

# Enlightened Yogis

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John Noyce



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# *Enlightened Yogis*

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## *Introduction*

Many enlightened yogis are invisible to history and only known through brief mentions in the songs of the householder sants and of the Sufis who interacted with them.

But these yogis played a key role in transmitting Kundalini awakening down through the centuries, and that is why we should remember them today when mass Kundalini awakening has become possible through the work of the Maratha saint, H.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi and the Sahaja Yoga movement.

Here I have assembled what is known in English about these great yogis, together with comments about them by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi.

This book is a companion to *Enlightened Sufis* (2012) and continues my biographical researches in the history of Spirituality begun in *Saints, Sufis and Yogis* (2009).

John Noyce  
Melbourne, Australia,  
August 2013.

## *Regional Index*

### *Bengal/ eastern India*

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### *Kashmir*

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### *Maharashtra*

Changadeva

Eknath

Gahininath

Gorakhnath

Jani

Jnaneshwari

Muktabai

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Nivriddhi

Samarth Ramdas

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Sopandev

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*Rajasthan*  
Mirabai

*Sind*  
Vishivanath

*Tamil*  
Avaiyar  
Raghavendra Swami  
Thirumoolar

*Telugu*  
Veera Brahmendra Swami  
Vemana



## Avaiyar

(Auvaiyar)

14th century

The term Avaiyar (Auvaiyar) refers to an elderly lady with motherly qualities. There were at least three female poets in the Tamil tradition to assume this name. The Avaiyar who composed the *Vinayaka Agaval* was a Tamil Saivite who was an ardent devotee of Shri Ganesha, and is different from the earlier poetesses of this name.

The *Vinayaka Agaval* is widely recited in shrines and temples dedicated to Shri Ganesha in south India. The text is replete with the yogic imagery of the Tamil Siddhis, describing the ascent of the Kundalini through the nadis and the chakras to the crown of the head, the Sahasrara chakra.

The snake hangs on the pillar that is the junction  
of the three realms.

He [*Ganesha*] helped me realize it's tongue.

In the *Kundalini* one joins the silence...

It breaks open...

and the mantra that rises up  
comes out because of his teaching.

The rising flame, breaking out of Muladhara,  
is caused to rise by the wind.

Born of the single thought which he has taught.

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## **Babaji**

A name taken by many holy men and yogis in India through the centuries.

## **Babaji Chaitanya**

16th/17th century

The guru/yogi who gave realisation to the Maratha saint, Tukaram (1598-1649), possibly in a dream, as recorded in this song:

My great good Guru gave me a blessing  
But I was not able to serve him at all  
I was on my way to the river for a dip  
Suddenly he found me and placed his hand on my head  
He asked for half-a-pound of clarified butter for food  
But in that dreamlike state I forgot all about it  
Perhaps he sensed that I was going astray  
Therefore he came in such a hurry to initiate me  
He gave me a clue to my spiritual lineage  
By naming Raghav Chaitanya and Keshav Chaitanya  
He said his own name was Babaji  
And gave me the mantra: "Rama Krishna Hari."  
It was the tenth day of the bright fortnight of Magha  
And a Thursday, the day of the Guru, when he embraced me,  
says Tuka.

In another song, Tukaram described the moment of realisation:

Placing his hand over my four-fold body  
He revealed to me the mind-blown state of being  
He stamped upon me that mind-blown state of being  
It gathered into an absolute blue luminosity  
Red, white, yellow, blue, and black  
Colours rippled out in various ways  
The self shed all colours to enter the realm  
Of its own pure and luminous transparence  
No image can convey that luminosity  
Its absolute formless stillness  
Where to arrive from? Where to depart for?  
One must only remain in such pure continuity  
Continuity means being without break  
It is more absolute than all that can be  
To describe it is to break its pure integrity  
How can one describe in words the absoluteness of being?  
Says Tuka, whereof all language must remain silent,  
Thereof what can one say? Babaji revealed it to me.

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## **Bhusuka**

8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> centuries CE

A Sahajiya Buddhist who probably lived in eastern India.

The great tree of Sahaja is shining in the three worlds;  
Everything being of the nature of void, what will bind what?  
As water mixing with water makes no difference, so also, the  
jewel of the mind enters the sky in unity of emotion

The clouds of compassion are shining always  
after pressing down the duality of existence and non-  
existence.

The wonderful has risen up in the sky,

Behold, Bhusuka, the Sahaja-nature!

On seeing and hearing it all, all the senses are destroyed and  
the mind revels in solitude.

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## Changadeva

d.1305

A Maratha yogi who achieved some spiritual powers through the practice of hatha yoga and tantra, but renounced that once he gained his spiritual realisation through Jnaneshwara and Muktabai, the latter becoming his guru.

Jnaneshwara drank to his fill the water of pearls,  
Nivritti-natha caught in his hands the shade of the clouds,  
Sopana decorated himself with the garland of fragrance,  
Muktabai fed herself on cooked diamonds,  
The secret of all four has come to my hands, says  
Changadeva.

Jnaneshwara composed a letter to him known as the *Changadeva Pasashti*. Changadeva's own work, *Tattvasara*, has not been translated into English. A few *abhangas* (songs) have survived. Like Muktabai, Changadeva uses the simile of the ant for the Kundalini:

The sky has been enveloped by an ant,  
And there a great wonder took place.  
It was one gnat which enveloped the whole Universe.

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## **Eknath**

1533-1599

Eknath is the link in the Maharashtrian religious tradition between Jnaneshwara and Namdev in the thirteenth century and Ramdas and Tukaram in the seventeenth century. He was aware of the work of the earlier saints, writing songs in praise of Jnaneshwara, Nivruttinath, Sopandev and Muktabai; and composing biographies of Namdev, Gora, Savatamali and Chokhamela. Even more so, he gathered the various versions of the *Jnaneshwari* extant in the sixteenth century and edited what he felt to be the authentic version, which has, for the most part, been followed by later scholars. In so doing he restored Jnaneshwara's description of the Kundalini to the *Jnaneshwari* after it had been removed by the priest (brahmin)-scholars.

Eknath's other major work is his translation and commentary in Marathi of the eleventh skanda (or part) of the Sanskrit *Bhagavata Purana*, popularly known as the *Ekanathi Bhagavata*. Whilst the full work (of eighteen thousand verses) has not been translated into English, the twenty-third chapter has been translated by the American Christian missionary, Justin Abbott as *Bhikshugita: The Mendicant's Song*.

Eknath also composed a commentary on the ninth chapter of the second skanda of the *Bhagavata Purana*, known as the *Chatusloki Bhagavata*. His *Rukmini-svayamvara* is a poem on the marriage of Rukmini to



Lord Krishna based on the narrative in the tenth skanda of the *Bhagavata Purana*. His unfinished *Bhavartha-Ramayana* is a Marathi version of the *Valmiki Ramayana*.

The bharuds are dramatic poems similar to folk-songs but with a double meaning, one secular and the other spiritual. Eknath, a brahmin, used this dramatic form to present the views of the untouchable Mahars and others lowly placed, often in a humorous way, to get his message across. This is Eknath as a married woman addressing the Goddess, Bhawani:

Save me now, Mother -  
I'll offer you bread, Bhawani.  
Father-in-law is out of town -  
Let him die there.  
I'll offer you bread, Mother Bhawani.

Mother-in-law torments me -  
Kill her off.  
I'll offer you bread, Mother Bhawani.  
Sister-in-law nags and nags -  
Make her a widow.  
I'll offer you bread, Mother Bhawani.  
Her brat cries and cries -  
Give him the itch.  
I'll offer you bread, Mother Bhawani.  
I'll give my husband as a sacrifice!  
Free me, Mother!  
I'll offer you bread, Mother Bhawani.  
Eka-Janardan says,

Let them all die!  
Let me live alone!

The Johar is a type of bharud in which Eknath uses the form of the Mahar salutation to a village superior:

I sweep the four Vedas  
I collect the rubbish of the six Shastras,  
I gather together all the Puranas,  
I bring this to the street of the Saints.

Eknath also composed some philosophical works such as the *Hastamalaka*, the *Sukastaka*, the *Svatmasukha*, and the *Ananadalahari*. He is also said to have written some four thousand abhangas. His famous song *Jogawa* is an invocation to the Mother Kundalini to rise and grant self-realisation, best expressed in the chorus:

Jogawa Magen, Aicha Jogawa  
Ai Ude G'ambe Ude!  
Ude, Ude, Ude, Ude, Ude, Ude, Wo!

Mother, we ask for Self-realisation  
So you rise, O Mother Kundalini, You rise!  
Rise, rise, rise, rise, rise, rise, Ho!

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## **Gahininath**

13th century

Nath yogi and disciple of Gorakhnath.

Gahininath spent much of his life in the caves and shelters of the hills of western India, including several years at Brahmagiri, near Tryambakeshvar, in what is now Maharashtra, where there is a cave known as Gorakhhagimpha. Whilst staying there, Gahininath took as his disciple a young boy, Nivritti, who, according to legend, accidentally entered the cave. Nivritti achieved his realisation, and in turn became the guru to his brothers, Jnaneshwara, Sopandev, and sister, Muktabai. There are Maratha traditions that report a connection between the forefathers of Nivritti and Jnaneshwara and the Nath yogis, extending over four generations, which include a reference to Gahininath being the guru of Vitthal, the father of Nivritti and his brothers and sister.

Gahininath is regarded in Maharashtra as one of the nine Navnaths whose samadhis are visited by members of the Navnath Sampradaya. He is also known as Gaibi Peer (or Pir).

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## Gorakhnath

12th century

Nath yogi who may have spent some years in the hills of western India and have a connection to several generations of the forefathers of Jnaneshwara. The Nath sacred texts contained detailed knowledge of the chakras and nadis of the subtle system, as in the *Siddha-Siddhanta-Paddhati*, traditionally attributed to Gorakhnath. Many of their texts are presented in the form of an exchange between Gorakhnath and Matsyendranath, as in *Gorakhbodh*:

Gorakhnath: Had there been no night, where would the day have come from? Without the day, where would the night merge? ... Matsyendranath: Without night, the day would have merged into Sahaj; had there been no day, the night would have passed into (Sahaj).

Several regional traditions claim Gorakh and the Nath yogis as originating in their area, notably Bengal in eastern India; the Deccan in southern/western India; Nepal in the Himalayan mountains; and the Punjab and adjoining areas in the northwest.

Having extensively reviewed a wide range of primary sources, Mallinson (in his 'Nath Sampradaya' and 'Hathayoga's philosophy') observes that the majority of the early textual and epigraphic references to Matsyendranath and Gorakh are from the Deccan and related areas in southern India, with the others being from Bengal in eastern India, and Nepal. The earliest textual

references to Gorakh are from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and from the Deccan or south India. These include the Marathi *Jnaneshwari* (c.1290), the Kannada *Ragales* (poems) of Harihara (c.1200-1220), the *Matsyendrasaṃhitā* of Matsyendranath, and the Marathi *Lilacaritra*.

Mallinson (in 'Nath Sampradaya') observes that travellers' reports of yogis contemporary with the earliest references to Gorakh are almost all from the Malabar Coast, namely the southern part of the western coast of the Indian peninsula (extending from Goa and the Konkan down through Kerala and Karnataka). Additionally, Mallison notes that the earliest iconographic representations of Nath-type yogis are those found at Panhalekaji in the Konkan region, which are dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and the 15<sup>th</sup> century examples from Srisailam on the Deccan plateau, and Vijayanagara in what is now Karnataka.

Mallison is therefore of the view that Matsyendra (aka Macchanda) lived in southern India, probably the Deccan, in the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, and that Goraksa (Gorakh in vernacular languages) also lived in the Deccan region in the 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. In forming this view Mallinson is in agreement with the Maratha historian R.C.Dhere who, using mostly Marathi-language primary sources, also locates Matsyendra and Gorakh in the Deccan area.

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## Indrabhuti

11<sup>th</sup> century?

There are several siddhis with this name so some care is needed. This Indrabhuti begins his commentary, the *Sahajasiddhi*, with a lineage list that indicates that he was the receptor of a teaching on Sahaja that began with a princess and her five hundred 'ladies in waiting' receiving awakening into the nature of *sahaja* from a rishi in the forest monastery of Ratnalankara.

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**Jabir**  
**(Jabir ibn Haiyan) (Geber)(Dza-bir)**

721-815



*15<sup>th</sup> century European portrait of 'Geber'*

A Persian Islamic alchemist renowned for his experimental contributions to chemistry, whose books may have influenced medieval European alchemists who knew him as Geber, the Latinised form of Jabir. There are many books attributed to Jabir/Geber, however the authenticity of some has long been questioned.

According to Tibetan Buddhist tantric sources, Dza-bir (or Dza-ha-bir) was a yogi born in Nagarkot in western India, possibly the son of a king, who may have settled in eastern India and become known as a Sufi alchemist. As a yogi he is known as Manikanatha or Mahasiddha Jabir.

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## **Jani** **(Janabai)**

similar dates to Namdev (1270-1350)

Janabai was the maid-servant from childhood of Damset and his son Namdev, caring for the child Namdev and later the adult Namdev, being treated more like a daughter, gaining her spiritual realisation from him. As a woman saint she is regarded as being second only to Muktabai. There are about three hundred abhangas (songs) attributed to Jani which have remained popular in Maharashtra, most of which can be found in the *Namdev Gatha*, and some have been translated into English. One of Janabai's most popular verses depicts Lord Vitthal or Vithoba as a loving parent to his devotees:

My Vithoba has many children -  
a company of children surrounds him.  
He has Nivritti sitting on his shoulder,  
and holds Sopan by the hand.  
Jnaneshvara walks ahead, and beautiful Muktai behind.  
Gora the potter is in his lap, and with him are Chokha and  
Jiva.  
Banka sits on his back, and Namdev holds his finger.  
Jani says, look at this Gopal who loves his bhaktas.

Jani's most famous abhanga is the extraordinary text translated into English by the twentieth century Maratha poet, Arun Kolatkar, who conveys the essence of the original through the starkness of his imagery:

i eat God  
i drink God  
i sleep  
on God

i buy God  
i count God  
i deal  
with God

God is here  
God is there  
void is not devoid of God

Jani says:  
    God is within  
    God is without  
    and moreover  
    there is God to spare.

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## **Jnaneshwara** **(Jnandev) (Dnyaneshwara) (Gyaneshwara)**

c.1275-1296

The first, and some say the greatest, of the saints in the Maratha Varkari tradition was Jnaneshwara, also known as Jnanadeva. [the variant names are based on three Sanskrit words: *Jnana* meaning knowledge, *-ishvar* used in the sense of lord, and *deva*, god. The Marathi can also be transcribed in western (roman) script as *Dnyan*, thus Dynaneshwara; also *Gyan* in Hindi, thus Gyaneshvara, or Gyandeo. Additionally, the ending *-vara* can be transcribed as *-wara*, thus Jnaneshwara.]

Born in 1275 in his mother's village, Alandi, near Pune, this young saint achieved much in his short life taking his eternal samadhi in 1296. He received his Kundalini awakening from his brother Nivrutti, who had earlier received his awakening from a Nath yogi, Gahininath.

It is Jnaneshwara who provides a detailed description of the awakening of the Kundalini in the language of the ordinary people (Marathi) in the sixth chapter of the *Jnaneshwari*. After several centuries of handwritten manuscript copying, this sixth chapter had been removed from the text by the Brahmin pundits. Acting on a dream, Eknath revised the text to re-include the controversial sixth chapter and its description of Kundalini awakening.

Mallinson is of the view that the combination of yogic teachings (ascribed to Gorakh) and vedantic discourse to be found in the *Jnaneshwari* is similar to that found in two early texts associated with the Naths, the *Vivekamartanda* and the *Goraksasataka*. Both texts are ascribed to Gorakh and are likely to have originated from Maharashtra and date to the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

In the epilogue to the *Jnaneshwari*, known as the *Pasayadan*, Jnaneshwara desires mass-realisation for the entire world and the rebirth of the saints who will give their blessings (realisation) to the whole world.

Let universal friendship reign among all beings.  
Let the darkness of evil disappear.  
Let the sun of true religion rise in this world.  
Let all beings obtain what they desire.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has indicated that this is a description of the Sahaja yogis in modern times. (1994-1002, 1994-1009).

In his *Amritanubhava* (Experience of the Ambrosia), Jnaneshwara attempted to describe the beauty of the Sahaja state, that oneness with the Divine. The *Changadeva Pasashti*, Jnaneshwara's sixty-five verse letter to the great siddhi yogi, Changadeva, is often published with the *Amritanubhava*.

Jnaneshwara is best known to Maharashtrians through his abhangas. These are devotional lyrics in which the innermost feelings of the heart are expressed, particularly in relation of the soul to God. There are some 1100

abhangas credited to him, of which one tenth are translated by P.V.Bobde in his *Garland of Divine Flowers* (1987). There is also the *Haripath*, a sequence of some twenty-seven four-line verses of the abhanga type.

There are two texts attributed to Jnaneshwara on Nath yogic themes: the *Lakhota* ('Sealed Letter') and the *Yoghapar Abhangamala* (a collection of abhangas on yoga). There is also the *Anusthanapath* ('Litany of Observances'), a group of yoga-related songs in the *Jnandev Gath* that are probably by later writers in the Varkari tradition.

Shri Mataji has observed that "to understand Jnaneshwara, I would say, first you must have your self realization. Otherwise you can never understand him." (1996-1125)

Jnaneshwara had two brothers, Nivrattinath and Sopandev, and a sister, Muktabai.

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## **Kanha** **(Kanhapa, Kanipa)**

8th 10<sup>th</sup> centuries CE

Little is known of the original Sahajiya Buddhists, save that they lived in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries CE in Bengal in eastern India. Saraha, Kanha, Bhusuka, Lui, Tilo, and others, are known today only through their *dohas* and *caryas* (short songs), written in a now defunct northern Indian language known as Apabrahmsa, and in Old Bengali. Many of the themes used by the Sahajiya Buddhists can also be found in the songs and sayings of later north Indian saints such as Kabir and Dadu.

In some Nath traditions, this siddhi yogi is known as Kanipa Nath, and is said to have been a contemporary of Gorakhnath.

He who has made his mind steady in samarasa which is the Sahaja, becomes at once perfect, no more will he suffer from disease and death.

---

Say, how can Sahaja be explained?  
(For) neither body nor speech nor mind can enter into it.  
In vain does the Guru preach to the disciple, for, how can he explain that which transcends the capacity of all verbal means?

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## **Lalla** **(Lalleshwari) (Lal Ded)**

1320-1390

Kashmiri saint and yogi whose teachings are preserved in the *Lalla Vakh* (Wise sayings of Lalla), written in Old Kashmiri, which includes coded references to chakras and the ascending Kundalini:

I held firm the reigns of my horse, the mind,  
I controlled well the pranas coursing through the ten nadis,  
Then did the nectar of the mystic moon melt and flow,  
suffusing my whole being,  
The mind thus curved,  
My void merged with the void of pure consciousness.

Married at a young age, Lalla renounced that life to become an ascetic, a naked yogi under the guidance of Sidh Srikanth. She eventually gave up her secluded life and became a wandering preacher with thousands of followers, both Hindu and Muslim, who memorized her Vakh's (verses) which have become the basis of Kashmiri literature and folklore. According to P.N.Kaul Bamzai, more than 30% of Kashmiri idioms and proverbs are derived from her sayings.

Lalla awakened the Kundalini of the Kashmiri Sufi, Nund Rishi who observed in one of his popular verses:

That Lalla of Padmanpore who had drunk to her fill the nectar, she was an avatar of ours.  
O God, grant me the same spiritual powers.

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## Markandeya

Dates unknown.

Indian sage of ancient times whose conversations and prayers are contained in the *Markandeya Purana* and the *Bhagavat Purana* also known as the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. He is also mentioned in the *Mahabharata*.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has stated that Markandeya incarnated on a number of occasions:

He was the first who wrote about Adi Shakti. All these things that you read about [in] Shankaracharya and all that, he took it from Markandeya. He was the first who wrote about Kundalini, first about Realization, he was the first who did all that. ... So that's the great part of Markandeya. He took his birth later on as Buddha, then he took his birth as Adi Shankaracharya, it's the same personality. But he was actually the son of Rama, to begin with. He was Luv and he went to Russia and that is why they are called as Slavs. ... Another son was Kush, who went to China, that is why they are called as Kushan. Then they incarnated again and again, also as Hassan and Hussain, as Mahavira and Buddha, as Adi Shankaracharya and Jnaneshwara, like that. (1988-0609)

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## **Matsyendranath (Machindranath)**

10/11th century

A possibly legendary yogi regarded as the founder of the Nath yogis together with his disciple, Gorakhnath.

In the *Kaulajnananirnaya*, attributed to Matsyendranth, we find mention of the higher chakras, namely Sahasrara and beyond:

Dearest, (in the pinda exist) the (cakras) of five lines, 16 lines, sixty four petals, the truly beautiful 100 petal (lotus) and the beautiful thousand petal lotus [*Sahasrara*] and above this is a very brilliant 10,000,000 petal lotus. Above the 10,000,000 petal lotus is a 30,000,000 petal lotus, each pericarp of which is similar to a flame. Above this is the all encompassing, eternal, undivided, independent, steady lotus- pervading all, stainless. By its will (sveccha) it causes creation and dissolution. Both the animate and inanimate are dissolved in this linga. (3:5-10)

In the *Gorakhbodh* there is a dialogue between Gorakhnath and Matsyendranath on the Sahaja state:

Gorakhnath: Had there been no night, where would the day have come from? Without the day, where would the night merge? When the lamp is extinguished, where does light dwell?



Matsyendranath: Without night, the day would have merged into Sahaj; had there been no day, the night would have passed into (Sahaj). (29-30)

Several regional traditions claim the Nath yogis as originating in their area, notably Bengal in eastern India; the Deccan in southern/western India; Nepal in the Himalayan mountains; and the Punjab and adjoining areas in the northwest.

Having extensively reviewed a wide range of primary sources, Mallinson (in his 'Nath Sampradaya' and 'Hathayoga's philosophy') observes that the majority of the early textual and epigraphic references to Matsyendranath and Gorakh are from the Deccan and related areas in southern India, with the others being from Bengal in eastern India, and Nepal. The earliest textual references are from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and from the Deccan or south India. These include the Marathi *Jnaneshwari* (c.1290), the Kannada *Ragales* (poems) of Harihara (c.1200-1220), the *Matsyendrasaṃhitā* of Matsyendranath, and the Marathi *Lilacaritra*.

Mallinson is therefore of the view that Matsyendranath lived in southern India, probably the Deccan, in the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, and that Goraksa (Gorakh in vernacular languages) also lived in the Deccan region in the 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. In forming this view Mallinson is in agreement with the Maratha historian R.C.Dhere who, using mostly Marathi-language primary sources, also locates Matsyendra and Gorakh in the Deccan area.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has said:

I went to Kiev [Ukraine] of all the places and they told us there were two saints who came from India, they told also the names of them, their names were Machindranath and Gurunath and they told us about this. (1996-0919)

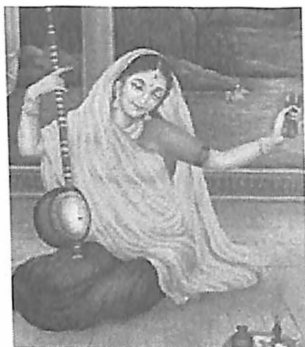
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## Mirabai (Meera)

1503-1546



Married at an early age into the royal family of the Rajput kingdom of Mewar in Rajasthan in north India. After much abuse from her in-laws, Mirabai left the palace to become a bhakta and sannyasin, singing of her devotion to Lord Krishna. There is some evidence in her surviving songs that she became a yogi:

Your secret, yogi, I have still not found.  
I've sat in a cave, taken a yogic pose,  
and trained my thoughts on Hari  
With beads around my neck, a bag of beads in my hand, and  
body smeared with ash.  
Mira's Lord is Hari, the indestructible.  
Fate is written on my forehead,  
and that is what I've found.

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## Muktabai

1279-1297

Sister of Jnaneshwara, Nivriddhi and Sopandev, and spiritual sister of Namdev. Guru of Changadeva. Preserved in short verses handed down in the oral tradition through successive generations of Maratha women, Muktabai's observations are timeless and profound. They also contain coded references to the inner subtle system and the ascending Kundalini, as one would expect from a realised yogi of the Nath tradition.

In one extraordinary song, Muktabai sings of the *ant* rising to the *Sun* to describe the ascent of the Kundalini to the Sahasrara:

An ant [*Kundalini*] flew to the sky and swallowed the sun  
Another wonder - a barren woman had a son.

A scorpion went to the underworld  
And the Shesh Nag [*thousand-headed serpent*] fell at its feet  
A fly gave birth to a kite [*bird*]  
Having seen it all, Mukta smiled.

Muktabai is best known for the *Tatiche Abhanga* (*Song of the door*). She addressed this song to her brother, Jnaneshwara, who, upset by the abuse of the brahmins (priests), had retired to a hut. The song begins:

Yogis pure in mind put up with people's offences  
Cheerfully becoming as water a saint quenches the world's  
burning anger  
Enduring the onslaught of weaponlike arrows

the saint treats even these as teachings  
The universe a cloth, Brahma the thread  
Open the door, O Jnaneshwara!

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## Namdev

c.1270-1350

Companion of Jnaneshwara, Muktabai, Janabai, and other Maratha saint-yogis. Disciple of Visoba Khechara.

Like Muktabai, Namdev includes coded references to the subtle system and Kundalini awakening in his songs:

in the beginning  
is the ant [*Kundalini*]  
mouth of the triple river [*the three nadis*]  
is the mouth of the ant

Around 1300, after his companions took their eternal samadhi, Namdev moved north to the Punjab where he continued to compose songs with hidden yogic meanings, these being in Hindi:

Moving the sun to the moon,  
Making firm the mind, the breath, the spinal column,  
effortlessly I rose through the Sushumna [*central nadi*] to the  
star-cluster [*Sahasrara chakra*] thus slaying desire.

Dwelling in the skies [*Sahasrara chakra*]  
I have made my home in the Sahaja.

My heart is rapt in the music within.  
Rare is the yogi who hears it.

Some of his Hindi songs can be found in the Sikh holy book, the *Adi Granth*. This saint is not to be confused with a later brahmin of the same name (16th century).



Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has commented:

My mother-tongue is Marathi and, thank God, I have been born in Maharashtra. Because it is a country of saints. Spirituality is the tradition of that country where a very simple poet called Namdev was born. He was a tailor, just an ordinary tailor. But he has written many sweet poems. (1983-0331)

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## **Nivritti** **(Nivrutti)**

1273-1297

Maratha teenage saint. As a boy, Nivritti received his realisation from the Nath yogi, Gahininath, in the Gorakhagumpha cave at Brahmagiri in what is now Maharashtra. He became guru to his brothers Jnaneshwara and Sopandev, sister Muktabai, and fellow saint, Namdev. There are Maratha traditions that report a connection extending over several generations between Nivritti's family, in particular his father, Vitthal, his grandfather, Govindpath, and greatgrandfather, Trimbakpant, and the Nath yogis, Gorakhnath and Gahininath.

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**Nund Rishi**  
**(Sheikh Nooruddin Wali)(Sahazanand)**  
**(Nuruddin Nurani)**

c.1378-1438

Sheikh Noor ud-Din Wali, better known as Nund Rishi, was a Kashmiri Sufi who used yogic techniques, having had his Kundalini awakened by the Shaivite yogini, Lalleshwari, also known as Lal Ded. As Nund Rishi remarks in one of his popular verses:

That Lalla of Padmanpore who had drunk to her fill the nectar, she was an avatar of ours.  
O God, grant me the same spiritual powers.

His Hindu followers remember him as Sahazanand, ‘the blissful one.’

Nund Rishi founded the Rishi Sufi Order which is indigenous to Kashmir. The Rishis’ spiritual practices were almost identical to those of the Hindu sanyasis. As the Kashmiri historian Rafiqi has noted, “All they (Rishis) seem to have added to the Natha framework was the name of Allah or huwa.’ (cited by Ramsay 2012:199).

Nund Rishi believed Hindus and Muslims were all children of the same God, who they called by various names. Some of his *shruiks* (verses) have survived and have been translated into English. Several of these verses critique the empty ritualism of the Hindu priests, the

Brahmins, and of their Muslim counterparts, the Mullahs and Sheikhs.

Do not go to Sheikh and priest and Mulla,  
Do not feed the cattle on arkhora leaves,  
Do not shut yourself up in mosques or forests,  
Enter your own body with breath controlled in communion  
with God.

Bear with the calls from the compound, friend.  
Respond to your inner voice:  
As you sow here, so shall you reap there.  
Sow and reap, sow and reap.

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# Patanjali

2nd century CE

Compiler of an historically important collection of sutras (verses) on yoga. Whilst there had been earlier breath control and meditation traditions, Patanjali was the first to bring a systematic yoga into textual form in his *Yoga sutras*. This Patanjali is probably different from the earlier grammarian of the same name.

Yoga is the cessation of the turnings of thoughts. (1:2)

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## Raghavendra Swami (Raghwindra Swami)

c.1595-1671



This South Indian mystic was born as Venkatanatha to Kannada-speaking parents in the town of Bhuvanagiri in what is now the state of Tamil Nadu. He entered the Sri Mutt (or matha; Tamil: monastery) in Kumbakonam where he adopted the name Raghavendra Theertha. Raghavendra succeeded his guru Sudheendra Theertha as the head of the Sri Mutt (1624 to 1636). He travelled all over South India expounding Madhvacharya's Dvaita philosophy.

Raghavendra entered samadhi at his mutt (monastery) in Mantralayam on the bank of the Tungabhadra river, on the border of Andhra Pradesh with neighbouring

Karnataka. The shrine built around the samadh continues to be an important place of pilgrimage.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, when speaking to a Sahaja Yoga public program in Chennai in 1991, commented:

This is a very special time you are all born, where people have to get their Self-realization. ... lots of prophecies have been there in our shastras about these times, but specially Bhrigumuni in *Nadigranth* has described about these times. If you tally them with the timing of today, it is exactly this time. After the death of Raghwindra Swami this will happen, and that's what is happening now. For you people it is very important to understand that Raghwindra Swami was in this area and he did a lot of work, and now the time has come to complete his work. (1991-1207)

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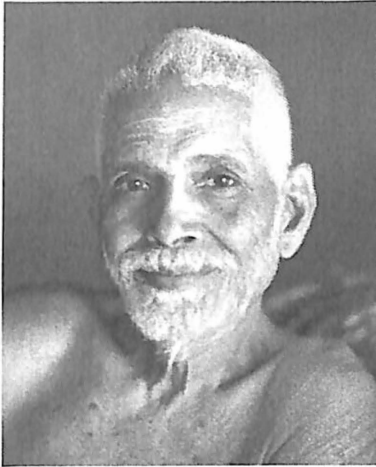
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## Ramana Maharshi

1879-1950



South Indian saint who made his home on the sacred hill of Arunachala. He gave realisation to a number of sadhus and disciples.

... the *samadhi* I speak to you about is different. It is *sahaja samadhi*. In this state you remain calm and composed during activity. You realise that you are moved by the deeper self within and are unaffected by what you do or say or think. You have no worries, anxieties or cares, for you realise that there is nothing that belongs to you as ego and that everything is being done by something with which you are in conscious union.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has stated that Ramana Maharshi was a realised soul. (1984-0828)



*Arunachala*

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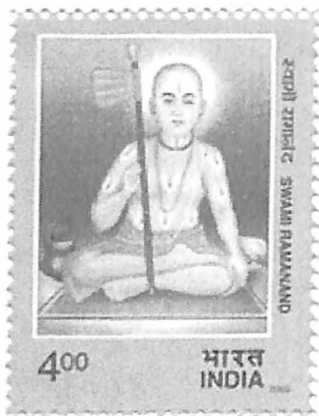
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## Ramanand

c1400-c.1476



Probably born in Allahad around 1400, this north Indian saint was an ascetic of the Vaishnava order, and devotee of Shri Rama. Ramanand broke away from the Vaishnava tradition, and took his disciples from all castes. Although a brilliant orator who drew large crowds, his poems were not preserved. Only one remains, known as the Raga Basant, included in the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Where shall I go when all the music  
and festivities are in my own house?  
My heart is content where I am,  
My mind has folded its wings.  
The Guru has revealed that Brahman is in my heart.  
If I wander outside, I will see the worship of stones  
and others vainly seeking the Lord in the holy books.

The Guru has ended all my failures and delusions.  
Ramanand is now lost gazing at his Master, Brahman.  
It was the *Word* of the Guru that destroyed  
all my millions of attachments and distractions.

Traditionally, Ramanand had twelve disciples all of whom became gurus. These included Kabir, Ravidas, Dhanna, Sain, and Pipa. But, like so much of his life, this is disputed by academics and devotees alike.

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## Samarth Ramdas (Ramadasa)

1608-1681



Maratha spiritual activist and guru who believed that the Marathas should be united in *Maharashtra-dharma*. He became the guru of Shivaji. The writings of Ramdas include the *Manache Shloka* (or *Manobodha*) (Verses addressed to the Mind), the *Dasbodha*, a huge work of 7752 ovis (verses) in which he gives advice and guidance for those seeking direct Realisation, and other shorter works such as the *Jnanasvabhava*, a poem of seventy verses that exposes the pseudo-gurus.

My gentle mind, go by this path of bhakti,  
which brings God's love  
Give up all that people despise  
Do what's praised with all your might.  
(*Manache Shloka* 2)

The fool looks only in one direction, but the wise man looks in all. ... He has indeed identified himself with the Atma, and cannot therefore be regarded as limited. He looks all around. ... He is everywhere and yet nowhere.  
(*Dasbodha* 11:10; 12.2)

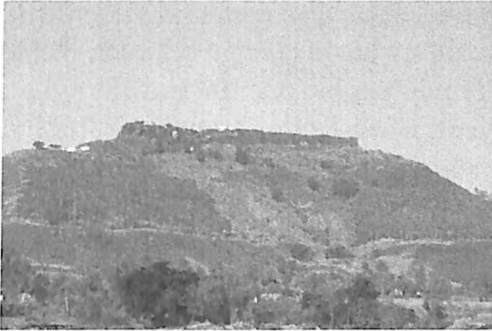
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*The Sajjangad hill fort near Satara where Ramdas resided at Shivaji's request.*

## Rupa Bhavani

1620-1720

The Kashmiri saint-yogini known as Rupa Bhavani (literally, 'form of the Goddess') described her spiritual experience thus:

I dashed down into the nether regions [*of the spiritual body*]  
and brought the vital breath up;

I got its clue out of earth and stones; then my Kundalini woke  
up with nada [*loud noise*];  
I drank wine by the mouth.

I got the vital breath (and) gathered it within myself.

In Hindi and in Kashmiri, *Rupa* also means silver, which forms the basis of the following exchange between Rupa Bhavani, the elderly Hindu yogini, and the (much younger) Muslim mystic, Shah Sadiq Qalandar (b.1689). Sadiq addressed Rupa thus in Kashmiri:

If you come toward me [*ie. accept Islam*] I will convert you,  
who are raph [*meaning 'silver' and 'yogi' in Kashmiri*] to  
gold.

To which Rupa replied:

If you come to me [*ie. accept Hinduism*] you shall become  
makti [*meaning 'pearl' and 'liberation' in Kashmiri*].

(dialogue from Tikku:89-90)



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## Sai Nath of Shirdi (Sai Baba)

c.1838-1918



This saint lived in the village of Shirdi, now in the state of Maharashtra, India, for some sixty years. He has left no authentic record of his birth and early life before first arriving at Shirdi as a young man of sixteen (c.1850), although it has been suggested that he was an itinerant Sufi, later returning to the village, c.1859, and remaining there until his passing in 1918. One of the persons who first came into contact with him at Shirdi addressed him spontaneously as 'Sai' which means Master.

Those who think I reside at Shirdi do not know the real Sai, for I am formless and everywhere. Oh, my dear friend, do not be anxious. I shall immediately show you the Brahman: all my dealings are in cash and never on credit. So many people come to me and ask for wealth, health, power, honour, position, cure of diseases and other temporal matters. Rare is the person who comes here to me and asks for Brahma-Jnana. There is no dearth of persons asking for worldly things, but as persons interested in spiritual matters are very rare, I think it a lucky and auspicious moment when persons like you come and press me for Brahma-Jnana. So I show to you, with pleasure, the Brahman with all its accompaniments and complexities...

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi confirmed that Sai Nath was originally a Muslim:

We had a great saint like Sai Nath of Shirdi, who was a Muslim to begin with, and it is said that Fatima herself brought him as a child in her lap and gave him to some lady. (1988-0814)

Shri Mataji declared many times that Sai Nath was an incarnation of the Primordial Master. (eg. 1980-0728, 1981-0207, 1982-1101, 1983-0302, 1988-0731)

All this work has been done in the ancient times, as Mohammed was one of the prophets who came out of the ten prophets, Moses, Abraham, Lao Tse, then we had also people like other prophets, Socrates. Recently in India we had the last one ... Sai Nath who lived [and] who was representing this great principle of primordial master. (1985-0317)

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## **Shankaracharya** **(Sankara) (Sankaracharya)**

7th century

This great yogi is credited with the writing of many philosophical treatises, concluding ultimately that it was only necessary to praise the Goddess. In his *Eight stanzas to Bhavani*, Sankara says

No father have I, nor mother, no comrade,  
No son, no daughter, no wife, and no grandchild,  
No servant or master, no wisdom, no calling:  
In Thee is my only haven of refuge,  
In Thee, my help and my strength, O Bhavani!

Sankara describes the ascent of the Kundalini in several works, including the *Saundarya-lahari*:

Thou art diverting Thyself, in secrecy with Thy Lord, in the thousand-petalled lotus [*Sahasrara*], having pierced through the Earth situated in the Muladhara, the Water in the Manipura [*Nabhi*], the Fire abiding in the Swadisthana, the air in the heart [*Anahat*], the Ether above [*Vishuddhi*], and Manas between the eyebrows [*Agnya*] and thus broken through the entire Kula path [*Sushumna nadi*]. (verse 9)

In the *Prabodhasudhakara*, the need for yoga (union) is described:

He who is immersed in the ocean of Supreme Bliss is full within and without, like a pot immersed for a long time in a large deep cavity of the river Ganga. (verse 164)

In the *Tad Niskala* (six stanzas on Nirvana), Sankara emphasises the need for detachment from the material world when seeking the eternal bliss:

Om. I am neither the mind,  
    intelligence, ego, nor citta [*seat of memory*]  
Neither the ears nor the tongue,  
    nor the senses of smell and sight;  
Neither ether nor air  
    nor fire nor water on earth;  
I am eternal bliss and awareness  
    - I am Shiva! I am Shiva!

He founded four monasteries, one each in east, west, north and south India, and all successive heads of these institutions have also used the name 'Sankaracharya'.

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## **Saraha** **(Sarahapada)**

8th-10th century

Almost nothing is known of this saint, save that he lived in eastern India, during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries. It can be surmised that he was a Buddhist monk who studied at the Buddhist university, Nalanda, and then became a wandering yogi, and, some say, the founder of the Sahajiya Buddhists.

Some *caryas* (verses) and *dohas* (couplets) attributed to Saraha have survived, as has the longer *Dohakosa* (Royal Song). Probably written in Apabrahmsa and early Oriya, these survive in Tibetan translation.

In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition Saraha is regarded as one of the mahasiddhas and is considered to be one of the founders of Vajrayana (or Tantric) Buddhism, and particularly of the Mahamudra tradition

In Sahaja there is no duality; it is perfect like the sky.  
The intuition of this ultimate truth destroys all attachment and it shines through the darkness of attachment like a full moon in the night.

Sahaja cannot be heard with the ears, neither can it be seen with the eyes;

It is not affected by air nor burnt by fire;

It is not wet in intense rain, it neither increases nor decreases,

It neither exists nor does it die out with the decay of the body;



The Sahaja bliss is only oneness of emotions – it is oneness in all.

Our mind and the vital wind are unsteady like the horse; but in the Sahaja-nature both of them remain steady.

When the mind thus ceases to function and all other ties are torn aside, all the differences in the nature of things vanish; and at that time there is neither the Brahman nor the Sudra. Sahaja cannot be realized in any of its particular aspects – it is an intuition of the whole, the one underlying reality pervading and permeating all diversity.

As the truth of the lotus can never be found either in the stalk or in the leaves, or in the petals or in the smell of the lotus, or in the filament, - it lies rather in the totality of all these parts, - so also Sahaja is the totality which can only be realized in a perfectly non-dual state of mind.

From it originate all, in it all merge again, - but it itself is free from all existence and non-existence – it never originates at all.

Some of the *caryas* make reference to the *nadis* of the yogic subtle system:

Abandon not the straight route [*Sushumna nadi*], to meander down the crooked way.

Enlightenment is near,  
so don't dally in worldly life.

The bangle on your wrist, do not attempt  
to see it looking in a mirror:

look to yourself - see Innate Mind direct!

Those going on either bank  
are fools pursuing the way of death.

Of the channels cut on left and right [*ida* and *pingala nadis*],  
Saraha says: O! mistake these not  
for the route that is straight!

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## **Sopandev (Sopana)**

1274 - 1296

Maratha saint of the Nath yoga tradition. Brother of Jnaneshwara, Nivriti and Muktabai. There is a temple to Sopandev in Pune, Maharashtra. According to Ranade, five abhangas (songs) attributed to Sopandev have survived, none translated into English. Other sources suggest 50 abhangas. There is also a Marathi text attributed to him, the *Sopandevi*, a commentary in Marathi on the *Gita*.

According to Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, Sopandev was an incarnation of Brahmadeva (an earlier incarnation was as Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet). (1988-0814).

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# Thirumoolar

6th century CE

The Tamil Siddhis were yogis skilled in the art of Kundalini awakening, and with an in-depth understanding of the subtle system of chakras and nadis. Undoubtedly the greatest was Thirumoolar, whose *Thirumanthiram* contains instructions, albeit cryptic, on how to raise the Kundalini through the subtle system from Mooladhara to Sahasrara, thus achieving yoga.

Beyond the Moladhara of triple angle shaped  
Where time and space mingle,  
Aloft that centre, opposite the forehead,  
Hangs the Crescent Moon, of myriad shape and peerless  
beauty.

Senses controlled, thoughts in oneness centered,  
If you sit in realisation thus  
Prana breath that comes circling again and again  
Will in jiva merged;  
Within that jiva the Kundalini dancer dances  
And I stand seeking her there.

Thus towards that excellent state practise yogic meditation:  
If you succeed in coursing your mother energy into the lotus  
in Sahasrara,  
You shall gain the infinite that remains hidden in the Vedas.

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## Tilopa

988-1069

Born into a Brahmin caste, Tilopa was ordained as a Buddhist monk and became the personal priest (*purohit*) to the King of Visunagara in southern Bengal in eastern India. He eventually fled his post to live with the Candala caste of fishermen, the poorest of the poor in Bengal. There he met a woman named Dharima who shared his spiritual aspirations. By day he earned a living as a producer of sesame oil. Tilopa is best known as a leading exponent of the Sahajiya school of Buddhist spiritual practice. As their fame spread, Tilopa and Dharima sang this Vajra Song (*vajragita*):

The oil which is the essence of the sesame,  
although known even by the ignorant to be in the seed, cannot  
be extracted unless it is learnt how to do so.

Likewise, the sahaja-jnana, though always present in the  
hearts of beings, is not realized unless the way is explained by  
a wise Guru.

By pounding the sesame, removing the husks, it is possible to  
extract the essential oil.

Likewise, when one attends to the Guru's Instruction, the truth  
of Absolute [*tathata*] is revealed.

This is the symbolism of the sesame. Indivisible and one is  
the Ipseity [?] of all that exists!

O! So vast, so deep, the meaning is now perfectly clear! How  
wonderful!

Tilopa composed the *Ganga-Mahamudra-Upadesa* in 28 verses in Sanskrit for his disciple, Naropa (Nadapada). It has survived in Tibetan translation.

At first the yogi feels his mind to be turbulent,  
like the upper course of a rushing mountain torrent.  
Then it becomes smooth like the broad river Ganges.  
In the end it is like entering the ocean, a child returning to the  
mother.

Tilopa is regarded as the original formulator of the system of the Six Yogas, more usually associated with his disciple, Naropa (1016-1100), and since practised in the Kagya lineage of the Buddhism that is associated with Tibet.

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## Veera Brahmendra Swami

c.1608-1693



Shri Potuluri Veera Brahmendra Swami was a South Indian mystic who wrote the *Kalagnanam* (lit: 'Knowledge of time'), the *Govinda Vakyamulu* and other poems, all written on palm leaves in Telugu. These texts are a collection of prophecies of future centuries including the Advent of Shri Kalki.

A Comet will be born, its information  
East its head, to the west  
Its tail, head the cart's wheel size  
Its width would be as a star  
Twenty metre'd length, this way it is  
To the eyes of the humans  
For 33 days it would be  
Unknown things will be known in the time



After five thousand within the Bahudhanya, (1998 or 2058 )  
All races would become one  
In earth the poor and rich as one  
Would be such a time is there . . .

Once the good people would come  
There will be a great , unbelievable war  
From the skies eagles will play ,  
With company of their wives , worthy rulers will come.  
Time will fruit to people in future  
In Karthika masa , they would have  
Balachandra"s shine will not be visible  
The suns glow will be low  
After a year and half a month  
Seven weeks will become one  
Seven – seven , fourteen worlds  
Single handedly will he be ruling  
Between races there will be many feuds  
The people will suffer a lot  
On the banks of Penna , Chennur  
Will bear the floods

(extracts from the *Govinda Vakyamulu*)

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## Vemana

(Kumaragiri Vema Reddy)(Yogi Vemana)



Dates uncertain. Possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century.

A South Indian yogi who composed four-line verses in the Telugu language about yoga, wisdom and morality. Born in Kondaveedu in present-day Andhra Pradesh, the legends of his life make him the son of the local king. According to legend he was initiated into yoga by a local yogi, Lambika Sivayogi. After this, Vemana travelled through the Telugu-speaking region in south India, composing poems and continuing his yoga.

Vemana's verses were collected by the Indian-born English civil servant and life-long Telugu scholar, C.P.Brown (1798-1884), who published an English

translation in 1829, with an enlarged edition in 1839. Vemana's status as a low-born shudra ensured that the high caste Brahmins actively excluded Vemana's verses from Telugu literature collections until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The great teacher is concealed in the world.

The teacher is the essence of the word.  
The teacher is hidden in darkness.  
The teacher is the support of all.

He who constantly, without intermission, holds the all  
pervading Divinity in his soul,  
He shall arrive at the ineffable dwelling,  
He shall truly comprehend the world –  
This is the truth.

If we look through all the earth  
Men, we see, have equal birth.  
Made in one great brotherhood,  
Equal in the sight of God.

What is the wisdom of that man who in the house of the body  
cannot distinguish his friends and foes?  
On him who knows them shall Divine ambrosia be bestowed.

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## Vishivanath

18th century CE

A yogi who lived on the Hindukush mountain in northwest Sind (now Pakistan). Said to be the guru of the Sufi, Sachal Sarmast (1739-1829) who composed the following verse:

I recognised the yogi who of his own accord entered my abode. He had dressed himself in the garb of an ascetic as an artful device. He had long yogic tresses and his body was smeared with ash. His flute's melody entranced my soul. God had brought about this union between me and the yogi. For him I have now sprinkled perfume and musk:  
It was he who revealed to me the entire mystery.

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## Visoba Khechara

d.1309

Originally a Maratha Sivaite (follower of Shiva), this yogi did not at first acknowledge the greatness of Jnaneshwara and his siblings, and was thus contemptuously called 'Khechara' by them. He later changed his view, and received his realisation from Jnaneshwara. Some sources say he was the disciple of Jnaneshwara's brother, Sopandev.

Best known as the guru of Namdev and for the famous meeting between himself and Namdev in the Nagnath temple at Aundh. In this story Namdev finds Vishoba reclining at ease within the temple with his feet placed on the top of the sacred Shiva-linga. When Namdev expresses his dismay at this seemingly sacrilegious act, Visoba uses his yogic powers to show Namdev the whole temple filled with the Shiva-linga in order to convince his would-be disciple that Shiva is all-pervading and omnipresent.

Visoba is known for a few abhangas, and possibly a Sivaite work known as the *Satshala*. In an abhanga addressed to Namdev he says:

Meditate on the Supreme Lord...  
Serve your master, who will impart to you  
the secret of the path of true knowledge.  
Then shall you see the Lord within, and your delusion will  
vanish.

Within your body is the abode of the Lord, where shines beautiful light and constantly, day and night, resounds "Soham".  
There you shall meet the Supreme Lord.

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# Glossary

*Abhanga* - four- or -six-line verse. (Marathi)  
*Apabrahmsa* - now defunct northern Indian language, later than Sanskrit, but before the regional languages.

*BCE* - Before the Common Era. Roughly equivalent to the earlier BC (Before Christ).

*Bhajan* – song

*Bhakta* – a devotee

*Bhakti* - devotion

*Bharud* - dramatic poem in Marathi, much used by saint Eknath.

*Braj Bhasa* - an early Hindi dialect in Rajasthan, 16th-17th centuries.

*Caryas* - short songs (Sahajjiya).

*CE* - Common Era. Roughly equivalent to the earlier AD (Anno Domini, in the year of our Lord).

*Chakra* – energy centre in the subtle body.

*Dharma* - Right conduct or true teaching.

*Dohas* - verses (Sahajjiya/Sahajayana)

*Gatha* - a collection of works by an author. (Marathi)

*Johar* - type of *bharud*, sung by Eknath. (Marathi)

*Kirtan(a)* - a sung performance of *abhangas*, *bhajans*, *bharuds*, in the Maratha tradition. Also in north India.

*Maharishi* – great sage.

*Mahars* - the untouchables of Maharashtra. Chokha is their best known saint.

*Nadi* – channel in the subtle body.

*Naths* -- yogis who maintained the transmission of Kundalini awakening.

*Pandharpur* - town in Maharashtra sacred to the bhakti sants who went (and still go) on pilgrimage to its temple dedicated to Lord Vittala.

*Purana* - sacred text.

*Rishi* - holy man, or sage, often residing in the Himalayas.

*Sadhu* – holy man. Ascetic. Yogi.

*Saguni* - with attributes

*Sahajiya* – a spiritual tradition of the 8<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> centuries, especially in eastern India.

*Sahajayana* – Buddhist counterpart of the *Sahajiya*.

*Samadhi* – withdrawal from everyday life into spiritual practice. In its extreme form, withdrawal from life itself. Used by Buddhists and Hindus.

*Samhitas* - collections of texts in the Vaishnava tradition.

*Shloka* - verse, similar to a stanza

*Shruiks* - verses (Kashmiri)

*Siddhis* - spiritual powers. Also a term for those possessing the spiritual powers, such as yogis.

*Skanda* - section (chapter) of a *purana*. Also the name of a complete purana.

*Stotra* - a prayer (Marathi)

*Stotramala* - a collection of *stotras* (Marathi)

*Sutra* - a Sanskrit verse or saying, thus *Yoga Sutra*. Also a collection of sayings.

*Upanishad* – sacred text

*Varkari* - a devotee of Vitthal (the Lord) who goes on annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur (Maharashtra, India).

*Vedas* – Lit. knowledge. Ancient Sanskrit texts.

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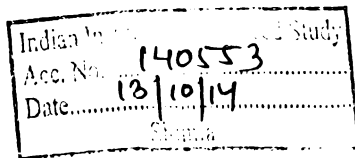
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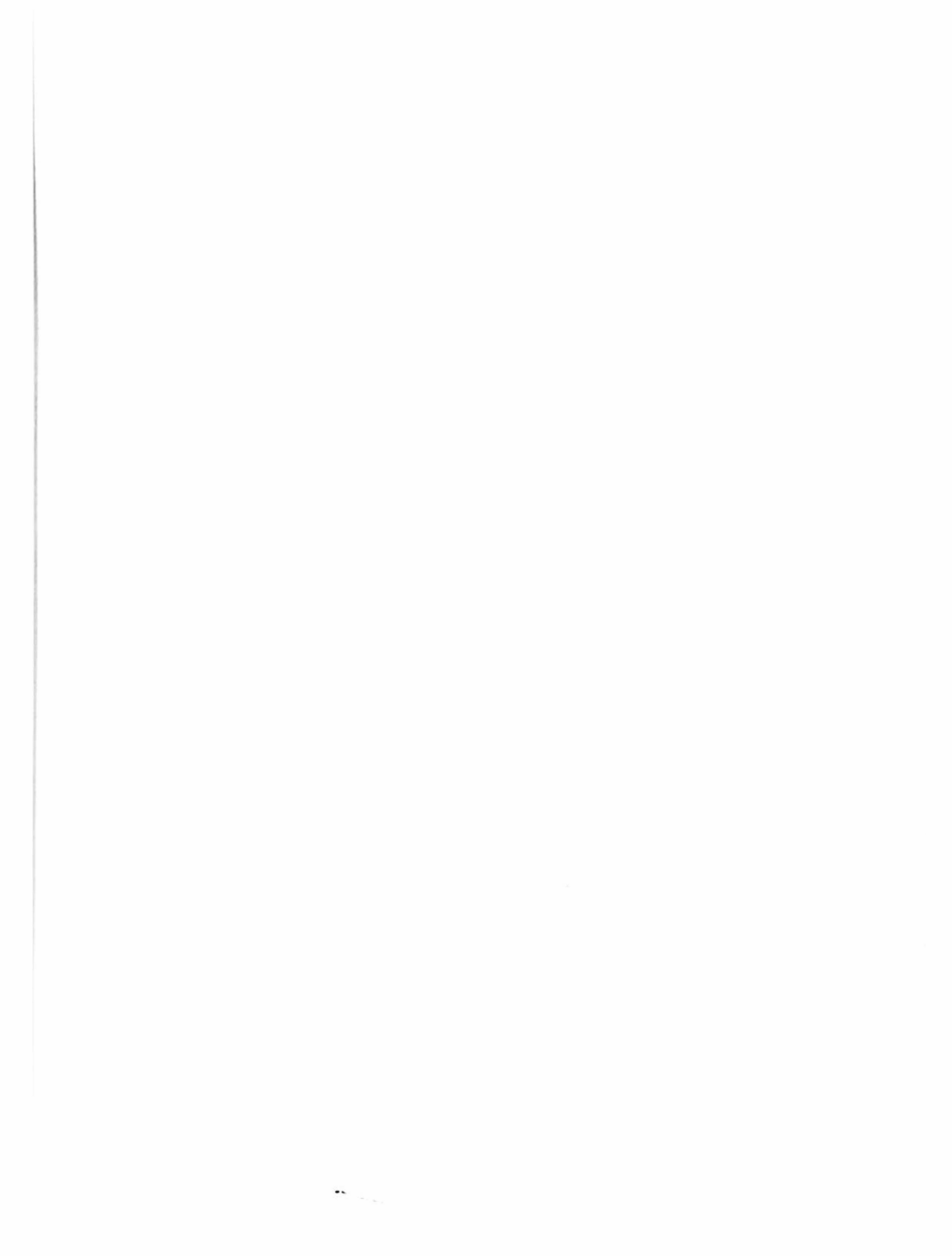
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