus took their presence without much concern, since they had prospered under many different religious rulers. Apparently they had not bargained for what they were to receive, for religious conversions were unlike anything they had experienced earlier. The guest who had come for lunch seemed not only stayed for dinner but also chose to dwell over a long period of time. As one Portuguese Viceroy later proudly claimed, '*The Portuguese entered India with sword in one hand and the Crucifix in the other; finding much gold, they laid the aside the Crucifix to fill their pockets*'. For Hindus, earlier only the nights were dark and forbidding; soon the days were too become dark and

forbidding. The Portuguese who in later days were to parade Goa as *the Rome of the Orient*, had already making it hell for the heathens. Missionaries commenced conversions with a gusto, lower castes being assured improved economic conditions. Difficulty came when they approached other classes, with *Sarasvats* refusing to be converted. Portuguese were peeved, reporting to the king that '*there exists in this island a caste of the people who call themselves as Senay Brahmins, who are much opposed to the conversions of others and not only do not convert themselves but also hinder the conversion of others whenever possible and support the error of heathanism . . . These Senays, who hinder conversion to Christianity, or at least their leaders should be banished from the island. I know that some of them are awaiting such order and may convert themselves*'. Therefore, in 1541 King Jose III issued an order observing that '*The non-Christians were so far been under the control of Satan. God has thought of them to deliver. God has ordered that the Hindu Temples and Muslim mosque should not be allowed to remain and has suggested that they should be destroyed.*'

With permission thus given, forcible conversion was accelerated in 1540 under Vicar-general Miguel Vaz and Diego Borba, who forbid people even wearing *dhoti, saree* or *choli*, or planting *tulsi*, using flowers or playing even *Indian* musical instruments. In his *Discoveries in Missionary Expansion and Asian Cultures*, Teotonio R de souza quotes M. Mascarenhes saying '*After conversion, Goan Christians were expected to make clean break with their Hindu past. Not only were the personal names were changed, but food habits, social customs, and even dress had to conform to the way of living European Christians*'. There was great opposition to such attempts, many continuing to follow the age-old traditions retaining the faith in traditional gods (as they do even now), even after their conversion to new faith. Teotonio R de Souza refers to an amusing incident where exasperated Jesuits complaining the difficulty of cutting the *Shendy* and dressing '*the poor heathens*' of Talavali in Goa, before allowing the Holy Spirit to dwell therein.

The opposition of the people was not looked with compassion. In March 1546, idolatry whether fashioned in wood, stone or metal was banned, temples were razed and festivals forbidden. In 1599 A.D. King Juao III by a Royal Decree encouraged to spread Christianity even by force, making it common for priests to boast of the number of temples razed and idols broken. The *Brahmins* who refused to accept the ban were either sent to gallows or banished from Portuguese occupied territories. *Joguis* or the religious heads of Kavale and Partagali Maths

came to particular attention of Friar Antonio, who recommended their banishment from Goa, 'because they bring flowers used in worship and other relics of their temples and devils with which they restore heathanism of local people', and assuring that '. . . there would then be no individual who did not turn to the faith of Our Lord Christ, because if exiled from this island he would have no means of livelihood'. Compassionate Christ was at disadvantage, when Satanic inquisition shook every pious soul, be it a heathen or a Christian. *Tribunal do Santo Oficio* became the dreaded institution, tarnishing all that was good, noble and desirable in Christianity.

In 1541, Martin Afonso de Melo complained to the King that more persons would have been converted but for few influential *Sarasvats* likes Krishna, Locu and Anu Sinay, Pedro Ferdinand Sardinah referring them as '*the most prejudicial and opposed to Christianity in Goa . . . Formerly he (Krishna) was and now his son Dadaji is the greatest enemy of in Goa of our Holy faith . . . After removing this arrogant son from this position of authority, with the help of Christ, if we are permitted to give the offices to Christians and with due discretion to humble some of the honored Hindus, the Fathers of the Society and I as their companion, within one year or at the latest in two, shall make this whole island Christian*'. It was suggested that Krishna, who was doing business with Portuguese merchants, should be asked to visit Portugal for discussion and then forcibly converted. But this ploy did not succeed, Krishna refusing to be converted. On his return, he was arrested by King of Bijapur, where he died. His son Dadaji was equally influential and adamant, refusing to be converted. He lost his position under the government, and the vacancy was given to Locu Senai who had become Christian along with his family.

These extreme measures forced the Hindus to immigrate to the adjacent territories ruled by Hindu Kings. When *Shantadurga* temple in *Kelosi* and the *Kavale Math* premises were destroyed, the idol of the deities were shifted to Kavale and the incumbent Swamiji Sri Vidyanand Sarasvati of *Kavale Math*, disgusted by the profanity under the foreign rule departed first to *Golvan* in Ratnagiri and later to Varanasi. Many *Sarasvat* followers of the Math went with him some settling in Savantwadi and Ratnagiri. Some others too settled in the adjacent places like Kanaras and Belgaum, few even venturing to distant places like Pune, Thana and Mumbai. They continued their contacts with religious *Maths* and *Kuladevatas* in Goa.

According to a *Rayasa* issued by Sri Upendratirtha Swamiji of Kashi Matha in 1654 available in *Tirumala Devaswom* Temple in Cochin, during this period, some 12000 families had migrated from

*Sashti* alone, out of which 400 families went to Maharashtra and the rest to Kanaras. When such forced conversions led to large scale immigration, the territory started becoming depopulated, changing the demographic character of Goa. Acute dearth of agricultural expertise, finance, artisans and labour and the excesses of Inquisition in Goa, made some enlightened persons like Lourenco Pires, ambassador to Rome, to convey the displeasure to the King, pleading that it may end up being disservice to God and the King. John Copper describes in *Three Presidencies of India* (1853), ‘ . . . these persecutions and religious slaughterers led in the end to unfavorable results . . . Armed with . . . Papal Bull, the Portuguese Christians, deluded the country with blood, but in vain. Even the native converts joined the standard of Hindoos and the Moslems, whose practices, if not their creed, was more merciful and tolerant than that of the civilised crusades of the Western World’. On 6<sup>th</sup> January 1515, Andre Cosali, sensitive to art, culture and architecture of the temples, complained about the wanton destruction of temples, sending some broken idols to Portugal to show the architecture of the ancient land which is being destroyed.

The disastrous effect of immigration of literate population on trade and commerce, made Portuguese government to realize that it is better to sleep with an intelligent heathen rather with a dumb Christian convert. It is far better to trade with persons like Krishna even if they refuse to be Christians, because only with their cooperation, Portuguese had succeeded in snatching trade from the Arabs besides taxes being paid by the rich Brahmins, rather than rely on illiterate poor farmers. Drastic loss of revenue made matters difficult for the Viceroy and he wrote to the King that ‘In matters of commerce the Christian converts cannot have the same means as the Hindus, since the main commerce of this land is wholly dominated by Hindus’. He further said ‘Having regard to the great harm which, I saw, had resulted from this stage of things to the interests of my king and welfare of the land and having taken the opinion of the Archbishop . . . (and others) who agreed that the law made (earlier) was very harsh and should not be enforced . . .’. The King agreed and the immigrant Hindus were invited to return back to their homes. Among the many who had emigrated, one of the brothers would remain in Goa, converted to Christianity, enabling him to protect the family lands. Therefore few who had not made such provision returned to claim their lands and settle in Goa, while many others who were by then well settled in the new places, refused to bite the carrot.

**The second stage** refers to the emigration of that section of *Sarasvats*, who were originally from *Kashmir*, and had settled in

*Gomantaka* with brief stay under Solanki Kings in Gujarat. In the new region they accepted Shantadurga and Mangesh as their kuladevatas and Swamiji of *Kavale Math* as their spiritual guide. When the Shantadurga temple in Kelosi and the *Kavale Math* premises were destroyed, the idol of the deities were shifted to Kavale but the incumbent Sri Vidyanand Saraswati of *Kavale Math* had departed to Golvan in Ratnagiri district to Varanasi. While some devoted disciples either accompanied him to Varanasi or established settlements outside Portuguese territories and continued to owe allegiance to the *Math*. But many among those who had left Goa, felt orphaned in the absence of their Guru in Goa or near about. Some who had departed to the adjacent *Kanaras* and the *Keladi* where the ruler even lost contact with their *Math*.

In the absence of their own spiritual head, they looked for guidance to Sri Shankaracharya of *Shringeri Math*. Even when Swami Satchitananda, the later incumbent of *Kavle Math* returned from Varanasi to Goa in 1630, and sought recognition as the head of *Kavle Math*, while those who had remained in Goa and in the immediate border regions accepted, the rest who had lost contact with the *Math* in Goa, like the *Sarasvats* who had settled in Goa originally from Kashmir, were not now agreeable to accept the new incumbent. Many of such dissenting members were ex-communicated from the *sampradaya* of *Kavle Math*.

Many of such *Sarasvats* were employed under Basappa Nayak, the ruler of Keladi who was a staunch *shaiivite*. As the author of *Shivatatva Rathnakara* he was fond of discussing religious matters with these *Sarasvat* courtiers. Many of them like Kagal Naranappa, Manikere Timmayya, Dhareshvar Lakshmayya, Chandavara Naraanayya, and Narayan Nadkarni held high administrative positions; some like Rangayya Amladi, Santayya and Venkayya were court musicians.

The *Lingayat* courtiers, becoming jealous of these *Sarasvats*, questioned their *Brahmannical* status as well their right to discuss spiritual matters, when they donot have their own *Guru*. This fact rankled in the minds of these *Sarasvats* and realized the importance to have a *Guru* of their own. Having burnt their boats with *Kavale Math*, they decided to search for a suitable person qualified to become their *Guru*, with an independent *Guru sampradaya*. After considerable search, they finally found a suitable young *sanyasi* in *Gokarn* who could be eligible to become their *Guru* and guide them in religious matters. The *sanyasi* accepted their invitation and became their first *Guru*, ordained as Sri Parijnananashram Svamiji by the Sri

Shankaracharya of *Shringeri*. Soon a new *Math* and *Parampara*, popularly known as *Chitrapur Math* came in existence in 1708, at Shirali in North Kanara. After initial reluctance, Kavle *Math* recognized the new Guru with full honours.

The *Sarasvat Vaishnavas* do not lack the guidance of their Guru. Since Sri Madhvacharya's (1238 – 1318) visit to Goa for propagating *Dvaita* philosophy, many *Sarasvats* in Kanaras and later in Goa had become his followers. Thus even before the arrival of the Portuguese in Goa, there were considerable followers of *Madhva Sampradaya* known as the *Gokarna Jeevottam Partagali Math* leading the flock, which was established as early as in 1477 by the first Guru Sri Narayana Teerth Swamiji.

The establishment of this *Math* has an important background. Once the Swami Ramachandra Teerth, the pontiff of *Phalumaru Math*, one of the *ashta-Mathas* established by the *Parama Acharya* while on a pilgrimage to Badarikashram, fell ill and desired to ordain a *shishya*. But finding no suitable member of the community in his entourage, he sought a suitable member of the community, ordained one Madhav, a *Sarasvat Brahmin* as his *shishya*. However, when Swamiji's health improved and he returned to *Udupi*, majority of his followers desired that a member of their community should be ordained as *shishya*. The Swamiji accepted the suggestion and took another *shishya* belonging to the community and Madhava, named Sri Narayana Tirth Swamiji was authorized to lead *Sarasvats* preaching them *Dvaita Dharma*, bestowing on him all the honours. Accordingly, the first *Math* was established in Bhatkal in 1477. The third incumbent on the *Peetha*, Sri Jeevottam Swamiji established in 1570, another seat of the *Math* in *Gokarna*. The seventh Sri Ramachandra Tirth Swamiji established in 1616 another seat of the *Sampradaya* in *Partagali* in *Gomantaka*. From that time onwards, the *Math* came to be known as *Gokarna Jeevottam Partagali Math*. Thus much before the Portuguese firmed up their settlement in Goa; many *Sarasvats* were prosperous in Kanaras. Of Kanaras were followers of *Vaishnava sampradaya* propounded by Sri Madhvacharya.

Apart from the *Smarta Sarasvats*, who after migration to Kanaras had settled in Keladi, many *Vaishnava Sarasvats* also had occupied important positions in the court of *Keladi* and *Sonda*. One of such distinguished families which had emigrated from *Lotli* in Goa, due to Portuguese persecution, was that of one Ganesh or Vinayak Mahale (Mallya). In Goa, his family's enterprise seems to be trade and commerce, some members being employed as tax collectors. Being traders, they were familiar with ports on the west coast. Therefore,

when emigrating, their first residence came to be established in *Kumta*, which was then an important outpost for trade. Ganesh Mallya came with nothing but his native intelligence. Like the *smarta Sarasvatas*, he too decided to try his luck in Keladi, where by sheer hard labour and intelligence, he rose up to become a high ranking official in the administration. The official recognition passed to his sons and grandsons. According to a copper plate of 1661, his grandson Vittal Mallya was a close confidant of Venkatappa Nayak II (1660 – 62) and with his permission constructed *Virakta Math* near Shirali, for which land was granted in Hosur by the ruler. While in Goa the family had close contacts with Portuguese traders, which made the Keladi ruler to send him as ambassador to Goa. Vittal Mallya's two sons Mhalappa and Narayan got land grants for construction of houses and digging wells. Mhalappa (referred in Portuguese documents as Mallapa Maloe or Molick Molla) was sent by the king to Goa for negotiations with Portuguese. During those trade was conducted by the Kings themselves for which Mhalappa was the acknowledged representative.

Narayan Mallya was in charge of the Mangalore fort and had business interests in Bhatkal. His meteoric rise in Keladi made even many *Sarasvat* traders jealous of him. Soon he was to concentrate on trade than in state administration. After the fall of Keladi kingdom in 1757, Mallyas went back to settle in Honavar, adjacent to the Venkatraman Temple constructed by the family earlier. Ramachandra Mallya, Ganesh Mallya's another grandson, was a minister and friend of King Bhadrappa Nayak. In 1663 and instrumental for constructing the famous Venkatraman temple in Honavar.

Some members of large composite Mahale family from Lotli, settled under Sonda rulers, who also had cordial relations with Portuguese traders as well as Keladi rulers. Unlike the Mallyas who had settled in Keladi, those who settled in Sonda were taking more interest in the ancestral vocations as traders and brokers representing the rulers in trade, commerce and sometime in political negotiations with Portuguese, in addition collecting cess, levies and taxes on behalf of the state, in Sonda as well as in Sirsi. This gave prestigious recognition as well prosperity under the rulers of Sonda. The Members of this Mahale family as an educated merchant class, played important part in social and economic matters. They had access to the royal house hold as well, since some of the rulers always encouraging intellectual class like Lingayat, *Havik* and *Sarasvats* in their administration, many of them occupying high positions. "*Shivaji-Mallmmaji Samarotsva*" a book published in Marathi, by Shesho Srinivas Mutalik, an officer of Belvadi State in Bailhongal Taluka of Belgaum District. It was written

at the instance of Rani Tarabai of Kolhapur, who was close friend of Mallamji, the daughter of Madhulinga Nayak (1638-1674). According to the book many Havik and *Sarasvat* students also studied along with Lingyats in the school established exclusively for royal household.

After the defeat of the rulers of Keladi and of Sonda by Haider Ali in 1763, the then Savai Immadi Sadashiva Nayak, the ruler of Sonda fled to Bandivade in Goa, to be sheltered by the Portuguese, ceding the territories in Goa to them in exchange for an annual pension. When the English defeated and killed Tippto Sultan, the rest of the territories in Kanara came under their control. As usual *Sarasvats* were in the forefront using their experience in administration and in maintaining the revenue records and tax collectors. The rich ones took to trade and lending monies to the *Havik* farmers, in turn becoming absentee land lords, with the lands mortgaged reverting to them, when monies lent remained unpaid. *Sarasvats* were also the earliest ones who took English education, enabling them to hold important positions as lawyers, educationists and officers in banks, commercial organizations and government administrations in far off places like Bombay, Bangalore, Madras and Calcutta.

### *The Third Emigration*

Much before the Portuguese took over Goa and Mhal Pai chose to settle in Cochin, on the Malbar coast, there was substantial *Sarasvat* presence in Malabar Coast due to trade and commercial activities, with the Arab and Jew merchants. The Arab presence was there even in Goa, who specialized trading in horses in exchange of rice, spices like cardamom and pepper. As trader Mhal Pai was not stranger to these places and with his banishment from Goa, his shifting trade to Malbar, did not inconvenience him. As one of the later Dewans of Cochin recalled to W. Cullen, British Resident of Travancore & Cochin, in 1858, '*The traditions exist regarding the first immigration of Konkanyies into Cochin to leave their native country Conkan with their idols in 1294 A.D., having obtained grants of land and assured promises of protection from His Highness the Raja of Cochin, they settled in Cochin's Conkanastha Mahajanam*'.

Along with Mhal Pai, many other communities like *Kudumbies*, *Sonars* and *Vanis* traveled with him. When the ruler of Cannanore did not admit them, they moved further down to Cochin, where nearly 360 *Sarasvat* families were allowed to settle. Mhal Pai established his first settlement in *Barapalli*, five miles from Cochin town. Kamat family, who accompanied him, is reputed to have brought

with them bags full of gold coins, needing 200 men to transport them. Kamat's settlement was known as *Andikkadav* and Kamat himself known as '*Anandpuratti Kamati*. A third establishment of Vav Prabhu wcame up in Cochin town itself, the area coming to be known as '*Konkan Keri*'. The people on Malabar Coast were not dynamic traders and *Sarasvats* could not afford to be lazy in the strange land. Their perseverance made them prosperous as traders and money lenders, a profession till then dominated by Jews. Hindu Kings were too happy to deal with *Sarasvats*.

In later generations, *Tirumala Devaswom* at *Mattancheri* became the centre of *Sarasvat* religious and cultural activities. Another temple for goddess *Damodari* was constructed. Kings sought the commercial wisdom, skill in *Ayurvedic* medicines, and of course, their financial wealth. Increasing trade brought economic prosperity. By 1627, *Sarasvats* carved an important place in the society, the King Vira Keral Verma recognizing their role by issuing a *Titturam* (Royal edict) assuring them freedom from interference from other communities. In 1648, they were given authority known as *Sanketam*, to exercise powers in civil and criminal matters within their territory.

Francisco Pyrada de Laval, a French traveler, referring them says, 'I have come across these Brahmins in Calicut, speaking among them. They say that they are from Goa and they consider Portuguese who have captured Goa, as the greatest enemies. Those among these Brahmins, who are proud, do not desire to stay under Portuguese rule. Because Portuguese treat them unjustly and treat them like dirt. Therefore many of them have emigrated to Calicut where they live independently and happily'.

*Sarasvats* prospered with ingenuity and royal patronage, capturing local trade from Arabs and Jews. Their influence in society encouraged even the Portuguese to trade with them, for which knowledge of Portuguese language helped them. But their dislike for Portuguese rule in Goa, made them come closer to the Dutch who appointed many *Sarasvats* as their agents and brokers. As Sardar K. M Panikkar says in *Malabar and the Dutch*, '*The Moorish trading community was practically non-existent in Cochin and in its stead there had grown up the Canarese a Hindu community of Konkan districts who worked as the agents of Portuguese. The Canarese or as we now call them the Konkans were wholly dependent on their European masters, so that when the Portuguese went away from Cochin they became equally serviceable to the Dutch*'. Dr T.I Poomers points out in *Survey of the rise of Dutch Power in Malbar*, '*There is little difference between the Canarins and the Jews in the manner of*

*trade, utensils, dwellings and practices. Many of them applied themselves also to agriculture . . . Some of the Canarins, engaged in commerce were prominent wholesale merchants trading with foreign nations and native traders. Others were retailers supplying everything domestic except livestock. Some of them were money changers. Every one of them had some kind of trade, even children of six and seven, being trained to trade. . .*' The Dutch took full advantage of the antagonism of *Sarasvats* towards Arabs and the Portuguese, even appointing them to collect custom duties from *Amaravathi* port and *Mattanchery* and persuading the local rulers not to impose any unfair restrictions on them. In his book *Asian Trade* Prof. A. Das Gupta refers to Baban Prabhu as an established *Sarasvat* trader, who held monopoly in trading commodities with the Dutch saying, '*The commanders of Malbar treated him (Baban Prabhu) gently, even when his payments were not prompt. He was believed to have enough political influence to bring about a war between Zamorin and the Dutch*'.

Baban Prabhu and Calga Prabhu prospered and even employing David Rabbi, to represent them in Malbar Council in 1752 when the Dutch did not pay their dues. Impressed by Baban Prabhu's sagacity, the Rabbi placed his son Ezechael under him to learn the trade, a step soon to be regretted by Baban Prabhu. The Jew was more cunning than the shrewd *Sarasvat*, forcing him to mortgage his warehouses to the Jew. However, the Dutch, conscious of Baban Prabhu's importance in trade circles forced Ezechael to return the warehouse to him. When Ezeichal died, his descendants filed a suit against Calga Prabhu, in which many *Sarasvats* jealous of Prabhu's prosperity sided with the Jew. Calga Prabhu, furious of such deception, encouraged Hyder Ali to fight the Cochin ruler, who had soft corner for Jews. But his efforts failed and all his properties, including *Vasukeshvara* temple, were confiscated by the ruler and he along with his sons were deported to South Africa. The temple, however, was redeemed by one Nagaresa and handed over to the Ruler, who in turn placed it under *Tirumala Dewaswom* for management.

*Sarasvats* continued to play important role even in political field. The Rulers needed money for pleasure or to fight battles and *Sarasvats* had enough. But Rulers normally have short of memory and do not like to be reminded. Poilcar Naik, Baba Patter, Vaman Naik, Parimbal Naik, Dewares Naik, Vithal Naik complained to the Dutch Courts in the Hague for such failures. The Cochin ruler Raja Rama Varma was infuriated at the audacity of the *Sarasvats* and persecuted them leading some of them to imprisonment.

The Travancore ruler, however, was more amenable to *Sarasvats*, Dewaresa Kini and Nagendra Pai being his favorite financiers. He would often mediate with the Cochin rulers on their behalf but with little success. In 1791, when *Sarasvats* insisted on return of the loans, the Cochin ruler took revenge killing many of them, including Dewaresa Kini, their leader. This created great panic among *Sarasvats*, leading them to emigrate to Travancore along with their deity *Tirumala*, to be installed in Alleppey. The shifting of the idol made the Travancore King Sakatan Tampuran happy. The presence of *Sarasvats* in his territory encouraged commercial activity and prosperity to his kingdom. The construction of warehouses in the ports made Alleppy a prosperous mercantile and trading centre, which was attributed to *Tirumala* deity. Therefore, the shifting of the idol became a bone of contention between Travancore and Cochin rulers, which was only solved in 1859 by persuading the *Sarasvat* community to re-install the deity in Cochin.

With the increased presence of the English in the other parts of India, Dutch lost interest, their political influence becoming weak in India. Portuguese too preferred to concentrate on Goa, their 'Golden Goose'. By 1814 the English filled the vacuum in Malabar, Cochin ruler accepting their suzerainty. *Sarasvats* too adjusted themselves to the changing times. Speaking about them, the Department of State Archives Kerala records " . . . *the life and culture of these people who, while preserving the best in language, customs and culture which are their own, have contributed not a little to the mosaic of cultural pattern of Kerala . . . Sarasvats have since then continued to play their important role in every avenue of life, whether in trade and commerce or in education, literature, art and culture of Kerala.*" When the British came to Malabar coast, *Sarasvats* were in the forefront in getting education in English language. This enabled them to occupy important positions, many contributing to Malayalam literature, music, art and culture, though their principal profession continued to be trade, making themselves an important segment of intellectual tapestry of Kerala.

The religious guidance of the *Sarasvats* of the territories south of South Kanara were primarily under what is known as *Kashi Math*, which was not much different from *Gokarna Partagali Math* as far as *Sampradaya* is concerned. But they were closer to the *Madhva sampradaya* of *Kumbhakonam*. The main seat of this *Matha* is obviously in Kashi or Varanasi. Here in the temple constructed, the idols of Bindu Madhava, Narasimha and Gopalkrishna are consecrated. Sri Bhuvanendra Teerth Swamiji and Varadendra Teerth Swamij of

this Math are illustrious. In Mumbai this Matha has a temple in Walkeshvar.

*Sarasvats under British Rule and thereafter:*

Ascendancy of the English as apolitical power left the Dutch completely isolated from India and Portuguese influence remaining restricted to Goa, Daman and Diu. Christians of Goa basked for long time under the borrowed plumes, while their offspring spread all over the world for livelihood, became increasingly divorced from Indian main-stream. Hindus temporarily forgetting their inherent essence were enamored by the overshadowing influence of other groups which gave them scope for widening their literary, musical and artistic horizon, which made them to parade themselves as the most tolerant, liberal and cosmopolitan, in the end being a permissive society, in spite of many famous personalities becoming leaders of persons. Representing the cream and soul of *Sarasvatism*.

To a large extent *Sarasvats* remind one of the *Hebrews*. To the *Sarasvats*, the Lord had given the auspicious and sacred land of *Gomantaka*, which *Skanda Purana* described as उत्तमम् (best), व्यवस्थितम् (well-established), क्षेत्रं जवाधिकम् (land endowed with grains), सर्वतीर्थान्वितम् (endowed with all sacred streams), विमलम् (auspicious), निर्मलम् (pure), तीर्थ मुत्तमम् (best of the sacred streams). To the Hebrews, the Lord gave Israel, the land flowing with milk and honey. Referring the *Hebrews* who were driven from their land Israel, unlike *Sarasvats* who emigrated from their lands either in search of enterprise or due to religious persecution, Will Durant says in *Story of Philosophy*, ‘*The Story of the Jews since the dispersion is one of the epics of European History. Driven from their natural home by the Roman capture of Jerusalem (70 A.D.), and scattered by flight and trade among all nations and to all continents; persecuted and decimated by the adherents of the great religions – Christianity and Mohammedanism – which had been born of their scriptures and their memories; barred by the feudal system from owning land and by guilds taking parting industry; shut up within the congested ghettos and narrowing pursuits, mobbed by people and robbed by the kings; building with their finance and trade the towns and cities indispensable to civilization; outcast and excommunicated, insulted and injured; yet without any political structure, without any legal compulsion to social unity, without even a common language, this wonderful people has maintained itself in body and soul, has preserved its racial and cultural integrity, has guarded with jealous love its old rituals and emerged greater in number than ever before,*

*renowned in every field for the contributions of its geniuses, and triumphantly restored after two thousand years of wanderings to its ancient and forgotten home. What drama could rival the grandeur of these sufferings, the variety of these scenes and the glory and justice of this fulfillment? What fiction could match the romance of this reality?* The history of Jews reverberates or should have reverberated loud and clear in every *Sarasvat* heart. But does it? The Jews regained their soul, rising like the Sphinx from the smoldering fires and ashes, fashioning their dreams and reviving their hopes, confronting and resolving all adversities, travails and confrontations. But *Sarasvats*, who were far better placed in environment and opportunities, still grope for their identity, without any direction, objective or purposeful goal in life. A word for the wise is said to be sufficient; but it's surely is not meant for persons who consider themselves as wise.

Even though the dark days of slavery have ended with democratic values needing to be preserved and encouraged, their intellectual eminence glorious emotive history does not seem to have motivated them to action. Goa is to the *Sarasvats* what Jerusalem is to the Jews. But while Jews returned to Israel and contributed to its resurgence, the *Sarasvats* are neither eager nor welcomed to Goa. Goan identity is either primarily paraded as Portuguese Christian and Hindus feeling proud to cling to coat-tails of others, with the clarion call of Shenai Goembab which raised flicker of hope earlier fading in the overwhelming globalization of scientific and economic culture and geo-political forces. When lucre becomes important, pride becomes subservient. That is the problem and perversity of destiny.

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### *Commercialisation of Sarasvats*

In the beginning, when nature evolved human race, there was neither a *class* system nor *caste* system and antagonism, if any, was individual between one another either because of racial groups or within the economically advanced and those who remained backward, one claiming to be cultured and others as savage. In India, when *Aryas* entered the Indian sub-continent, even they considered themselves cultured and noble, all other earlier settled races like the *negritos*, *australoids* and *Dravidians* as the *un-Arya*, the ignoble, *dasa*, the servile or the *dasyus*, the despicable, in spite of their having a vibrant, highly urbanized civilization. Even among the *Aryas* there were only two classes which would takes up performance of actions according to their attributes, whether as *Brahmins*, the '*seers*' of wisdom and the *Kshatriyas*, '*preservers*' of the wisdom, the functions often overlapping one another and not being exclusive. Therefore, there were '*preservers*' who often were '*seers*' and '*seers*' who were '*preservers*'. When the non-*Aryas* came to be assimilated within the *Arya* fold, even they became '*seers*', composing hymns.

With passage of time, with realization that the Earth bears people, speaking varied languages and following various religions, according to the places and abodes as *Atharvaveda* declared 'जनं विप्रति बहुधा विवाचसं नानाधर्माणं पृथिवी यथैकसम् |', seeking as *Rigveda* responded '*We all have various thoughts professions and diverse are the ways of men. Brahmin seeks a worshipper; carpenter seeks to cracked, and physician seeks the sick . . . Writer of hymns am I, my father is a physician and my mother grinds the corn*', the social structure came to be classified based human attributes and the functions performed by them. *Purusha Sukta* elevated the classification of the society as natural effulgence of *Satya*, the *Prime Existence*, identifying *Brahmin* with mouth, since through speech one communicates wisdom; *Kshatriya* with shoulders, since through strength of shoulders one maintains order; *Vaishya* with thighs, since through enterprise one stabilizes the welfare

and *Shudra* with feet, since performance of work initiates the human evolution.

Since attributes are as said by Krishna, 'प्रकृते क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः' – Actions are performed entirely by attributes of nature, it is only the bewildered self-sense that makes a person that it is his 'I' that performs the action - 'अहंकारविमूढात्मा कार्ताहमिति मन्यते'. Therefore, though in early days, wisdom was not the sole preserve of those born to *Brahmin* parents, any one born in *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* or *Shudra* families could aspire to be a *Brahmin*, if he possessed the necessary qualifications, in later days with decline in clarity of righteousness and increase in bewildering unrighteousness, the classification of society according to attributes and performance of functions was overwhelmed people for whom birth became more important than attributes. *Vajrasuchika Up.* points out the incongruity ' . . . there are many species among creatures, other than human; many sages are of diverse origin. We hear from the sacred books that Rshysshringa was born of a deer, Kausika of Kusa grass, Jambuka from a jackal, Valmiki from an ant hill, Vyasa from a fisher girl, Gautama from the back of a hare, Vashishtha from Urvashi (celestial nymph), Agastya from an earthen jar. Among these, despite their birth, there are many sages, who have taken the highest rank having given proof of their wisdom', therefore concluding that 'He alone who is possessed of the (required) qualities . . . is the Brahmana. This is the view of the Vedic scriptures, tradition, ancient lore and history'.

Later when economic prosperity became the deciding factor, providing dominant position in the society, *Brahmins* clung to their positions than to their attributes, to the form than to their essence, with earlier the freedom of movement from one class to the other servrlay curtailed. Therefore in *Mahabharata*, Yudhishtira speaks of the difficulty of knowing the class to which a person belongs and concludes that conduct alone should determine the class to which one belongs.

Around 1000 – 900 BC with the discovery of iron ore and coal in Bihar, the assimilated non-Aryas, who were more urbanised and industrious in temporal activities, provided finance, skill and labour to the generation of wealth. The earlier perceived superiority of the *Brahmin-Kshatriya* nexus, was no longer acceptable to the largely non-Arya segment of the society, refusing to be dominated. In the intervening period many philosophies not in agreement with the Vedic scriptures, propounding rationalism in extreme forms like Charvakas along with spill over of the beliefs of the Non-Aryas like *Shaktas*,

*Pashpatas, Shakti cults etc.* and new waves of thinkers like *Buddha* and *Mahavir*, which led to the decline of the power and prestige of the *Vedic* proponents and many others claiming equal right to perform the professions hitherto reserved for *Brahmins*.

Influenced by the teachings of *Buddha* and *Mahavir* and conscious of their financial strength, *Vaishyas* and *Shudras* stopped engaging the services of *Brahmins* for performance of costly sacrifices and on *Kshatriyas* only for strength and protection. The defining moment had come for *Brahmins* to re-assess their status in the society. To protect their perceived superior status, they treated the problem as sectarian and not as social one, needing comprehensive re-appraisal of the entire social structure. Economic consideration received primacy instead of moral and ethical values.

To safeguard their economic prosperity and *Brahmannical* dominance in the society, they codified *Dharmashastra*, providing for a principle of *Apaddharma* at the expense of other classes, which gave liberty to *Brahmins* to undertake functions assigned to others, at the same time not permitting others the liberty to take up *Brahmannical* functions. This led other classes to consider *Dharmashastras* as oppressive and as mentioned by Sherring in *Hindu Tribes and Castes* by other classes, ‘*the most baneful, hard-hearted and cruel social system that could possibly be invented for damning the human race . . .*’ providing as Swart said in *Caste in India*, ‘*more or less willingly, a personal and selfish tendency . . before all else their aim was to establish their absolute supremacy of Brahmanas*’.

When under protestations from other classes, *Brahmins* began their migration to other places, they took the principle of *Apaddharma* along with them. Classification according to *birth* became the catchword replacing the one which was traditionally based on performance of actions according to *attributes*. *Brahmins* lost sight of the words of caution which *Krishna* had voiced that ‘*श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् | स्वधर्मो निघ्नं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ||*’ - better is performance of one’s actions according to one’s attributes than doing those of others, which are fraught with danger.

Soon the principle of *Apaddharma* became known in *Gomantaka* and *Sarasvats* accepted the same with alacrity. They seem to have put it in practice first under Northern Shilaharas, with the assistance of their *Vaishya* compatriots. Soon the *Brahmannical* wisdom with shrewdness of *Vaishyas* gave new dimension to their skill and expertise, giving them an edge over other classes in trade and commerce. The lure of lucre transformed their traditional role as presiding priests, advisors to the Kings to one as competent traders and shrewd negotiators, brokers and agents on behalf of the rulers with Arab, Dutch, Portuguese and English merchants.

Gomantaka had an all-weather port and under Vijaynagar, Adilshahi and Maratha rule, *Sarasvats* replaced Arabs as traders and in Kerala they gave fright to the Jews. From being advisors and ministers in royal administration to become traders in rice and spice in market place was short step. In the face of such appealing economic and material prosperity, the intellectual *Sarasvats* shrank back, leaving leadership to the producer of wealth than the communicators of wisdom. It is a travesty of historical evolution that those who once prided as sons of *Sarasvati*, the inheritor of *Sarasvat muni*, holding pages of scriptures in one hand to recite and the ladle in the other for ghee in sacrificial fires, should find self-righteousness in handling weighing scales or a cookery book in one hand and spoon for pouring oil in the frying pan in the other.

This shift gave them a new identity in the present society, being *Brahmins* by birth and *Vaishyas* by profession. Their success more in commerce than in spiritual wisdom made them immune even from knowing their heritage a little more, if not understand and appreciate better. Their success in material endowments has shadowed their essential spiritual attributes, distancing them from the spiritual, social and cultural *ethos*. It is no one's case that wealth and material welfare is not important to make human life convenient and comfortable. Even Vedic seers were financially more well served than the present day merchants. But in that process they were not divorced from their religious, spiritual, moral and ethical commitment to the society.

Each generation had and should have breathing space to meditate on the miracle of creation, meaning of our existence, the

purpose of one's enterprises and goals as human beings, because it is given to humans alone whether one should abide by and guide those who come after, lest they be swallowed by the reckless and unbridled greed, which the principle of *Apaddharma* has unconsciously let loose. With the expanding frontiers of information and human knowledge, the intelligence and enterprise of *Sarasvat* individuals, institutions and the community stand at the cross road towards deep and unconscious frustration.

The problem of the lost identity which *Sarasvats* face today is fundamentally due to the attitude one has for the eternal values and to the gifts which life has offered. There is need for an meaningful and impeccable balance of human spirit to the contradictory pressures, which history brings before a society. Human spirituality should necessarily foster human conscience and human responsibility towards renewed energy and inspiration, by looking within one self and, howsoever insignificant one's influence may seem to be, striving to contend both with the perceived and concealed threats to the integrity of *Sarasvat* society. This is the eternal message which Parashurama gave while settling our forefathers in the sacred land carved specially out for us.

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*Re-defining the Sarasvat Values.*

According to वर्णाश्रम, a *Sarasvat* is ब्रह्मवेत्ता ब्रह्मवादिन्, *Brahmin*, the word वर्ण meaning that which is described – वर्णयिति ते वर्णः. *Bhagavad Gita* uses the word as performance of actions according to attributes of the person. It further cautions that performance of actions according to one's attributes is better than performing actions which are those of others. *Brahmin varna* describes one who is वेदरतः - intent on acquiring wisdom, सदाविचारी - ever reflecting on the *Prime Existence*, वेदवेत्ता the knower of the wisdom, and सदाचारी ever practicing values of the *Prime Existence*. *Brahmin* is one who respects deities, men of wisdom, the Teacher and the enlightened ones (देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनम्), intent on purity (शौचम्), in being straightforward (आर्जवम्), steadfast in *Prime Existence* (ब्रह्मचर्यम्), retraining from injury (अहिंसा), absence of provocative speech (अनुद्वेगकं वाक्यम्), pleasant and favorable truth (सत्यप्रियहितम्), austere intention (स्वाध्यायभ्यसनम्), serenity of mind (मनःप्रसादः), gentleness (सौमत्यम्), silence and self-control (मौनमालनिग्रहः) and purity of feelings (भावसंयुद्धि).

Therefore, if *Sarasvats* claim to be *Brahmins* then they should ask themselves whether they possess any or even few of these attributes or whether a stage has come to designate many of them as *Vaishyas* in the garb of *Brahmins*. If they believe themselves to be *Brahmins*, then they need not restrict their trade and commercial activities, but give primacy to their *Brahmannical* functions i.e. अध्ययन, अध्यापन, यज्ञ, याजन, दान and प्रतिग्रह, not in the literal sense but in substantive meaning. Because it is only then the *Divine Energy* within them would initiate their actions incomprehensible making them उत्तम पुण्य or पुण्योत्तम without any individual preferences or *likes* and *dislikes*.

Human beings are comprehensive entities, with complemented and not segregated by exclusive attributes. Attributes over-lap, some dominating others for briefer or longer durations. The one which

dominates as natural attribute, determines the performance of functions. Therefore, even as Vashishthas, Kanvas, Bhargavas, Vishvamitras were 'seers' of the hymns, they also took to arms in exceptional Human beings are comprehensive entities, with complemented and not segregated by exclusive attributes. Attributes over-lap, some dominating others for briefer or longer durations. The one which dominates as natural attribute, determines the performance of functions. Therefore, even as Vashishthas, Kanvas, Bhargavas, Vishvamitras were 'seers' of the hymns, they also took to arms in exceptional circumstances when there was need to preserve them as cultural heritage. Taking up any other functions temporarily or a subsidiary, does not debar a Sarasvat from being a *Brahmin*. In earlier times, therefore, when one performed acts prompted by their essential attribute, it was not disapproved and free movement from one class to the other was permitted. Vishvamitra, a *Kshatriya* by birth, Vyasa and Valmiki *Shudras* by birth became *Brahmins* by virtue of their attributes. Drona, Kripa and Asvathhama, *Brahmins* by birth performed actions of *Kshatriyas*. But when human being perform acts which are contrary to their attributes, then their actions, not being commensurate to their attributes, are fraught with danger, since they are caused by bewildered person thinking that his 'I' initiates the actions and not his attributes.

*Sarasvats* should ponder whether they should give primacy to their traditional spiritual values or to the transitory temporal attainments. No one can suggest that one should discount temporal achievements, though a time has come to shift the focus to the intellectual and spiritual achievements of the *Sarasvats*. Only when becomes conscious of one's responsibility to one's heritage and prides his *being* a *Sarasvat Brahmin*, excelling more in the wealth of wisdom and splendor of spirituality than in wealth of possessions and splendour of prosperity.

*Satya* is the eternal, immutable *Prime Existence*, the *essence* entering the diverse manifest *forms*. *Rta* is the inexorable law that regulates evolution and sustenance of the *manifest forms* so long as they are analogous to the *essence* within and terminates them when they cease to be capable to do so. *Dharma* is the righteous principle that guides both the spiritual and the temporal objectives of the *manifest forms* from time to time as the *Time* evolves. Of all the inveterate creatures, human being alone is capable of being aware of the *Prime Existence*, participating in its *Intent*. When it does so, then his *manifest form* is said to be attuned to the *divine essence*, *Rta* being fulfilled. Unlike *Satya* and *Rta*, which represent the *essence* of the Prime Existence *Dharma* is the *form* that changes and has to change with time, place and people. Neither the *Yugas* nor the history is any

factual documentation of numerous *events*, but narrations of dramatic *events* which transform the human evolution from the gross to the subtle, from the savage to the cultured.

In *Vivekachudamani*, Sri Shankaracharya says that 'जन्तुनां नरजन्म दुर्लभमतः पुंस्त्वं ततो विप्रता तस्मद्वैदिकधर्ममार्गपरता विद्वत्त्वस्मात्परम् | आत्मानात्मविवेचनं स्वानुभवो ब्रह्मात्मना संस्थितो मुक्तिर्नो शतकोटिजन्मसु कृतैः पुण्यविना न लभ्यते ||' - For beings, rare is the human life, for men the intelligence, in that the desire to traverse on the Vedic path, therein superior is the wisdom. Discrimination between Self and not-self, self realization, establishing Brahmins within oneself, deliverance – all these are not possible unless one has attained merits of hundreds thousand years. Therefore, 'दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतद्देवानुग्रहहेतुकम् | मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयम् |' - three things are rare without grace, human life, desire for deliverance and the company of great persons.

People have to decide for themselves whether they desire to become *devas*, enlightened ones or *asuras*, un-enlightened ones. It is the travesty of life that few live desiring enlightenment, while many remain unenlightened, choosing to be influenced by sensory diversions. attractions remain un-enlightened, be influenced by sensory attractions. Krishna says in *Bhagavad Gita* that 'आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा | कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पुणेणालेन च ||' – enveloped is knowledge by the eternal enemy of the wise, as desire which is like insatiable fire. Therefore, when both the proper and the pleasant come before a man of wisdom chooses the proper in place of the pleasant - 'श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्याम् एतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः | श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षमात् वृणीते ||' (*Katha Up.*).

Therefore, Sri Shankaracharya suggests, that one should energise one's instruments through austerity of actions based on one's own attributes, stage in life and through adoration of Sri Hari and initiated in dispassion and other disciplines, like sense of discrimination, distancing from sense attachments, restraint of organs of action and perception, detachment from influence of senses, receptivity to scriptures and communion with the Teacher - 'स्ववर्ण आश्रम धर्मेण तपसा हारितोपणात् साधनम् प्रभावेत् पुंसाम् वैराग्यदिशिश्यताम् |'.

स्ववर्ण is not one's *caste* but the description of one's attribute, the *essence*. आश्रम is the stage in which one is. बाल्य is childhood when is engaged in physical growth, ब्रह्मचर्य is when one dwells in the wisdom of *Brahman*, गृहस्त is taking hold of (*ग्रहण*) supporting hand (*हस्त*) of one's spouse, who symbolizes शक्ति, as *सहधर्मिणी* and *सहचारिणी* and finally वानप्रस्थ is not going (*प्रस्थान*) to the forest (*वन*), but distancing one's self from one's body, वान meaning the body. सन्यास is not denying the society but denying attachment to the social allurements. A man of wisdom offers adoration to the three-eyed Lord, sweet-scented and spreading strength, praying

for deliverance, as a cucumber from its stem, from his mortal *form* and not from the immortal *essence* - 'त्रयंबकम् यजामहे सुगंधीम् पुष्पवर्धिनीम् उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनात् मृत्योर् माम् मुक्षीय नामृतात्'.

*Sarasvats* were वेद वेदांग परांगतः and मंत्र औषधी तपो योग बलेन जीतात्मनः . *Sarasvats* can be intellectually and spiritually vibrant only when and only if they are conscious of their essence as *Sarasvats* performing their षट्कर्म - the six-fold functions – अध्ययन (*learning*), अध्यापन (*teachings*), यज्ञ (*sacrifice*), याजन (*presiding over sacrifices*), दान (*generosity*) and प्रतिगृह (*disciplined action*).

अध्ययन is initiation in the universal righteous values collated by *Vyasa* in *Vedic* scriptures. When *Shakaracharya* recommended 'वेदानित्यमधीयताम्' in *साधना पन्चकम्* he did not subscribe to the idea of remembering and reciting alone but assimilating them with conscious awareness of an alert mind. As *Rigveda* itself points out, 'If one does not know them, then what would the Vedas do for him? Those who know That, only they are perfect'. As *Yaska* said one who knows only words and not the meaning thereof, is one who carries the load.

Yoga is attuning the Mind to the essential resonance of the immutable ! अध्ययन illumines one's intelligence, widens the vision. *Gayatri Mantra* prays *Aum*, the *Earth* (पृथ्वी), the *Space* (सुख) and the *beyond* (स्वः). May *That Supreme Light* (तत् सवितु वरेण्यं), *invigorate our divine intellect* (मार्गो देवस्य धीमहि) and *energise my prayers* (धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्). *Bhagavad Gita* enjoins one to *know That One* (तद् विद्मि), *through humble reverence* (प्रणिपातेन), *through inquiry* (परिप्रश्नेन) and *through service* (सेवया) *so that men of wisdom* (ज्ञानिनः) *who have perceived the Prime Principle* (तात्त्वदर्शिनः) *may instruct* (उपदेश्यन्ति) *that wisdom* (ते ज्ञानम्). अध्ययन, therefore, is one's commitment to *Brahmic* wisdom, through listening (श्रवण), reflection (मनन) and meditation (निदिध्यासन). *Taittiriya Up.* demands from an aspirant the purity of Mind, sincerity in speech and perfection in performance of action.

अध्यापन is communication of wisdom of *the Prime Existence* by an *Acharya*, i.e. one who has put that wisdom in practice, since he alone is capable of transmitting what he has attained. Therefore, the *Acharya* is cautious to advise the student departing after अध्ययन that whatever good practices there are in them, only those are to be adopted and not others – 'यानि अस्माकं मुचरितानि तानि त्वयोपासानि नो इतराणि'. Auspicious thoughts elevate the mind and the in-auspicious ones, degrade. In अध्ययन the *Acharya* leads the aspirant from *non-existence* to *the Prime Existence*, from obscurity to the clarity, from mortality to immortality on the *Path to Perfection*, by taking his hand, as a father would lead his son, making him abide in *Brahman* and protecting him as if he were his child,

seeing in him his own reflection. In that process, the *Acharya* becomes the पूर्वरूपम् - the prior form, aspirant becomes the उत्तररूपम् - latter form, wisdom becomes the सन्धिः - the junction and communication the संधानम् - the connection. In precedence mother is the first *Acharya*, father is thereafter and the *Acharya* is final one. Aspirant is dissuaded from accepting and adopting what the *Acharya* communicates, without inquiry, except those which are blameless and only the good practices which they themselves practice and not others.

यज्ञ is enjoining one's attributes to the *Will* and *Intent* of the Lord, in communicating one's enlightenment to others, who seek to learn what needs to be communicated. 'यज्', 'यम्', 'यच्च' and 'यत्' mean to reach out, extend, enjoin oneself to others. *Chhandogya Up.* clarifies that what people refer here as *Yajna* to be, verily, ब्रह्मचर्यं i.e. being in continuous and conscious awareness of *Brahman*. यज्ञ is fostering the gods by performance of actions, so that the gods may in turn foster the performer, through their luminous energy, to attain the supreme immutable good - 'देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः | परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ||'. Krishna says that *Yoga* has many forms, offering sacrifices to gods, offering one's actions in fire, symbolizing energy, offering senses and performance of actions, austerities, lunanimous mind, learning and wisdom, material possessions. यज्ञ is not denial of things by offering them in the sacrificial fire, but the skill in performance of actions in the spirit of complete surrender of one's attachment to the results of the actions, for maintaining social order. यज्ञ is constant commitment, possible only through performance of actions - 'यज्ञः कर्म संभवः'. In performance of actions, *Brahman* abides, such actions being possible only through mediation of the immutable, all encompassing *One* - 'कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् | तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ||'. *Chhandogya Up.* considers performance of actions, austerity and charity to be the three foundations of *Dharma*. It further declares the Life itself to be a great sacrifice, first twenty-four years being morning libations, the next forty-four years being mid-day libations and remaining forty-eight years being the final libations. *Mahidasa Aitareya* who knew this questioned, 'Why do you afflict me with this sickness, who am not going die by it?' and lived for hundred and sixteen years.

याजन is initiation of others by one who is energized by performance of *Yajna*, through enlightened advice and guidance to perform similar यज्ञ. Shiva as *Jagadguru*, the Universal Teacher, is said to perform यज्ञ for encouraging the humans to follow likewise. In *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord performs actions even when there is nothing to be gained by him through such actions - 'न पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन |

नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एवचकार्मणि ॥'. याजन is the same as what Krishna refers as turning the *karmic* cycle as a continuous process. If the wise one do not initiate others to perform यज्ञ, then their actions would lead to discordance and degradation, because whatever a superior person does, same is practiced by inferior one. Whatever standards he sets, those the world follows - 'यद् यद् आचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः | स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तनुवर्तते ॥'.

दान is that which given by free will, without expectations anything in return, while दक्षिणा is what is given as compensation to an *Acharya* for services rendered. *Brihad Aranyaka Up.* uses the word दक्षिणा in its true sense as compensation e.g. 'जनको ह वैदेहो बहुदक्षिणान यज्ञेनेजे'. But दान and दक्षिणा are generally used one for the other. दक्षिणा सूक्त in *Rigveda* uses the word दक्षिणा as charity दान the intention being made clear at the outset, '*The gods have not ordained hunger to be our death; even to well-fed person death comes in many forms. (Therefore) the riches of the liberal never waste away, while he who does not give finds himself no one to comfort him. Let the rich satisfy the implorer and stretch his sight on the long pathway; riches come now to one, now to another and like wheels ever turn around*'. Unlike *Rigveda*, *Upanishad* uses the word *Dana* specifically as charity. When *devas*, *danavas* and *manavas* approached *Prajapati* for instruction, he uttered one syllable 'द', which *devas* understood as दम्यत – restraint, since they are by nature unruly, *danavas* as दयध्व – compassion, since they by nature harm others and *manavas* as दत्त – give, be charitable, since they are by nature avaricious. Here दान means being generous.

In relation to *Brahmins*, दान means transmitting one's wisdom freely as natural obligation for maintenance of the world order, without any expectation in return. The *Acharya*, therefore, proclaims, अहं वृक्षस्य रेखा | - I am like the energizing tree. कीर्तिः पृष्ठं गिरेरिव | my fame is established as a mountain peak. ऊर्ध्वपवित्रो वाजिनीव स्वमृतमसि | I am the pure expanding un-decaying high point like the Sun. द्रविणं ॐ सवर्चसम् | I am effulgent like wealth. सुमेधा अमृतोक्षितः | I am possessed of immortal, undecaying insight. I look forward for aspirants to come from all directions, from diverse ambiance, in proper manner and through proper channel, with restrained and composed mind. *Acharya*, then shines forth as one endowed with splendour and luminosity among people, seeing whom, aspirants flow towards him as rivers would flow effortlessly from mountains to the oceans. Finally after the instructions are complete, the aspirants are instructed to speak of सत्य, *the Prime Existence*, practice धर्म, righteousness, never neglecting स्वाध्याय, learning, never being careless about स्वाध्याय - learning and प्रवचन - communication.

प्रतिग्रह is made up of प्रति (in return, towards, in direction of) and ग्रहण (drawing, sourcing or accepting). प्रतिग्रह is दक्षिणा is the fee or compensation received by *Acharya*, without coveting, for imparting wisdom or by a priest for presiding over sacrifices or religious functions. But *Acharya* is cautious to point out to the aspirants that whatever is given should be given with full receptivity to the importance of giving and should not be given without proper receptivity, affluence should be given, with modesty, with awe and with empathy – ‘श्रद्धया देयम्, अश्रद्धयाऽदेयम्, श्रिया देयम्, द्विया देयम्, भिया देयम्, संविदा देयम् |’.

In later times, the sacrifices became costly with elaborate rites and rituals, and the concept of प्रतिग्रह acquired new connotation, *Brahmins* becoming covetous and दक्षिणा, being the source of income demanded for services rendered than compensation willingly and voluntarily offered. For performers of sacrifices, who observed the prohibitive costs, with concern and disgust, new religions and teachings offered religious performances making दक्षिणा redundant. *Brahmins* instead of re-assessing their claims, tried to tackle the problem not as a social but as a challenge to *Brahmannical* supremacy in society.

It is easier to know what is right and what is wrong. But individual ego prevents one from accepting what is right and avoids what is wrong. Even while conceding that *Brahmins* are the dominant among the four *varnas*, *Vajrasuchika Up.* posed the question: who is a *Brahmin*? Is he the individual soul or the body? Is *Brahmanism* based on birth or on his deeds? The conclusion arrived was that none of these make one a Brahmin, but only *he who perceives directly, like amalaka fruit in hand, The Prime Existence* by one’s own experience, manifesting as one’s own Self, fulfilling one’s functions, getting rid of desires, attachments, greed, expectation, bewilderment alone is qualified to be called a *Brahmin*. Yudhishtira clarified that the determining factor of a *Brahmin (dvija)* is his character and neither birth, study nor learning - ‘श्रुणु यक्ष कुलं तात न स्वाधायो न च श्रुतं कारणं वा द्विजत्वे च व्रतं एव न संशयः |’. When new structure for proper compensation should have been the natural corollary, *Dharmashastras* introduced the principle of *Apaddharma*, under which the Brahmins could undertake the functions of other classes, to strengthen their weakening economic position in the society, which led to travesty of *Varnashrama*, making mockery of the earlier attributes assigned by Nature for *Brahmins*.

Ideals must be inculcated and pursued, though difficult to be practiced. Only in silence of the solitude and never in indulgence of the senses, can one reflect on ideals. There is no difference between *being in silent mind* and *being alone with one’s self*, but there certainly is difference between *being in silent mind* and *being lonely in mind*.

When one is *in silent mind* or *alone with one's self*, nothing else remains to be done, and solutions come to be revealed, without intermediaries. *Time* may change, *circumstances* may change and even forms may change, but when one experiences *being in silent mind*, *Time* stands still, experiencing without movement, moment to moment. *Lonely mind* needs company, not *the silent mind*.

*Sarasvats* should reflect in their *silent mind*, whether they can justify themselves being called after their patron, *Sarasvat muni*, *the child of Sarasvati*, whom the ancient seers lauded as *motherliest of divine mothers* - 'अश्वितमे नदीतमे देवितमे सरस्वति' and requesting her to not deprive them of nourishment, which would make them weak and push them far from her - 'सरस्वति अभि नः नेपि वस्यः मा अप स्फरीः पयसा मा न ः आ धक् ।'. History brought us from the hallowed territory, far too distant, and *Sarasvats* would be poorer if she forsakes us.

For *Brahmins* there is nothing like wisdom 'न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रं इह विद्यते', for that alone stabilize a confused and bewildered mind. Therefore, a *Sarasvat* by very definition of the word, has to be a man of wisdom - वस्मज्ञानी, luminous - सवितृ, energetic - अग्नि, leader of others on *the Path to Perfection* - पुरोहित, mobile - वायु, supple - आप and expansive - आकाश. He should endeavor perfection through initiation (दीक्षा), postures (आसना), signs (मुद्रा), diagrams (मंडल) and worship (पूजा), through proper direction (क्रिया), practice (चर्या) enjoining one's self to *Divine Intent* (देवी संकल्प). Then साधना does not become restricted ethical and moral perfection but leads spiritual regeneration through restraint of the senses and to dispassion. As one climbs heights, one becomes, as it were, like the mystical bird श्येन, flying in ethereal space, lays eggs and also rears them in space.

One should ponder over these thoughts *being alone in silent mind*. Then the inquiry would, perhaps, lead one to understand, be conscious and experience *the pride of being a Sarasvat*. In that alone rests the future of *Sarasvatism*.

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*Language of the Sarasvats.*

**This Chapter is an exercise in futility.**

When Albuquerque embarked on the Malabar Coast, he was bewildered by strange languages spoken in the land, till an Arab merchant hailed him in his own mother tongue, hearing which the Portuguese mariner is said to have embraced the Arab trader in ecstatic joy. Such incidents make interesting reading, touching the sensitive hearts till the calculative mind takes over making a language useless unless it provides economic gains in temporal life. Therefore, that people generally consider as emotional attachment is not wholly true, because the practical mind takes over once emotions of the heart, whether a particular language has the required advantages or not.

Scriptures tell us that on completion of the creative process, *Brahman* used the *Mind*, *Speech* and *Actions* as his instruments for effulgence, the *Speech* transforming in *Action* what the *Mind* possessed in *essence*. From beginning, the *Mind* and *Actions* dominate the human life, *Speech* being essentially intermediate the necessary tool which not being the necessary and an important component of empirical life. 'When it was desired that the objects be assigned with names, *Vak* was sent as the earliest of all utterances through *Brihaspati*, the first and the foremost. The *Speech* that was best and stainless, was revealed, along with the Divine mystery . . . In four groups (परा पश्यन्ति मध्यमा and वैखरी) was *वाक्* classified, all of which the men of wisdom are aware. In the first three groups are hidden the mystical secrets and men generally speak only the fourth'. The fourth was the natural (*prakritic*) form, referred by Hemachandra Suri as the languages prevailing among general masses – 'लोकात् इति वर्तते' र 'लोकात् अवगन्तव्यम्'

In India, the people of *Sindhu* and *Sarasvati* civilizations spoke an early form of *Dravidian* language with local variants, the *Aryas* characterizing it as मृदुवाचः - indistinct *Speech*. The speech of the people settled in other parts or in wild, uncultivated, mountainous forest region like *Pandya*, *Kekaya*, *Valihika*, *Sahya*, *Nepal*, *Kunatala*,

*Kambhoja, Gandhara, Haiva and Kanoj*, outside the pale of Arya society, was collectively designated in later days by grammarians as *पैशाची*. According to A.E. Hoernle, the dialects spoken by the Aryas were primarily *Magadhi* and *Sauraseni* with their own variants pointing out that ‘. . . points to a still remote period in the glottic history of India, when there were only two great varieties of speech current in the North India which divided that country diagonally between them; the one occupying the north-western, the other the south-eastern half. These two glottic divisions I shall designate as the *Sauraseni Prakrit* and *Magadhi Prakrit*, respectively’ and that ‘. . . in the remote past *Magadhi* (has). . . been the only language of North India. . . before the advance of the *Sauraseni* tongue’ whose impact was ‘. . . fullest in the West (especially in *Sind*, the *Punjab* and *Western Rajaputana*) but gradually grows weaker and narrower as it advances eastward, mainly following the course of the broad valley of the *Ganges*, and working itself as a wedge in to the *Magadhi* area which overlaps it on its southern and northern banks in the *East Rajasthani*, *Gujarati* and *Nepali*, in which *Magadhi* relics are most noticeable’. Sir John Marshall, James Beames, S.K.Chatterjee and others generally accepted this premise.

Thus one may accept the premise that *Magadhi* was the speech of the earlier *Aryas*, who coming from North-West, though the mountainous *Khyber* valley, settled in the plains of *Punjab*, known as *sapta-sindhavah*. *Sauraseni* was spoken by the *Aryas* who came crossing the snowy terrain of *Ladakh* and *Kashmir* and settling in the present *Himachala Pradesh* and in the area bound by the three rivers, *Sarasvati*, *Drishadvati* and *Apayu*. There was no much difference in these two dialects, both having common source. The early hymns ‘seen’ or composed earlier or later in India were in the two natural - *prakritic* – forms. It was only centuries later when the hymns became unintelligible, as *Aryas* began spreading across the sub-continent, assimilating the non-*Arya* elements within their fold that *Krishna Dvaipayana* collected the innumerable hymns belonging to various seer-families in different *prakritic* forms and collated them in a formalized, refined, cultured and noble (*sanskritic*) form of speech known as *Brahmi*, *Devabhasha* or *Chandas* (छंदयिति ते छंदः) – that which conceals the mystical essence of mystical essence of the seer’s sensory perceptions from falling in the hands of unqualified, lay or common people. Since the sage separated the significant hymns from the mass of innumerable hymns scattered over the periods, in single one he came to be known as *Vyasa*, one who separated – विव्यासः.

Since the language of the *Vedic* scriptures were not accessible to normal unqualified, uninitiated intelligence, six subsidiary

manuscripts -*vedangas* like *Shiksha*, *Kalpa*, *Vyakarana*, *Chhanda*, *Nirukta* and *Jyotisha* came to be provided. The *Nirukta* which was the grammar written by Yaska was systematized by Panini in *Ashtadhyayi* and further commented by Patanjali in his *Mahabhashya*. Panini remarked that impure words dominate speech, pure words being few. For each one of the pure word, there are many impure words – ‘भूयांसोऽपशब्दः | अल्पियांसशब्दः | एकैकैस्य हि शब्दस्य बहवोऽपभ्रंशः |’. The primary purpose of *Vyakarana*, therefore, is the protection of the essence of the Vedic hymns – ‘रक्षणार्थं वेदानां अध्येयं व्याकरणम् |’ or systematizing the words - ‘शब्दानुशासनम्’. Only the language which fulfils the systematized words is entitled to be called cultured – *Sanskrit*.

Vararuchi, one of the earliest grammarians of Indian *Prakrits*, had identified *Magadhi*, *Sauraseni*, and *Paishachi* as the three primary *Apabramshas* with *Maharashtri* as the poetical variant of *Sauraseni*. Hoernle also concurred saying: ‘. . . It will be noted that the *Maharashtri Prakrit* does not occur in the list of at all; nor indeed, is it found in any list of *Apabramshas* or vernaculars. This shows plainly that the *Maharashtri Prakrit* was not looked upon as the vernacular of any people, and that it did not take its name from the *Maharashtra* (or *Martaha*) country. . (Vararuchi) seems to use the term not as a proper name, but as laudatory or descriptive expression meaning the *Prakrit* of the great kingdom (i.e. of the famed country of the doab and *Rajasthan*)’. Endorsing this view, J. Beames said in his book *Comparative Grammar of Modern Indo-Aryan Languages*, that ‘It is absurd to attempt to affiliate any modern Indian language as a whole with any *Prakrit*. *Maharashtri* and *Marathi* have little common except the name’.

In spite of these clear conclusions, *Maharashtrians* have been claiming that *Marathi* is sourced from *Maharashtri*. Stein Konow, therefore, emphatically says, ‘It is clear that a language, such as *Maharashtri*, which was used by lyrical poets from all parts of India, would, in course of time, adopt words and perhaps also inflectional forms from other vernaculars than that which was its original base. On the other hand it would, naturally, influence the spoken vernaculars. The language of lyrical poetry is, of course, more apt to exercise such influence than that of any other branch of literature. Every *Prakrit*, especially *Maharashtri Prakrit*, should therefore, be expected to be more or less of a mixed character, and this is understandably so’.

Vararuchi pointed out the primary source of each of these three *Apabramsha* dialects, saying ‘पैशाची प्रकृतीः शौरसेनी | मागधी प्रकृतीः शौरसेनी | शौरसेनी प्रकृतीः संस्कृतम् |’. This shows that probably when the *Vedic* scriptures were collated by Vyasa, he having lived in the area dominated by

*Sauraseni* rather than *Magadhi*, which having spread far and wide reaching distant eastern territories, had more non-*Arya* words within, than in *Sauraseni*. Therefore, probably *Vedic* scriptures which were collated by orthodox Vyasa in *Sanskrit*, as the formalized medium for transliteration, contained more *Sauraseni* variants than the *Magadhi ones*, which gave rise in due course to *Pali*, which in Buddha's time became the dominant dialect of the general masses, thereby giving religious acceptability to regional dialects.

It would be interesting to recall that Parashurama had brought *Brahmin* families from *Brahmavarta*, which was in *Sauraseni* territory, and when the descendents of *Pauravas*, who also spoke *Sauraseni* dialect, took the same route as was taken these *Brahmannical* settlements establishing their rule in the territories through which they passed like Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Gujarat and Konkan. It is therefore, natural that Hoernle to find *Sauraseni* inflection in subsequent dialects that came up in these areas than from *Magadhi*, which influenced the dialects which came to prevail in the eastern part of India, along the river banks of Ganga. The language which in later times came to be known as Konkani was sourced from *Sauraseni*, as pointed out by the present author in his book *Konkani Bhashecho Itihas*, unlike Marathi which owes its origin to *Magadhi Prakrit*. Grierson also advocated a principle in *Linguistic Survey of India*, to find out whether one language is a dialect of the other, while considering Western Hindi and Bihari. He said, '*The difference of a language does not depend on non-intercommunicability with another form of speech. There are also other powerful factors to be considered, if we are to look at the subject from a scientific point of view. First and foremost, there is what I have already referred to, grammatical structure. . The vocabulary of the two forms of speech may be similar, but the whole grammatical structure of the one (Bihari) is radically different from that of the other (western Hindi)*'. Therefore, just because there are many common words in Konkani and Marathi, and still fewer in Bengali, it would be preposterous to claim Konkani as a dialect of Marathi, even as to consider Konkani speaking *Sarasvats* having migrated from *Bengal* to *Gomantaka*.

Even as we find many Christians under Portuguese rule accepted their language, manners and customs after their conversion to Christianity, even as some *Sarasvats* settled in USA, or any other western countries have adopted the languages, manners and customs of those countries, even as many Indians who claimed to be English than the *Britishers*, accepted English language, manners and customs in their daily life, even so *Sarasvats* who were employed in the courts of

Shilahas, Devgiri Yadavas and Marathas adopted Marathi language, manners and customs of the ruling classes in their daily life, not only in public life but also in their communication with others in the family and community. The senseless attitude of many of these Maharashtrian *Sarasvats* has extended to such that it comes to them natural to refer *Chitpavans* as *Brahmins*, as if they themselves were either not Brahmins or have reduced themselves to be something less than *Brahmins*. Perhaps it is this poverty of thought that made them till almost the beginning of twentieth century, referring themselves as *Shenvis*. The situation was slightly different in Karnataka and Kerala, where *Sarasvats* with equal enthusiasm and enterprise contributed to the languages and culture of the regions where they were settled. They too were influenced by the religious literature of the regions and one would not be surprised if one finds *Basava's Vachanas* or *Purandaradas* or *Kanakadasa's bhajans* on their tongue. But they preserved, as good luck would have it, Konkani as their Mother tongue, for communicating with the family and community members.

When the Portuguese were ruling Goa and Marathas were knocking their doors, the *Sarasvats* who were converted to Christianity accepted Portuguese language, manners and customs, while the poor converts continued to depend on Konkani. But many *Sarasvats* under a mis-placed zeal to counter the foreign rule succumbed to the influence of Marathi language. As a consequence while Konkani came to be wiped out from Maharashtra and in Goa became the literary language of the Hindus, with very dominant lobby of *Maharashtravadi Gomantakis* opting for merger of Goa with Maharashtra and making Marathi, the language of the State.

When the Maratha rule came to be extended to Goa, their language, manners and customs also followed them. The influence was so deep that those *Sarasvats*, who were converted to Christianity, were not satisfied with the Christian literature written in Konkani, and wanted to be instead in Marathi. F. Thomas Stephens, who was obviously had come to Goa to save the lost souls of the heathens, and not to propagate Konkani language agreed to their insistence to write *Christ Purana* in Marathi language, though he knew that Konkani was the language of the masses in Goa and had in fact written his *Doutrin Christa* and other religious books in Konkani. Making reference to the request of the *Sarasvat* convert, he says in *Christ Purana*,

पण दैत्रिनी वांचोनि अन ऽ काही येक आगळे शास्त्रपुराण |  
जरी आमां करविते पठण | तरी होते बांग |  
जैसी तेआं तेआं दिपावति | देसापरिचीं पुराणें होति |

तैसी पुस्तकें कां न मेळति | आमच्या देसी |  
 हा मोठा अभिप्रावो जि म्हणे | तुमि तरि वारिली मागिली पुराणें |  
 तरि प्रतिपुस्तके अनाकारणें 5 कैमे न करिती तुमीं |  
 या पामोनया जि आतां | जैतियांच्या पुराणकथा |  
 नवेआ किरस्तांवांच्या चिंतां | आठविति देखा |  
 जरी मराठीये भासेचीं काहीं | शास्त्रपुराणें होति आमां ठांयी |  
 तरी लोकांचा मनोरथु पै | पूर्ण होता |

In spite of these efforts to please the *Brahmins* converts, Fr. Thomas Stephens thought it advisable to make the *Purana* easier to understand by inserting Konkani words in between the narrative – ‘हे आ पुराणाचा फळु बहुतो जनांसी होउंसी काए केले मागिलेये कवेस्वराचि बहुतेकें सोपी वात्मणांचे भासेचि ह्यकोंकणीह उतरें ठाई ठाई मिसरित करून कवित्व सोपें केलें |’.

Thus while the Christians of Goa and Mangalore kept the Konkani language alive as the medium in their spiritual and temporal life, to whatever extent that was possible for them, the *Sarasvats*, completing sidelining their mother tongue took up the languages of the regions where they had settled for giving expression to their genius in literature, in performing arts and culture of those regions, sparingly touching their own inherent language and culture. The fact of the matter was that they did not even think it worth while to preserve whatever linguistic remnants there were in their possession. The matter came to a such state that while those in Karnataka and Kerala at least took pains to maintain their identity as minority community in the region where they were settled but the *Sarasvats* in Maharashtra made every effort and took every pains to completely annihilate their distinct identity, language and culture taking pride of being called a *Marathi Manoos* and referring those still maintaining Konkani language and culture as *henagadis* – uncultured or *Karawaris*, as if the place from where they came, was something unsophisticated. The *Sarasvats* in Goa were in a peculiar situation, neither able to align with the Portuguese culture nor possessing integral strength to preserve their age old tradition, customs and culture. Some climbed the Maharashtrian bandwagon, taking pride being servile to one amazing and bizarre belief in their presumed universal outlook – सनातन धर्म and विश्व ते माझे घर, whereas they have restricted their identity within the boundary of a well, leading to their sense of frustration.

The loss of the sense of pride in being a *Sarasvat* seems to be complete, the soft spoken lullaby of mother’s tongue being lost in the clamour of the market place. An outstanding *Sarasvat* literary figure in Marathi claimed once that Konkani can not be termed as an independent language, because it is written in Marathi script, without

realizing that even Sanskrit and Hindi languages are written in Marathi script and yet they claim to be independent languages. A *Sarasvat* writer in Kannada, who won the *Jnanaapitha* Award had not hesitation to claimed in *Marathi Sahitya Sammelan* that in his childhood he was influenced by Marathi language, when studying in his school, where Marathi was not even a medium of instruction, and later by Kannada, till the Prime Minister lauded him as a perfect product like the *Kokam* fruit (the word popularized by *Ko* – Konkani, *Ka* – Kannada and *Ma* – Marathi). We have another *Sarasvat Sahitya Academy Award* winner who leaves no opportunity to tell his friends in Konkani gatherings that he does not write in Konkani because he does not know which Konkani he should write in – *Malavani Konkani, Goan Konkani, Christian Konkani, Karawari Konkani, Navayat Konkani, Mangalorean Konkani or Kerala Konkani*. When such problems were also faced by Gujaratis, Mahatma Gandhi had advised such confused writers that if they have some thing good and noble to tell, then the language being only a medium, will enrich itself by those very thoughts as expressed. *Jnanaeshwar* never considered whether the language in which he wrote *Jnaneshwari*, was the best possible language when he could have used Namdeo's polished language in his beautiful *Bhajans*, which is almost similar to the modern Marathi.

Since language is spoken by human beings, it differs from people to people, place to place and period to period, place to place. The origin of a language therefore should be sought with these points in mind. When Parashurama brought *Brahmins* from *Brahmavarta* for settlement in *Gomantaka* it was from *Sauraseni* region. Later when Yadu was allotted by his father Yayati *Paurava*, the territory south west of *Aryavarta*, Yadu's eldest son, Sahasrajit established his kingdom on the banks of *Narmada* river and extended it along the west coast of the ocean. Krishna and Balarama, the descendents of Yadu's second son Kroshtri, also migrated along with his kinsmen from *Mathura* to avoid repeated raids from Magadha King, Jarasandha, and the father in law of the slain Kamsa, and established their capital in *Dvaraka*, on the west coast in *Saurashtra*. Padmavarna, Sarasa and Harita, belonging to the Yadu's family also later established their small kingdoms in Kolhapur, Banavasi and in an island near Karawar coast. All these migrations being from *Sauraseni* region, the speech of the *Arya* settlers in *Saurashtra, Gujarat* and *Konkan* also became more and more *Sauraseni* based and Konkani being one of the direct offshoots.

Language is like a flowing river picking waters of streams joining on the way till it reaches the vast ocean. V.P.Chavan felt more similarity between Gujarati and Konkani rather than with Marathi and

Konkani. Even then it was claimed for long time that that Konkani is but a dialect of Marathi and not an independent language of a region. In fact, in deciding whether a language is independent or a dialect, Dr Grierson has put some guidelines in his monumental *Linguistic Survey of India*. Making a comparative study of Bihari and Western Hindi, he said '*The differentiation of a language does not necessarily depend on non-inter-communicability with another form of speech. There are also other factors to be considered. . First and foremost, there is what I have already referred to, grammatical structure, . . .The vocabulary of the two forms of speech may be similar, but the whole grammatical structure of the one (in this case Bihari) is radically different from that of the other (western Hindi)*'. From this viewpoint, there is no commonality between Konkani and Marathi as far as grammatical structure is concerned and the similarity of vocabulary has to do more with historical, geographical, social and cultural interaction than anything else.

A language blooms in an environment and not in isolation. During much of its course, Konkani came in contact with Marathi and Kannada, therefore there is more influence of these languages, even though now days one uses more English words than any other India languages during daily communications. But a close study of Konkani language will reveal that it has more *tadbhava* – derivatives words than *tatsama* – similar words picked from *Sanskrit*. This fact authenticates the gradual development and evolution of Konkani language, from its source which obviously is *Sauraseni*, embellished by many words which have sneaked in during historical, geographical and cultural associations. But admission of words from other language groups does not make a language less virile, even as English language has not become poor because of the inclusion of words from almost all world languages. On the contrary, it shows richness of the language, in spite of many intruding words.

It is misfortune of Konkani language that when Indian languages were being studied, Konkani language was not brought to the notice of the linguists, because of the non-availability of literary works for their study or to a large extent negligence of Konkani speaking languages in preserving it. Portuguese missionaries who had access to then existing literature, when they began conversion to Christianity, they could write Grammars and compile dictionaries even before any one other language could have scientifically written grammars. Even though Hoernle did not make reference to Konkani, and Grierson could only make reference to the destroyed literature in Konkani, Konkani

finally came to be recognized by *Sahitya Akademy* and *Indian Constitution* as independent language.

Often historical data often becomes inconvenient intruders in presumed assumptions of intelligent historians. In their eager attempts to make Konkani a part of Maharashtra, they brush under the carpet the in even as late as 7th century A.D, Konkani was not considered a part of Maharashtra. An early *Aihole* inscription dated 634 A.D. describes the frontiers of Maharashtra to include the area of Vidarbha, the territory from Khandesh in the north to Satara in the south and southern Maharashtra including a part of present Karnataka (Journal of Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society, Vol XXIV). Konkani was neither mentioned nor ever considered a part of Maharashtra.

Evidence of Konkani as distinct language of the Konkani is first found at the foot of the famous inscription dated 1012 A.D. of Bhayirju Shenvai, Minister of *Shilahar* King Aparajita available in Alibag, which includes many Konkani words which are even now found in Konkani speech. The 11<sup>th</sup> century inscription found at the foot of famous *Gomateshvar* statue on *Shravanabelgola*, in Hasan district, which states that the statue was carved at the instance of Shri Chamundaraya,- 'श्री चामुंडराये करवियलं', evidencing the presence of Jains from Goa and Kanara visiting the famous pilgrim centre. An inscription of 1109, found presently in Parel, Mumbai, which speaks of Anant Pai-Prabhu who was Yadava governor of north Konkani. The entire matter is in Sanskrit, and when the Saapvacana was given expression by Pai-Prabhu or by the person who inscribed it on stone, it had to be in his mother tongue, Konkani - 'अथ तु कोणिकी ए शासन लोपी तेच्या वैद्यनाथाचि भाल सकुटुंबी आफडे . तेहाची माय गाढवे इविजे'.

Konkani in its early stages of development was thus the language of *Aparanat* extending to *Gomanataka* in the south. Literary compositions in Marathi with *Kekavali* by Mukundraja in 1189, followed by Chakradhar's *Lila Charitra* in 1190. *Jnanaeshvari* was written what was known as doSaI BaaSaa,, known to common people in which perhaps for the convenience of his devotees from Konkani, contained many Konkani words which are still prevailing in common Konkani speech, to understand which Maharashtrians need *Jnanesvari Jnana kosha*. Much imagination is not needed to gauge the intention of *Jnaneshvar* to make his Baavaaqa-dIipka, intelligible to his Konkani speaking devotees also, by using Konkani words extensively in *Jnaneshari*, when like his contemporary Namadeo, he could also have written in pure literary Marathi, as he did later in composing अमृतनुभव. Like *Jnaneshvar*, Namadeo did not insert Konkani words in his *Bhajan*s or *Gathas* but only showed Konkani as distinct and different

language than Marathi, even as Gujarati, Kannada and Urdu were. He gives in his *Gathas*, the specimen of Konkani as spoken during his period. After mentioning, 'गवळिणी टकविल्या एक एक संगतीनि मराठी कानडीया एक मुसलमानी कोंकणी गुजराथी असा पांच जणीं गौळणी टकविल्या' he gives sample of the Konkani speech, 'पावगा दातारा पावगा दातारा. तु नंदाचो झिलो. माका फडको दी. मीं हिंवान भेलो. घे मजो कोयतो. देवा पाय पडलो'.

When the religious literature of the saints from Maharashtra came more and more to be written in Marathi, *Sarasvats* in Maharashtra came more and more under the influence of Marathi language, even as the *Sarasvats* on Karnataka were exceedingly influenced by came saints from Karnataka like *Purandardasa*, *Kanakdasa*, *Basaveshvara* and others. It became as common to quote from these saints as *Sarasvats* in Maharashtra feel familiar in quoting *Jnaneshvar*, *Namdeo*, *Tukaram* or *Emanate*.

We have also specimen of the Konkani spoken in Kerala around 17th century from the testimonial given by three *Sarasvat Ayurvedic vaidyas* to the author of *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, published in Amsterdam in 1678. When John Leyden and English traveler visited Kerala he informs having seen many books in Konkani, which were brought from Goa but not even one of such books, were preserved by the subsequent generations of *Sarasvats* settled in Kerala.

Long period of time passed, when Goa under Portuguese went in extended spell of slumber and *Sarasvats*, losing contacts except the contacts with their *Kuladevatas*, felt forlorn under cultural influences of adjacent regions. The society came to be divided as *Goenkars*, *Karavaris*, *Mangloreans*, *Kochikars*, *Pednekars*, *Kudalkars*, *Bardeskars* and *Mumbaikar Shenvis*, which was a great blow to Konkani language and unity among the *Dakshinatya Sarasvats*, divided between religious *Mathas* and religious practices.

However, a small ray of hope was shining among the Christians of Goa and Mangalore who kept the Konkani language alive. Hindus woke up to their traditions when a clarion call was sounded in Karwar and Mumbai. Varde Vaman Valavalikar, popularly known as *Shenai Goembab* sowed the seeds for resurgence of Konkani with intense and uncompromising dedication and Madhav Manjunath Shanbhag from Karwar gave to that effort the needed emotional moisture and missionary warmth. Konkani language rose like a sphinx from the ashes, in spite of numerous quislings within the *Sarasvat* fold. *Konkani Bhasha Mandals* were formed in every place, Annual Literary Conferences were held, and Performing arts both in dramatic and musical forms came to be encouraged. Folk songs and dances, long forgotten, were revived even as the wisdom of common idioms and

proverbs were collected, Christians who had preserved some literature and Hindus who were becoming alive for using Konkani for their creative outlet fashioned a kaleidoscopic picture of resurgent Konkani in India as well in many foreign countries where they had spread over. If there was still something lacking for bringing together different regional and religious segments of the Konkani speaking with one script, which alone will bring the Konkani together making their language understand in spite of the regional variations, so that a time would sooner come than later when the language will have a standardized form.

Yet what is lacking among Konkani is the lack of interest in traditional values, whether they are *Sarasvats*, to whom the present book is essentially addressed or to any other communities. The shift of *Sarasvat* from their traditional intellectual functions, as interpreted in the modern context, understood and practiced in the spirit of accommodation of their essence with the changing periods, places and forms required to give meaning to their creativity. Lack of interest to such an extent in one's traditional values, language and culture leads to inevitable consequence of shifting the attention of the people from value based life to cost-oriented enterprises. How much the cost of a thing should be than how much should its *value* be in one's life becomes criterion in human evolution. Pride in having things in life rather than pride in being something in life overwhelms one's will, determination and enterprise. The integrity, perseverance and performance shift from ethical, moral and spiritual goals to unethical, immoral and unproductive temporal goals. Sense of discrimination becomes submerged under an avalanche of wasted words. *Sarasvats* appear to have increasingly turned their face from the first two primary functions of *Adyayana* and *Adhyapana* (re-appraised in intrinsic sense), consequential activity of *Yajna* and *Yaajana* (re-appraised in modern context), *Dana* and *Pratigraha* as social commitment towards social and moral standards to preserve and maintain *Rta*, the cosmic order. *Sarasvats* are seen as being increasingly hitching their energies to trade and commerce, trading their trained intelligence and commercializing their qualifications and personal achievements, for greed and material satisfaction.

Since *Sarasvat* intelligence cannot remain concealed, they achieve incomparable success in spiritual, literary, cultural, social and economic fields, rarely recognized and appreciated for their contribution in administration, education, legal, medical banking or engineering professions, even though these professions have been the traditional functions of *Brahmins* since time immemorial. No one can

dispute one being economically prosperous, even in ancient times men of wisdom like Vashishtha, Vishvamitra, Bhargavas, Bharadvajas Angiras, Gotamas were rich in wealth as they were in wisdom. They believed in and practiced Aqa-- material endowments and kma- - performance of actions firmly assigned according to one's Qama-, the perennial principles to attain मोक्ष - liberation from the travails of संसार. It is hoped that that better sense will prevail on members of our community and they will balance their activities accordingly. For it is said in *Bhagavad Gita*, 'श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्तानुष्णित्तात् | स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः . . स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् || सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् | सर्वारंभा हि दोषेण धुमेनाग्निरिवावृताः' – Better is one's *Dharma* though imperfectly pursued, than *Dharma* of others, howsoever, perfectly pursued. Better is death in (fulfillment of) one's *Dharma*, for to follow *Dharma* of others is fraught with danger . . In performing one's *Dharma* according to one's attributes, one does not incur demerits. One should not give up performing actions according to attributes because all enterprises are shrouded as fire is by smoke.

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**NAMES OF SOME THE BOOKS ON SAME SUBJECT.**

***Shenai Goembab***

Inaugural Address on Third All India Konkani Parishad.  
Goykarali Goybhayali Vasanut.  
Konkani Bhasheche Jait.  
Kahin Marathi Lekha.

***S. S. Talmaki.***

Saraswat Families

***R. B Gunjekar.***

Saraswati Mandal.

***Mathastha Ganesh Ramachandra Sharma.***

Saraswat Bhushana.  
Saraswat Ratnamala.

***V.N. Kudva.***

Dakshinatya Saraswats.

***Chandrakant Kini.***

Itihas.

***Purushaottam Mallya.***

Emigration of Sarasvat Families to Kerala.

***Nagesh D. Sonde.***

Konkani Bhashecho Itihas.  
Sarasvatalen Bhavitavya

**OTHER BOOKS WRITTEN BY NAGESH D. SONDE**

**In English Language**

1. Sri Madhva's Commentary on *Isha & Kena Upanishad*
2. Sri Madhva's Commentary on *Katha Upanishad*
3. Sri Madhva's Commentary on *Mandukya Upanishad*
4. Sri Madhva's Commentary & Summation on *Bhagavad Gita*
5. Narada's Aphorisms on *Bhakti*
6. A Study of Three *Vedic Suktas*
7. Commentary on Sri Ramana Maharshi's *Upadesh Saram*
8. Commentary on Sri Ramana Maharshi's *Sat Darshanam*
9. Philosophy of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi
10. Sri Shankara's Hymn on *Sri Dakshinamurti Stotra with Manasollasa*
11. Conservation and Preservation of Wealth. - Commentary of *Sri Sukta*.
12. Life and Teachings of *Sri Manika Prabhu*
13. Sri Madhva's Cpmmentaray on *Mundaka Upanishad* (In Manuscript)
14. *Pegs to Hang Thoughts on A study of the Teachings of Gautama Buddha and Ramana Maharshi* (In manuscript ).
15. *Ganesha Atharvasheersha* – with brief commentary (In manuscript)
16. Sri Shankara's *Sadhana Panchakam*. (In manuscript)

## In Konkani Language

- 1 विष्णु आनी वैष्णव संप्रदाय
- 2 राधा माधव प्रणय प्रणालि
- 3 श्री मध्वाचार्य जीवन आनी विचार
- 4 श्री गणपति अथर्वशीर्ष विवेचन
- 5 श्री सूक्त विवेचन
- 6 उपनिषदांचे अंतरंग
- 7 कथासंगम
- 8 कोंकणी भाशेचो इतिहास
- 9 श्री पुरंदर दास चरित्र
- 10 सारस्वतांलें भवितव्य
- 11 श्री विष्णु सहस्रनाम भाशांतर आनी विवेचन ह्यमुद्रणाक तयार आसाह
- 12 श्री विष्णु सहस्रनाम नित्य पाठ्याखातिर भाशांतर ह्यमुद्रणाक तयार आसाह

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## REVIEWS ON BOOKS WRITTEN BY NAGESH D. SONDE

### 1. Sri Madhva's Commentary on Isha & Kena Upanishad

Translated from Sanskrit with explanatory notes

***“Sri Sonde has, in a spirit of deepest piety and devotion, brought out this edition of Sri Madhva's Bhashyas on two of the Upanishads, Isha and Kena. Both the Upanishads have been regarded as key texts for all three schools of Vedanta, Sri Sonde would have gladly had a Guru in flesh and blood to guide him in his spiritual studies but not finding one at hand laid himself at the feet of the Lord Sri Krishna himself”.***

*Prof. S. Ramaswamy in Mountain Path, December, 1992.*

“I am delighted to receive a copy of book entitled “The Commentary of Sri Madhva on Isha and Kena Upanishad”. I congratulate on the commendable job in translating the work, which is scholarly. . .”.

*Dr. T. S. Devadoss, Director, The Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras.*

### 2. Sri Madhva's Commentary on Mandukya Upanishad

Translated from Sanskrit with explanatory notes

“Continuing his solid work in expounding the approach of Acharya Madhva to the Upanishads. Sri Sonde highlights in this work the special features of the Acharya's interpretation . . . The text of the Upanishad is followed by a commentary o the Acharya. ***Sri Sonde adds notes of clarification to his faithful tradition, making the book a notable addition to the literature on the Mandukya”.***

*Late Sri Madhva P. Pamdit, Sri Aurobindo Ashrama Aurobindo Ashrama, November 1991.*

“. . . ***The learned and spiritually awakened author Sri Sonde reveals a remarkable breadth of mind and mastery over English language. Every line vibrates with Mumukshatva or yearning for liberation . . .***”

*Swami Srikanthanandaji, Ramaakrishna Yoga Pitha, Mallur, Karnatak.*

“In the three volumes (Isha/Kena, Katha and Mandukya) under review Mr. Sonde gives us a readable elegant translation of the Upanishads. . . **Mr Sonde has brought out the acute intellectual arguments of the Acharya, pointing out the untenability of Shankara’s interpretation . . .** Sri Madhva strictly adheres to the principles of interpretations . . . Sri Madhva’s style is brief and difficult to understand without commentaries . . . ”

*Late Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, Rtd Tagore & Vivekanand Professor, Madras University.*

“Nagesh D. Sonde, an ardent scholar of Madhva tradition, has translated the (*Mandukya*) Upanishad and Madhva’s *Bhashya* in English and also added his own gloss on the *bhashya* to explain certain intricate points. The book contains an elaborate introduction which would acquaint a lay reader with the main concepts of *Mandukya* Upanishad. The editor’s grounding in Madhva Philosophy renders the translation of the original commentary authentic.”

*Shri N. B Patil in Vol 73, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay 1998.*

### **3. Sri Madhva’s Commentary on Katha Upanishad**

Translated from Sanskrit with explanatory notes.

“This is the second publication of Sri Sonde containing the Commentary of Sri Madhva on Kathopanishad . . . **His introduction in 22 pages is lucid explanation on the importance of the contents of the Upanishad . . . The reviewer and the scholarly world keenly await further publications for the remaining eight Upanishads**”.

*Hindu News Magazine, 14th July 1992.*

### **4. Sri Madhva’s Commentary and Summation on Bhagavad Gita.**

Translated from Sanskrit with explanatory notes

“This book is a translation in English of Sri Madhva’s *Bhashya* of the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Tatparya Nirnaya*. This is supplemented by the explanatory notes of the author. . . **the book is a**

*most welcome addition to the wealth of commentaries on the Gīta, which is an inexhaustible subject and is bound to be immense value to those who aspire to serious study of Vedānta”.*

*Hindu News Magazine, 27th August 1996.*

“It took me nearly two years for me to complete this book and I have just finished it. It is wonderful book and you have made the entire *Gīta Bhashya* so lucid and understanding with verses, commentary, summation and explanation. As I was studying it, I could feel a strange feeling, a sensation of satisfaction going through my subconscious mind. I think that this book should be read again and again. Please accept my hearty congratulations and felicitations on making the *Gīta Tatparya* of Sri Madhva so easy to understand . . . I wish Sri Hari and Sri Vyasa will give you more and more strength to write such books of Sri Madhvacharya to serve poor people like me who have no knowledge of Sanskrit,

*Dr. P. Raghavendra Rao, Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Letter dated 30th April 1998.*

“ (Mr. Sonde) appears to be quite conversant with the Philosophy of Madhvacharya in particular and Indian Philosophy in general. He also seems to be quite good in his knowledge of Sanskrit and also English. His foreword and Epilogue to the book under review are well written, almost in an impassioned prose. His epilogue especially shows his mystic leanings. There is no doubt that the Author has immense regard for Sri Madhva and mad made a very sincere and serious attempt at translating the text of the *Gīta*, the *Bhashya* and *Tatparya*.. . . “

***(This Reviewer has, however, been critical of the manner in which the Bhashya & Tatparya have been dealt by the Author ) :***

“ . . . The author has not brought out the spirit of the *Bhashya* and *Tatparya*, in the translation of the verses. The verses donot reflect the *Bhashya & Tatparya*. The Author himself admits . . . ‘. . . we have used the generally accepted words in the text leaving it to the *acharya* to offer his views”.

“ . . . There is a confession by the author of this work that he has not faithfully translated the verses on the Madhva lines and has

been more than unjust to the *achatya*. In a sense, the readers who read this book thinking that its verses give Madhvacharya's meaning of the verses, are taken for a ride by the author. . . The author has bungled and made a mess of Madhva's thought. . .”

“. . . About the terminology. They are inexact, fanciful and far from correct. . . .”

“I can only say that the author is far from being successful and yet I am fully aware of the efforts which he has taken to accomplish this difficult task. The book, therefore, needs to be thoroughly revised. There are too many printing mistakes and grammatical mistakes. The author does not seem to have gone through the script before printing and before the final print order. Pages 12 and 21 are totally blank . . .”

“I admire the sincerity of the author. His mystic leanings are clear. He is sensitive person and his *Shraddha* is unquestionable. It is possible (but I am not sure) he is trying to express his vision, through the language of *Dvaita* Philosophy. Then, for that he has to stick to *Dvaita* Vedanta terminology faithfully. Otherwise his translations of the verses do not go well with the spirit of *Bhashya* and *tatparya Nirnaya* of Sri Madhva. Again the translation of the *Bhashya* and *Tatparya Nirnaya* should be more faithful to the original . Terminological exactitude is most important and will do full justice to the great philosopher, or whom the author has very high regard.”

*Dr. S. G. Mudgal, in Vol 73, the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay 1998.*

##### 5. *Narada's Aphorisms on Bhakti* :

“What is special about this publication is that each rendering from Sanskrit Original is followed by exclusive supporting passages from the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and Bhagavat etc. ***Explanations of nama, japa, sound in Vedic sense and other relevant topics are satisfying*** . . . The translations are precise and the notes most helpful. A welcome addition to the extant literature on *Bhakti*”.

*Late Sri Madhav P. Pamdit, Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, In Mountain Path, December 1990.*

**“Mr. Sonde uses the word “Communion” instead of devotion for the Sanskrit word Bhakti. Sage Narada is considered as a Parama Bhagavata and hence his aphorisms - sutras - on Bhakti are translated**

and annotated in English for the consumption of all . . . *The author has provided the original sutra in Sanskrit followed by a translation of the same.* After that he provides elaborate discussion on that citing various references from different texts . . .”

*Hindu News Magazine, Madras , 15th October, 1991.*

**6. A Study on Three Vedic Suktas**  
**(Nasadiya, Hiranyagarbha Purusha)** 1with explanatory notes

*“It (the book) deserves repeated reading and cogitation. . . translation varies from the traditionally accepted interpretation and I find it revelatory of your insight and reveals the intuitive vision of a rishi to a great extent. Your general way of approach also befits the modern mind. Your interpretation of Purusha Sukta is appreciable”.*

*Swamy Muni Narayana Prasad - Sri Narayan Gurukula, Varkala, Kerala.*

*“Sri Sonde has characteristic style, original insight. I especially note the interpretation of the word Tamas as not darkness but absence of apprehension”.*

*Swami Srikanthanandaji, Sri Ramakrishna Yogashra, Petha, Mallur*

*“The book is thought provoking and needs a careful study for understanding the Vedic Suktas. It presupposes a study of the Upanishads.”.*

*Dr. D. Rama Rao, in Tapovana Prasad, Novemebr, 1994, Chinmayananda Ashrama.*

*“The greatness of Indian Culture lies in its flexibility to change and elasticity of the Vedic tradition. Thus all the religious beliefs of both orthodox and heterodox schools can be understood only when read against the Vedic tradition. Continuing the tradition the seers and saints reverberate the same thought in a language known to their listeners. Thus the study of the Vedic texts and the gospels of the saints correspond so much as to reveal the uninterrupted tradition. The pamphlet of Nagesh D. Sonde confirm the message. . . Thus the*

books are of immense use to obtain a bird's eye-view of India religion”.

*M. Srimannarayan Murti in Sri Venkateshwara University Oriental Journal, January-December, 1992.*

**7. Sri Ramana Maharsh's Upadesh Saram** Translation with Notes

*“The Greatness of Indian Culture lies in its flexibility to change and elasticity to Vedic tradition Continuing this tradition the seers and saints reverberate the same thought in a language known to their listeners. Sri Sonde's pamphlet confirms this message and is of immense use to obtain bird's eye view of Indian religion.*

*M. Srimannaraya Sri Venkateshwar University Oriental Journal Jan - Dec 1992.*

*“The well known verses of the sage (Sri Ramana Maharshi) have been edited here in Roman script and translated with explanations by Nagesh D. Sonde The explanation which is extensive puts the verses in proper context . and brings out adequately the truths and mystical suggestions implied in the cryptic verses and as such the present publication is most welcome addition to the wealth of literature available on Life and Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi.”*

*K. V. Sarma, Adyar Library Bulletin 1996.*

**8. Sri Shankara's Hymn to Sri Dakshinamurti,**  
*with Sri Sureshvara's Manasollasa* with explanatory notes.

*“The present author (Sri Sonde) has translated the Vartika and the slokas in English language and offered additional explanatory notes by way of clarification to the modern reader. The wisdom of the Vedas and Upanishads have been brought out clearly by the present author. There are relevant quotations from almost all Upanishads in the text . . . **The Commentary of Sri Sureshvara and the additional lucid explanations given by the Author provide a healthy trend of inquiry and rational approach to every aspect of the prevailing religious beliefs. . .**”*

*Dr. D. Sri Rama Rao, Tapovan Prasad, March 1995, Chinamayanand Ashrama.*

***“Nagesh D. Sonde deserves to be congratulated for translating the Vartika and shloks in an excellent manner. Explanatory notes to the Hymns are rich and profound in content. The moderately priced book ought to be read by all those who nurture misgivings about Advaita Vedanta”.***

*Dr. Satish K.Kapoor, Prabuddha Bharat, November, 1994.*

### **Other Books**

1. Philosophy of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.
2. Conservation and Preservation of Wealth – A study in Sri Sukta.

## ***Nagesh D. Sonde***

Mr. Sonde belonging to the well-known Sonde family in Sirsi, North Kanara, Karnataka, has been interested from early school days in development of Konkani language. He was the Jt. Secretary of the Fourth Session of *All India Konkani Sahitya Parishad*, held in Bombay. He was President of *Konkani Bhasha Mandal* and *Konkani Sahitya Samiti*, both of Mumbai. He presided over the 15th Session of *All India Sahitya Parishad* held in Bangalore 1984. He has written 12 books in Konkani. His book *Sant Purandardas* received award from T.M.A. Pai Foundation, Manipal. He published *Kaundinya*, a quarterly magazine in Konkani for four years and arranged dramatic and musical performances in Konkani.

Since 1985, he has written 18 books in English on *Shankara*, *Madhva* and *Ramana Maharshi's* Teachings which received good reviews from discerning critics. His book on study of the *Teachings* of *Gautam Buddha* and *Ramana Maharshi* is under preparation. The present book on *Dakshinatya Sarasvats* is thought provoking book, intended for serious consideration by the members of the community.

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Dakshinatya

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