

Spiritual Studies in Yoga Philosophy



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Abstract

In the Nineteenth and twentieth century there were great Yogins and Saints like Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Ramanmaharshi, Aurobindo Yogin and others. But, there were also some less known great Yogins and scholars like Gulabrao Maharaj whose original contribution in the Yoga Philosophy is yet to be fully studied and appreciated. Sri Gulabrao Maharaj (GM) is undoubtedly a scholarly saint par excellence in whom do we find a rare combination of a scholar, a yogin, a devotee and an Advaitin in perfect harmony. In his **short life of 34 years**, he has written **about 134 works**. All this he achieved without eyes, **he was blind**.

Sri Gulabrao Maharaj

Sri Gulabrao Maharaj was born on 6th July 1881 A.D. in a village called Lonitakli in Amaravati district of Vidarbha, Maharashtra. His parents were Gonduji Mohod and Alokabai. He lost his sight when he was just nine months old. He had very sharp memory. He studied many major texts on subjects like Veda, Vedanga, Music, Ayurveda, Literature, theosophy, Western philosophy, electron theory etc. He had great liking for books, but due to poverty he had to beg others to read out the books for him and pay for the books he purchased.

He considered himself as child of Shiva and Parvati, as wife of Shri Krishna, as friend of Gopika and as disciple of Sant Jnanadev Maharaj. He regarded himself as Panchalatika, one of the Gopika, and performed the Katyayani vrata as described in the Bhagavatam.

It is said that he had visualized (remember, he was blind) the form of Jnanadev and described it to an artist who had then drawn it and it became the first ever available beautiful painting of Sant Jnanadev.

At the age of 34, Gulabrao Maharaj left this world on 20th September, 1915 A.D., leaving for the world about 134 analytical works in different languages like Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi, Bhojpuri etc. Thus in all there are 20 yashti or collection of books of Maharaj comprising of 2500 abhang (Marathi verses), 1250 Gita, 23,000 ovee (Marathi verses), 2500 pada and 1000 shloka.

GM had great respect for the ancient Shastra more particularly for Advaita and Yoga. All his great intellect was fully focused on synthesizing the theories of these shastra, paving way for new thoughts in philosophy.

GM- on Yoga

GM had written eight books on Yoga viz.

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Yogaprabhav | 2. Nididhyasana Prakash |
| 3. Dhyanyoga divakara | 4. Hiranyayoga |
| 5. Yoganga yamalakashana | 6. Sopanasiddhi |
| 7. Yogaprabhav in prose and | 8. Kundalini Jagadamba |

Apart from these, he had discussed many interesting topics of yoga in his letters also. Let us now see some of his views regarding matters related to Yoga so that there can be a clear understanding of his magnanimity as a thinker.

Patanjali and his Rajayoga

GM considers Patanjali as an incarnation of Adishesha and explains that Patanjali had achieved excellence in five fields viz. in Ayurveda as Charaka, in Vyakarana as Mahabhashyakara, in service as Lakshmana, in polity as Balarama and in Yoga as Patanjali.

In the Yogasutra of Patanjali, the Samadhi, the fruit of Yoga is explained first and sadhana or the means, next. But, generally the means are explained first and the result next. GM explains this in his text Yogaprabhava, that the Yoga practitioners who have achieved detachment should study the Samadhipada because the state of Samadhi is easily attainable to them. But, those who have an unstable mind should study the Sadhanapada onwards and practice strictly all the yama and niyama.

The Vyasabhashya on the Yogasutra states that this science is for the qualified ones only.³ GM explains that this science is for everybody and therefore everyone should try to practice it continuously at his level. In his opinion, a person who has no fear of death and of this transmigratory life, alone is true Adhikarin in Yoga. In order to enjoy the full benefit of Yoga, the aspirant should develop some good qualities in him. They are:

- i) Having deep interest in Yoga,

- ii) Having full faith in the teacher and making a synthesis of the experience expounded in the Yoga texts, explained by his teacher and experienced by him.
- iii) Keeping away from the worldly attractions,
- iv) Getting over the psychological level,
- v) Living a moderate Life (as per Gita) and
- vi) Turning towards the reality after knowing fully all the blemishes of worldly affairs.

While explaining the result of auxiliaries of Yoga, GM says that each of the eight auxiliaries aims at bringing about a certain result in the Yoga practitioner.

- a) Constant practice of Yama and niyama controls the senses,
- b) Constant hearing of Vedanta sentences in the Niyama helps in controlling the negative tendencies within.
- c) Regular practice of asana makes the body steady,
- d) Careful practice of pranayama ends the mudha (मूढ) state of mind
- e) Practice the pratyahara ends the Kshpita state of mind,
- f) Practice of dharana and dhya ends the Vikshpita state of mind,
- g) Samprajnata samadhi makes mind one-pointed (ekagra) and
- h) Asamprajnata samadhi makes mind fully controlled (niruddha).

The Yogabhashya enumerated the various states of mind and the commentators like Vachaspati and others explained these states on the base of the guna theory, but the credit of connecting the Ashtanga yoga with the states of mind and explaining the efficacy of ashtanga in mind control in yoga practice should go to GM.

Dhyanayoga : An independent type of Yoga "Vaa" ('वा')

Considering the use of the indeclinable va (or) in the Yogasutra (1-39), GM explains that dhya (meditation) is an independent yoga not to be combined with other means of samadhi. This dhya is of two types viz.

1. Avastubhavana (not contemplating on any object) and (अवस्तुभावना)
2. Tadakara-karana. (becoming one with the object of meditation). (तदाकारा-कारना)

The Hiranyayoga (Dream Analysis in Yoga)

One of the important contributions of GM in Yoga is the exposition of Hiranyayoga. In his opinion, dreams too can corroborate to Yoga. His exposition was planned in the beginning in seven chapters called Hiranyamudrika. But, to the disappointment of all yoga aspirants, only four such chapters are available with his commentary now.

GM regards dream as one of the types of Yoga. He explains that dream is due to the Madhya samvega (moderate inclination of mind) and it can lead to the experience of yoga which is substantiated by the Yogasutra. He classifies dreams into three categories as –

Type of Dream	Meaning
Apartha	The dreams which do not become true and are caused by sattva guna influenced or dominated by impurities.
Yathartha	The dreams which become true and are caused by sattva guna.
Anyartha or Suchaka (Mithya suchaka)	Dreams that are indicative.

GM explains that the dreams which do not become true are apartha or illusion. He further explains that the world is an apartha dream in that sense.

At the end of the discussion on this topic, GM explains that the dreams in childhood are outcome of previous birth, those in old age are indicative of next birth and those in between, belong to this life.

But he restrains himself from further elaboration of the esoteric matter and states that by the order of experienced teachers of that science he is not supposed to proceed on that topic.

Interpretation of Samvega

The Yogasutra of Patanjali (1-21) records the importance of samvega in the process of realizing the state of Samadhi. Among the ancient commentators of the Yogasutra, Vachaspatimishra, Ramananda and Sadasivendrasaraswati explain this as 'detachment'.

But not accepting this, Vijananbhikshu states that such interpretation is wrong as it goes against the bhashya which mentions nine types of Yogin on the basis of this samvega only, hence it should be understood as quick practice of the means of Yoga.

Bhojaraja explains it as a kind of deep impression on the mind. Anatadeva follows him.

Narayanatirtha, a commentator of the 18th Century, has absolutely no problem with any meaning of the word samvega. He finds all the meanings possible in the present context.¹⁴

Yoga Commentator	Meaning of Samvega
Vachaspatimishra, Ramananda and Sadasivendrasaraswati	Detachment

Vijananbhikshu	Quick practice of means of Yoga
Narayanatirtha	All the meanings possible
Gulabrao Maharaj	Firm determination of mind

Grades of Samvega

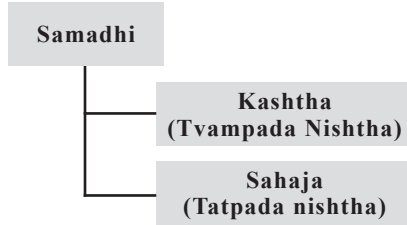
Compared with the available commentaries on Yogasutra or Yogabhasya, especially in the context of the word samvega, it is quite evident that GM has novel explanation of the grades of samvega.¹⁵ According to him:

1. the people with low samvega should practice dhyana and deliberately try to imagine the form of favorite deity,
2. those with moderate samvega will see the form in dreams and
3. those with intense samvega do always realize the Lord in their heart.

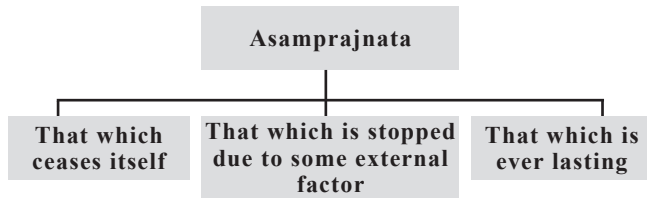
He explains samvega as firm determination of mind.¹⁶ It may be noted that both detachment and firm determination go together. Without the one, the other is not possible to get. That is the reason why the ancient commentators explained the word in the sense of detachment.

4. The exposition of samadhi

Yoga can lead to liberation but detachment is compulsory for it, he says. Samadhi basically means the union of the subject and object of contemplation. It is of two types viz. 1. Rooted on the soul and 2. Rooted on the Lord.¹⁷



Both the varieties of Samadhi propounded by Patanjali in Yogasutra as Samprajnata and asamprajnata belong to the first category only. If intense love to Lord is attached, then alone the asamprajnata can become sahaja. This Asamprajnata is again of three types.¹⁸



This kind of subtle analysis of very important concepts of Yoga is a special feature of the yoga works of GM.

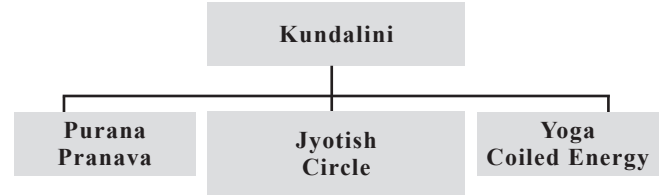
5. Isvarapranidhana

The Yogasutra mentions Isvarapranidhana in the samadhi pada (1-24) and in sadhana pada (2-1). Though there is not much difference in the wording of the sutra, the indeclinable "va" ("वा") present in the sutra in samadhipada raises a question whether bhakti is optional and secondary. GM explains that the particle doesn't mean 'option' here. It means 'certainly' in the present context.¹⁹ The pranidhana mentioned in the samadhipada brings about asamprajnata samadhi and the same in sadhanapada brings about samprajnata samadhi.²⁰

6. Kundalini and Chakra

The Hathayoga texts give lot of importance to the chakra and Kundalini. GM's exposition of these is unique and thought provoking.

GM made a perfect synthesis of the views of Purana, Jyotisha and Yogashastra regarding Kundalini.²¹ He says that the word Kundala meaning 'a circle' refers to the Omkara or pranava. He explains further that the shape of a nadi is kundalini. Now, coming to the Jyotish system, GM explains that the jyotish shastra does not accept the view of purana that the earth is positioned on the thousand hoods of Adishesha.



But, reconciling the Yoga theory with the Purana view, GM explains that the individual energy is Kundalini and the collective energy is the Adishesha. He provides another novel explanation that the energy in individual body is Kundalini and the same at cosmic level is Adishesha.²² Thus, he has undoubtedly paved a new path in interpreting the sacred texts in a synthetic manner.

He says that the chakras are psychological and not plexus as some people explain and they are created by intense imagination. Once created, they begin functioning at physical level too.

The saint of synthesis

GM has achieved great success in interpreting many ancient texts, systems, in explaining many age old beliefs and synthesizing many theories which otherwise appear contradictory. This kind of attempt in lucid terms with ample examples is definitely unique.

While making an evaluation of Samkhya, Yoga, Jnana and Bhakti, GM states that the realization propounded in the

samkhya system reaches one near detachment, the yoga makes the senses ineffective and the contemplation on the meaning of mahavakya brings about Brahman-realization.

Basically, the samkhya aims at the enquiry into the nature of 'self', the yoga at that of the 'Lord' and the Vedanta at both.²⁵ One can notice the obvious influence of Vedanta on GM, especially in the interpretation and synthesis of matters of Yoga.

He explains, if the mind is turned into the Brahman by way of contemplation, the process is yoga and if it is done by the way of enquiry, it is Vedanta.

One should understand the reality with the help of Samkhya, control the mind with the help of Yoga and realize it through the Vedanta, he explains.

Conclusion

The contribution of modern thinkers in understanding the Yoga philosophy in a synthetic manner is also unique helping the Yoga aspirants achieve a finer understanding of the system and progress in their practice. GM is one of such great thinkers whose original ideas throw light on many unexplored topics of Yoga Philosophy.





किशोर खैरनार

आध्यात्मिक क्षेत्रातील व्यासंगी अभ्यासक व
कृष्णमूर्ती एज्युकेशन ट्रस्टचे संचालक

जे. कृष्णमूर्ती आणि त्यांची शिकवण

फे ब्रुवारी १९८६ मध्ये जे. कृष्णमूर्तींच्या मृत्यूपूर्वी दहा दिवस, त्यांना एक प्रश्न विचारण्यात आला. 'कृष्णमूर्ती या व्यक्तीच्या मृत्यूनंतर त्यांच्यातून कार्यरत असलेल्या त्या विलक्षण प्रज्ञेचे, त्या ऊर्जेचे काय होईल?' कृष्णमूर्तींच्या रूपाने मानवतेचा त्या परमोच्च प्रज्ञेशी, त्या विलक्षण ऊर्जेशी संपर्क होता. परंतु जेव्हा कृष्णमूर्तींनीच देहरूपाने सविस्तर उत्तर 'जे कृष्णमूर्ती : जीवन आणि मृत्यू' या चरित्रग्रंथात दिलेले आहे. त्या उत्तराचा आशय असा आहे, की कृष्णमूर्ती हे देहरूपाने जरी नसले तरी त्यांच्या शिकवणुकीच्या रूपाने ते सदैव मानवतेला उपलब्ध असतील. जे कोणी आत्मीयतेने त्यांची शिकवण जगण्याचा प्रयत्न करतील ते कदाचित काहीसे त्या प्रज्ञेच्या संपर्कात असू शकतील. कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण अमूल्य आहे, कारण त्या परमोच्च प्रज्ञेशी संपर्काचा तो एकमेव मार्ग आहे.

कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण त्यांच्या अनेक पुस्तकांमधून वे ध्वनिचित्रफीतींमधून उपलब्ध आहे. 'द्रष्टा हाच दृश्य असतो' हे तिचे सूत्र आहे व मानसशास्त्रीय मुक्तता हे तिचे उद्दिष्ट आहे. कोणतीही शिकवण ही सूत्रात्मक असते, तिची आपल्या दैनंदिन जीवनाशी सांगड घातल्याशिवाय, ती आचरणात आणल्याशिवाय त्या सूत्राचा उलगाडा होत नाही. कोणत्याही गोष्टीचे आचरण व पडताळणी हे कष्टाचे काम असते आणि सामान्यपणे माणसाची कष्ट करण्याची तयारी नसते. याच कारणामुळे कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण बऱ्याच लोकांना अवघड व सर्वासाठी नाही असे वाटते.

तंत्रविज्ञानात (टेकनॉलॉजी) विलक्षण प्रगती करणारा मानव मानसशास्त्रीयदृष्ट्या मात्र अजूनही मागासलेलाच आहे. त्याची मानसिकता अजूनही भय, क्रोध, हिंसा, असुरक्षितता, दुःख, चिंता, महत्वाकांक्षा, आसक्ती इत्यादींनी ग्रस्त आहे. त्यामुळे मानवाचे अस्तित्व हे अत्यंत असंतुलित व धोकादायक बनले आहे. कृष्णमूर्ती त्याला मानवी चेतनेतील संकट असे संबोधतात. यातून बाहेर पडायचे असेल तर मानवाला त्याची मानसिकता बदलली पाहिजे. कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण ही मानवामध्ये आमूलाग्र मानसशास्त्रीय परिवर्तन कसे घडून येऊ शकेल यासंबंधी आहे. कोणत्याही गोष्टीत बदल घडवून आणण्यासाठी ती आधी समजावून घेणे आवश्यक असते व त्यासाठी त्या गोष्टीचे अवलोकन करावे लागते. मानवाला स्वतःत बदल घडवून आणायचा असेल तर त्याला स्वतःकडे बघावे लागेल व असे बघणे हे नातेसंबंधांच्या आरशातूनच शक्य आहे.

कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण ही अत्यंत परखड व वस्तुस्थितीशी एकनिष्ठ आहे. तेथे कोणत्याही अंधश्रद्धेला, आध्यात्मिक अधिकारशाहीला वाव नाही. स्वतःमध्ये मूलभूत परिवर्तन घडवून आणायचे असेल तर स्वतःलाच स्वतःचा प्रकाश व्हावे लागेल, दुसऱ्याच्या प्रकाशाचा तेथे काहीही उपयोग नाही. कोणताही गुरु, कोणतेही पुस्तक, कोणतेही तत्त्वज्ञान, कोणतीही पद्धत, कोणतीही प्रणाली या बाबतीत उपयुक्त ठरू शकत नाही. कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण ही माणसातील जिज्ञासा वाढवणारी व त्याच्यात विचार निर्माण करणारी असली तरी ती माणसातील रूढ विचारांना व परंपरागत समजुतींना धक्का देणारीपण आहे. ईश्वराने मानवाला निर्माण केले नसून, मानवानेच ईश्वराला आपल्या समजुतीनुसार बनवले आहे. सामाजिक नैतिकता ही अत्यंत अनैतिक आहे. जगाला वेगवेगळ्या देशात विभागणे हा एक टोळीवादच आहे, ज्ञान

हे मानवी मनाला प्रदूषित करते, माणसाने माणसाची हत्या करणे यासारखे दुसरे निघण कृत्य नाही व अशा सर्वाधिक हत्या धार्मिक कारणांवरून झाल्या आहेत. मनुष्य हा स्वतःला कितीही स्वतंत्र समजत असला तरी तो एक आज्ञाबद्ध (प्रोग्रॅम्ड) जीव आहे, अशी कितीतरी विधाने त्यांच्या शिकवणीत पहावयास मिळतात.

कृष्णमूर्तींनी मानवनिर्मित देवाचे अस्तित्व नाकारले, परंतु मानवी जीवनात अत्यंत पवित्र, विचाराने अस्पृशित, कशानेही कलुषित न झालेले असे काही आहे का, असा प्रश्नही उपस्थित केला, आणि त्या परम पावित्र्याचा शोध घेण्यासाठी मनही पवित्र असले पाहिजे, असे म्हटले. जगातील वर्तमान धर्म हे धर्मच नव्हेत. कारण ते रूढी, परंपरा, अंधविश्वास, अधिकारशाही (ऑथॉरिटी), ग्रंथ, कर्मकांड, इत्यादींवर आधारित आहेत. धर्म म्हणजे जीवनासंबंधीचे सत्य उलगडण्यासाठी स्वतःमधील सर्व ऊर्जा एकवटणे असा धर्माचा नवा अर्थ त्यांनी दिला.

कृष्णमूर्तींचे शिक्षणविषयक विचारही तितकेच मौलिक व क्रांतिकारक आहेत. शिक्षण हे जीवनाभिमुख असले पाहिजे. त्यातून एक स्वकेंद्रीत मानव निर्माण न होता एक जागतिक मन निर्माण झाले पाहिजे, असे मन, की जे समग्रतेने व सर्वांपांगी विचार करू शकेल. सध्याचे शिक्षण हे विद्यार्थ्यांना सर्व प्रकारच्या बंधनातून मुक्त होण्यास मदत करण्याऐवजी त्यांना अधिकाधिक संस्कारबद्ध व स्वकेंद्रीत करत आहे. शिक्षणात भयाचा वापर हा एक प्रकारचा आतंकवाद आहे. बक्षीस व शिक्षा ही प्राण्यांना शिकवण्याची पद्धत झाली, माणसांना नव्हे, मानसशास्त्रीयदृष्ट्या शिक्षक हा विद्यार्थ्यांइतकाच अज्ञानी व अशिक्षित आहे. शिकणे व शिकवणे या दोन वेगवेगळ्या प्रक्रिया नसून विद्यार्थी व शिक्षक अशा दोघांनी मिळून एकत्रितपणे शिकणे ही एकच प्रक्रिया आहे. म्हणून विद्यार्थी हा शिक्षक व शिक्षक हा विद्यार्थी आहे. परीक्षेतील गुण हे विद्यार्थ्यांची गुणवत्ता ठरवू शकत नाहीत. एका विद्यार्थ्यांची दुसऱ्याबरोबर तुलना करणे म्हणजे दोन्ही विद्यार्थ्यांना इजा पोहोचवणे होय, शिक्षणाविषयी अशी कितीतरी आगळीवेगळी विधाने कृष्णमूर्तींच्या शिकवणुकीत पहावयास

मिळतात. कृष्णमूर्तींची शिकवण ही वस्तुनिष्ठ व विज्ञानाधिष्ठित असली तरी प्रेम हा तिचा गाभा आहे. माणसाने विज्ञानात कितीही प्रगती केली, तो अगदी चंद्रावर मंगळावर अथवा कोणत्याही ग्रहावर पोहोचला तरी त्याच्या जीवनात जर प्रेम नसेल तर त्याचे हे सर्व यश व्यर्थ होय असे ते म्हणतात. प्रेम ही एकमेव अशी गोष्ट आहे, की जी असेल तर सर्व काही आहे व जी नसेल तर काहीही नाही. मानवी जीवनात प्रेम नाही किंबहुना ते कधीही नव्हते, म्हणूनच त्याचे जीवन समस्यारग्रस्त झाले. प्रेमाविषयी बोलताना ते आपल्या प्रेमाविषयीच्या सर्व संकल्पना, सर्व अनुभव नाकारतात. प्रेम म्हणजे । आसक्ती नव्हे, भावना नव्हे, वासना नव्हे, विचार नव्हे, स्मृती नव्हे, ईर्ष्या वा मत्सर नव्हे. लैंगिक संबंधही नव्हे. जेथे दुःख असते तेथे प्रेम नसते. प्रेम हे स्थलकालनिरपेक्ष असते. ते आंधळे नसते तर प्रज्ञायुक्त असते. प्रेम ही अशी गुणवत्ता आहे, की जी मानवी जीवनाला सर्व बंधनातून मुक्त करून ते सर्जनशील बनवते, त्याला एक नवा आयाम देते.