

Purushottam Yeshwant Deshpande, popularly known as P. Y. was one of the foremost architects of the modern Marathi Novel and a major literary force during 1925 to 1945. Basically a thinker with a radical outlook and global vision, P. Y. had an entirely new approach to literature.

P. Y's turning to religious mysticism and J. Krishnamurti gave a new look and new edge to P. Y's writings as revealed in his varied commentaries; first on 'Nasadiya Sukta' and Dnyaneshwar's 'Amritanubhav' and later on another Vedic Suktas called 'Manavopanishad'. His entirely new interpretation of 'Patanjali's Yoga Sutra', Buddha's discourses and the 'Gita' brought him international reputation.

Dr. Indumati Sheorey, the author of this monograph is a Marathi novelist, short story writer and scholar. She had remained on the editorial staff of 'Independent' - an English weekly for more than a decade. She was also connected with All India Radio as a producer and with 'Kesari' and 'Tarun Bharat', Marathi Dailies as their London correspondent.

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From : Nagarjunakonda, 2nd century A.D.

Courtesy : National Museum, New Delhi.

**MAKERS OF INDIAN LITERATURE**

**P.Y. DESHPANDE**

**INDUMATI SHEOREY**



**Sahitya Akademi**

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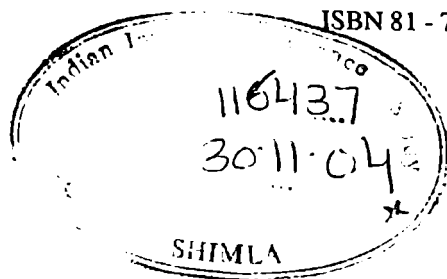
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## INTRODUCTION

PURUSHOTTAM YESHWANT DESHPANDE, popularly known as P.Y. is a multifaceted personality in Marathi Literature. As a novelist and journalist, communist labour leader, a political activist and an M.P., finally a Krishnamurtiite thinker - philosopher and a commentator of scriptures, he was one of the predominant literary forces in Maharashtra. His writings influenced its two generations. Gifted with a charismatic personality, P.Y. is rather a peculiar unusual phenomenon in Marathi literature.

P.Y. was neither a scholar of Marathi, nor a lover of it. He never dreamt that he would take to writing. As he tells us in MEE KA LIHITO? (Why I write?), he did it quite accidentally. But having once started he never stopped. He wrote ceaselessly and kept doing so literally till last breath of his life.

Though gifted with qualities that go to make a great writer, his novels never became popular in the sense that N.S.Phadke's and V.S.Khandekar's did. Yet they were thought - provoking and were discussed by Marathi readers and litterateurs alike. He was the first to introduce many new things in the Marathi novel. Thus he had many firsts to his credit. He gave his novels a new content, introduced psychoanalysis and symbolism in them. But with the heavy stuff they contained, they went beyond the ken of common readers. As the critics rightly say, his novels were really meant for a selected class of highbrows and intellectuals.

Nor, was he a prolific writer as his contemporaries like N.S.Phadke, V.S.Khandekar and even G. T. Madkholker were . In number, his books are less, yet his output is prodigious and presents a bewildering variety. He has to his credit a volume of poetry , 10 novels, a couple of books on literary criticism, 3 tomes on saint Dnyaneshwar's writings, several commentaries on the Upanishadic Suktas and the Gita, a thesis on Patanjali's 'Yoga Darshana', (published

into 3 European languages) and lastly an 'Untold story of Tathagata Buddha' in English.

Known as a revolutionary and a rebel from his very first book, P.Y. vehemently criticised our mindless imitation of dead, age-old traditions, our lack of initiative and spirit of enquiry which had fired our ancient thinkers. Himself imbued with that spirit, he always remained an innovator. As some critics have noted about his novels, 'he always liked to traverse through unfurrowed field'. From his very first novel, upto his last philosophical work, we find P.Y. striking to his own new path, never imitating, never falling in line with others. As such, his works always evoked criticism from the traditionalists and status-quo-lovers of all hues.

And so did his life too! P.Y. had more critics than admirers, both equally vociferous!

The reason is that P.Y.'s life has passed through so many phases and ideological changes, that critics have accused him of inconsistency, even apostasy. Beginning as an exponent of 'individual freedom' and liberal humanism, turning into a dyed-in-the-wool communist, then becoming a Gandhian and still further returning to his brahminical spiritual roots, ending as an admirer of the great world - teacher J.Krishnamurti, his spiritual journey can be likened-'From a commissar to a yogi', a long, varied process indeed!

Yet none of his critics denies his vast learning, brilliant analytical mind and his originality of approach. Perhaps they find it difficult to fully understand his intellectual honesty and his spirit of enquiry that kept him moving. Because, whatever ideology P.Y. accepted, his acceptance of it was whole-hearted, his study of it thorough. Yet he did not waver to abandon it if he found it inadequate and defective. This led him to hop from one ideology to another. The writing of that period certainly reflect these ideological changes.

But taken as a whole, and viewed in the context of his entire life, his works reveal a seeker of truth underneath. P.Y. Deshpande's varied journey would appear to be the truth-quest of his enquiring

mind, leading him through various ideological landscapes; thus depicting various stages of growth of his personality, till he thought he had arrived. Along with this, his writing too grew more and more complex and specialised making it beyond the reach of common readers.

As a result, P.Y. is rather a difficult writer. His erudition, vast experience of life, and variety of subjects he covered render this task even more difficult. Perhaps that may be one of the reasons why very little has been written on P.Y's later writings!

As one who had the privilege of observing him through various phases of his life, I have taken this task upon myself but with trepidation and with no claim whatsoever of having done it successfully.

# I

## LIFE SKETCH

To understand the complexity of P.Y.'s works, one must try to know the man behind, who was equally complex.

Though short and slim in stature, P.Y. had an amazing vitality and a dynamic personality. One could experience his inner force even in his casual talks. He had a peculiar appeal. It is difficult to analyse his mystique. A keen, razor-sharp intellect, emotional intensity to match and a fiery spirit, these were the triple threads by which P.Y.'s personality seems to have been woven.

His keen incisive mind made him go to the root of the matter, and analyse it threadbare. His emotional intensity made him accept things whole, - heartedly, while his fiery spirit made him do something exceptional and original, so as to leave his stamp on society. And he did leave his mark in whatever field he entered.

Born in December 1899 on the threshold of two centuries, as he would say jokingly, P.Y. was the third son of Y.G.DESHPANDE, a noted lawyer belonging to an aristocratic zamindar family of Berar, now called Vidarbha.

### EDUCATION

In his early years P.Y. was deeply influenced by the religiosity and saintliness of his grand-father BAPUJI who was an ayurvedic doctor- a Vaidya, who practiced medicine and used to distribute his extra earnings among the poor villagers. He would send food, if anyone went hungry. As P.Y. tells us in his essay 'Why I write?\*' his main goal in those days was to achieve 'Nirvana' like Buddha. He would say his morning-evening prayers earnestly and the number

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\* 'Mee Ka Lihito?' Pratibha Prakashan, Aurangabad, p. 88-92.

## VARIED CAREER

In between, he was picked up in the M.P. judicial service. But he did not remain there long. Always a rebel, he resigned his post as a Judge, as he could not tolerate the discriminatory, arrogant attitude of the white bosses in the then judiciary (1929 to 1931).

The same year, he was chosen president of the 'Berar Youth Congress', an independent body. Though P.Y. was not happy with the so-called lukewarm and weak-kneed Gandhian politics, he joined the Indian National Congress on persuasion of the President of Berar Congress Committee - Veer Vamanrao Joshi - then known as the 'lion of Vidarbha'. When Berar was visited by a severe famine, P.Y. agitated for famine relief and revenue exemption. He was arrested and sent to jail. It was during this brief imprisonment that he first got acquainted with communist literature. The sudden withdrawal of Chauri-chaura satyagraha in Bihar by Gandhiji further alienated him from Gandhian ideology, while the philosophy of Marx, Engles and Lenin attracted him more and more. He came out of prison a changed man. His next novel VISHAL JEEVAN (Vast Horizon) in 1933 portrays his experiences of the farmers' agitation and attraction towards communism.

Like most of the youth of that era, P.Y. had sincere faith in the communist dream of a new world order and the Marxist Millenia. He was attracted more to communist ideology than its experiment in Russia. He never became a party member, but he did become a trade unionist. As a leader of the INTUC, he led Badnera mill workers through a couple of successful strikes and was soon recognised as a labour leader.

Now he found Amraoti too small and restricted a place for his political achievements and shifted to Nagpur. For his living he accepted lecturership in Nagpur University Law College but did not continue long. He started a Marathi weekly BHAVITAVYA to serve as a forum of communist ideas. This brought him in contact with likeminded young congress workers like Jaya Prakash Narayan, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan, Minoo Masani, Yusuf

Meherally, etc. which soon resulted in founding of the 'Congress Socialist Party' of which P.Y. was one of the founder-members. His two novels NAVE JAG (The New World) - 1940 and KALI RANI (The Dark Queen) - 1941 depict his involvement with communism.

### **A COMMUNIST - DISILLUSIONED**

P.Y. remained under the communist spell till 1942. The world war II had already started and Russia got involved in it, first as an ally of Nazi Germany signing a friendship treaty with it and later its bitter enemy. In 1940 the Nazi forces invaded Russia and it was desperately fighting for survival. P.Y.'s articles written with great fervour defended and glorified with other communists this life and death Russian struggle against Fascism. But this fervour received a jolt when Gandhiji gave a call for 'Quit India' movement in 1942 and Indians witnessed a sudden communist 'volte face'. Because Russia was now an ally of Britain - the imperialist power which wanted to suppress Indian struggle for freedom. Indian communists actually helped the British Govt. in arresting Indian underground leaders by reporting on them.

P.Y. like most of the Indian and world socialists got extremely disappointed and disillusioned. The war exposed the real nature of communism. The dream was shattered. Gone were the slogans of International brotherhood of the proletariat. P.Y.'s articles in BHAVITAVYA now spoke about this disillusionment. His booklet SOVIET RUSSIA ANI HINDUSTAN is an 'Expose' of this situation.

P.Y.'s disillusionment with communism was soon replaced by enthusiasm for Gandhism. He identified himself with it. Gandhism, he thought, was as revolutionary as communism. In his another compilation of articles GANDHIJICH KA? (Why Gandhism?) he discusses various aspects of its uniqueness.

### **HALCYON DAYS**

From 1940 till 1962, P.Y. was constantly in the lime-light. He grew in fame and stature. It was the glorious period of his life. He was noted for his analysis and originality of approach to problems. All

kinds of honours came his way. They came thick and fast. His books kept appearing every now and then. He was chosen to preside over the 'Marathi Wangmaya Parishad' held at Baroda in January, 1937, Literary Conference at Ujjain in 1940, 'Bombay & Upanagar Marathi Sahitya Sammelan' in Dec. 1945. He was also elected as president of 'Vidharbha Sahitya Sangh' in 1946. His views on Literary criticism compiled in NAVI MULYEN was prescribed as a reference book in Nagpur University, so also his novels.

But politics, more than literature, remained at the core of his life. Though he never held high political positions except the membership of parliament between 1950 to 1952, he was deeply involved in politics. He was elected Vice President of the All India INTUC. After Independence, he along with two journalists Sheorey Bothers - founded a publishing company THE NAVA SAMAJ LTD., which ran an English daily THE NAGPUR TIMES. P.Y's weekly BHAVITAVYA now-became their publication. He was also the editor of the English daily for brief period. To the newly formed post-independence first Ministry of old M.P. and Berar, he was considered a friend, philosopher and guide. They were his halcyon days.

During the early fifties he was chosen as the Zonal President of the 'Indian Committee For Cultural Freedom'- an international organization to combat communism. He was sent abroad twice. First, as a representative of the ICCF to its conference in Paris in 1953, then as a Marathi member of the Afro-Asian writers' delegation to Russia in 1960.

## NEW TURNING POINT

But much before that, an inner change was coming over P.Y. The late fifties saw P.Y. gradually withdrawing from active politics. Power-politics was not his kind of game. With disillusionment with Marxism and spell of Gandhism waning, there had to be a vacuum for a seeker. P.Y. found all his activities meaningless, all isms inadequate to solve basic human problems. This feeling of emptiness was not only political, but also philosophical. He realised that the Hegelian theory of Dialectics



on which Marxist philosophy of Dialectical Materialism was based, was wrong. Also the Gandhian theory he found inadequate, perhaps too idealistic for active life. He found most Gandhians none better than other kind of politicians, inspite of their lip-service to his principles. He found Gandhiji already dead physically and morally in India.

This lacuna had to be filled. He wanted a philosophy which could replace Marxist Materialism, and cover all aspects of life-A 'holistic' philosophy. Could any serve the purpose?

This was the real turning point in P.Y.'s life. It went far deeper into his psyche than any other previous ideological changes. Next ten years was a period of 'Angst' - anguish and deep introspection. The problem was not ideological but existential. Which way to turn? He tried to turn to his Brahminical past ... the religious mysticism and Vedic philosophy, the fountainhead of all philosophical thinking in India. Perhaps his boyhood God-quest which lay dormant all these years had stirred up again.

### TWILIGHT PERIOD

He now turned to the 'Upanishadas and the Shatdarshanas' (the six systems of Vedic philosophy). For six years he studied these systems just like a young student from a well-versed Shastri! Amongst Marathi saint poets Dnyaneshwar appealed to him most.

This could be called the twilight period of P.Y.'s life. He was sort of groping around opaque walls. Always a rebel and never a follower, he did not seek any Guru, nor followed the traditional ways of knowing the Truth. He wrote a number of books during this period which reflect this state of his mind. The first one ANAMIKACHI CHINTANIKA (Meditations of a nameless person) - a novel cum personal essays tells his own story in disguise. AHUTI (a novel), AMRITANUBHAV RASRAHASYA commentary on Dnyaneshwar's poetry depicting his mystic experience. AMRITANUBHAV another poetic commentary on NASADIYA SUKTA. His CHINTANIKA depicts the hero who has come to the end of his tether, groping for a new light which is ultimately shown by J. Krishnamurti. The book brought

him Sahitya Akademi Award in 1962. He also wrote SAPTASHLOKI BHAGWAT and some poems.

### THE NEW LIGHT

P.Y. met J. Krishnamurti in Feb. 1961. Apart from his spiritual malaise, P.Y. was at that time, deeply shattered by the sudden suicidal death of his younger son Nachiketa. His mind was just like a furrowed field, ready to accept the seed. As he himself writes in the Introduction of the CHINTANIKA, in meeting Krishnamurti he found 'a long-sought soul', a philosopher-friend. His teaching gave P.Y. a new vision, a new process of reaching the Truth. In his thoughts he found what he had sought-a firm foundation of a new, all-embracing philosophy : A holistic philosophy.

On Krishnamurti's asking him, Whether he was willing to make Rajghat Institute his home as well as his grave? P.Y. replied, "yes!" He renounced everything and went, alongwith his wife, to 'Krishnamurti Foundation' there. This was P.Y.'s final turning point.

It was in his final phase of about 20 years, that living like a recluse, P.Y. produced his best reflective works both in Marathi and English : 2 novels: AMULAGRA and BHERIGHOSH KI DHARMGHOSH? - a historical novel on Ashoka's religious conquest, MANAVOPANISHAD - ( the sum total of his philosophy of life) KHARA PATANJAL YOGA and NITYANUTAN GITA in Marathi and JNANADEVA (a biography), THE AUTHENTIC YOGA (a thesis on Patanjali's Yoga Darshana) and TATHAGAT BUDDHA (the untold story of the Buddha's life) in,English.

His Marathi books evoked every little response from Marathi readers, may be because of his long absence from Maharashtra, and also because the subjects of these books rarely appeal to the common readers. On the other hand, his English works, especially his thesis on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras had a great appeal in the West-which brought him international reputation. The book was translated into German and Spanish languages. The German version now running into the fourth, while the English into the third edition. It speaks, of

the keen interest in Yoga in the West, no doubt. But popularity of the book is mainly due to entirely new and original interpretation of Patanjali's Suktas by P.Y.

### **BACK HOME**

Old age and illness brought P.Y. back to Nagpur - his home town in 1982. Past twenty years had seen much water flowing down the river. Nagpur was no longer the place he had left two decades ago. It was caught in the complexities of age. It now represented a new culture - competitive, power mongering and mammon worshipping - so alien to him. P.Y. shunned public eye, remained aloof from the glitter of lime light and led the life of a recluse. Gone was his previous Darbar in the drawing room. No more comings and goings or heated discussions. He spent his days in quiet walks, in reading and writing but mostly in meditation. His health kept failing. His last work NITYANUTAN BHAGWAD GITA ANI JEEVAN DARSHAN was finished rather hastily, just a week before his death. At last, he had given in it a philosophy of life, as he had promised himself.

P.Y. breathed his last on 26th July, 1986. Thus the spiritual journey of the boy seeking 'Nirvana' came full circle to a 'Yogi' whose dying words were :

" All is bliss! It is all happiness! "

## II

### AS A NOVELIST

P.Y. was one of the 'Famous Four' novelists who reigned over the thirties and mid-forties in Maharashtra - the other three being N. S. Phadke, V. S. Khandekar & G. T. Madkholkar. All of them were stalwarts in their way. While the other three wielded other forms of literature also, P.Y. chose mainly the novel for expressing himself and stuck to it till the end.

#### NORMS OF THE MARATHI NOVEL

Norms of the Marathi novel were set by Hari Narayan Apte (1875-1919), the foremost modern Marathi novelist who shaped the 'social' as well as 'historical' novel and gave it an aesthetic form. In him were synthesized the two contemporary trends - the liberal Humanism of Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and the ardent Nationalism of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. His social novels were motivated by a desire for social reforms, while the historical novels were written with the purpose of rekindling the patriotic fervour in Marathi minds, reminding them of their glorious historical past. Writers of various calibres - like S.V. Ketkar, B.V. Warkar (Mama), Altekar (the social novelists) and Nath Madhav, Hadap (the historical novelists), who followed took the cue from Apte. They enriched its variety and swelled the tide of the Marathi novel.

The twenties had witnessed a large growth of reading public. As a result new periodicals and magazines catering to readers of all levels were coming up fast, alongwith new crop of writers who enlarged the field of fiction. This period was also a sort of interregnum - between the decline of the Marathi theatre and the arrival of the cinema. The fiction stepped in as the principal mode of entertainment for the middle class.

During this period stalwarts of previous generation like Prof. V.M. Joshi, S.V. Ketkar, and Mama Warekar were still in the arena. Prof. Joshi - a philosophic thinker and Dr. Ketkar a sociological thinker and the compiler of the first Marathi Encyclopaedia added socio-philosophic dimensions to the Marathi novel. Joshi's 'Ragini', 'Sushilecha Dev' and 'Indu Kale Sarla Bhole', depicted the new self-consciousness of the educated Marathi women and the changing pattern of Maharashtrian family life. These novels attempt to portray the revolutionary change that had come in the religio-philosophic beliefs of the educated new generation.

Ketkar chose rather unconventional subjects-like the structure of society and the problems inherent in Hindu Society. His novel 'Brahmankanya' discusses the future of the progeny of prostitutes. Warekar's novels 'Vidhava Kumari' and 'Godu Gokhale' painted the image of bold, independent, spirited women seeking to shape their own destinies. His other novels brought in the problems of the industrial mill-workers in big cities. Beginnings of realism were first seen in these novels. However, the Marathi fiction-writers as a whole had not yet freed themselves of Romanticism and Idealism.

### **THE CONTEMPORARY INFLUENCES**

When P.Y. started writing, the Indian life-scene was changing fast, both socially and politically. Imbued with new ideas of individual freedom and liberalism, there grew a new consciousness among the youth to revolt against social restrictions on marriage and morals. There were several influences working in the contemporary Indian life which had made life more involved and complex :

- (1) Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement had brought fresh wind in the political atmosphere. His economic theories drew attention to rural areas. But Gandhiji's emphasis on self-sacrifice and simple living-high thinking conflicted with hedonistic tendencies incited by western ideas of freedom.
- (2) Marxism which projected an ideal state of Govt. of the proletariat and the International brotherhood of workers had caught hold of the younger minds.

- (3) Liberal Humanists movement emphasizing the individual freedom - known in Maharashtra as 'Navamatvad'. Some of its advocates interpreted 'freedom' as libertarianism and rejection of traditional moral values. Love was equated with sex resulting in permissiveness, but its acceptance was theoretical rather than actual. Joint families were being replaced by small families because of jobs away from homes.
- (4) The highly educated youths were attracted by new psychological theories, which opened doors of new perception of the inner world of the human mind. As an antidote to repression, lack of restraint and discipline by the family was encouraged.
- (5) There were very few intellectuals who tried to understand the implications of Einstein's theories which brought new concepts regarding Man's outer world and time. P.Y. was the lone writer to experiment with this subject.

These various influences worked over the minds of the Marathi writers between 1925-47 in some way or the other, to a lesser or greater degree. While Gandhism did not have a strong hold over the Marathi writers, Marxism had. Writers, like Prema Kantak (in 'Kama ani Kamini' & 'Agniyan'), Sane Guruji (in most of his novels, especially 'Shyamchi Aai'), D.N. Shikhare chose Gandhian themes, V.M. Joshi (in 'Sushilecha Dev'), Warekar (in 'Dhawata Dhota'), Khandekar (in 'Hirwa Chafa', 'Don Mane'), Ketkar (in 'Brahman Kanya') depicted Gandhian characters who spoke about Gandhian philosophy with gusto. Marxism gave a new dimension to Marathi novel. Beginning with V.M. Joshi and followed by Warekar and Ketkar, most of the major writers of the next generation - like Khandekar (in 'Don Druwa'), Madholkar (in most of his novels from 'Muktatma' to 'Chandanwadi'), P.Y. (in 'Vishal Jeevan' and 'Nave Jag') and minor ones like Hadap/Shriram Attarde (in 'Sawalichya Unhat'), P.G. Sabastrabuddhe (in 'Prahar'), Bhise and several others depicted the struggle between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', the rich and the under dog. Even women writers saw in socialism woman's freedom from slavery. Vibhwari Shirurkar (in 'Hindolyawar') and Geeta Sane (in 'Hirwali Khali' and 'Wathalela Vriksha', revealed woman's woes and

fought for even sexual equality.

Freudian psychological theories too had a deep impact on the Marathi Novel, which changed it inwardly. While Phadke's approach was superficial, Madkholkar dealt with several aspects of new psychology-like repression, sublimation, incest, homosexuality and their conflict with morality in his novels - like 'Duheri Jeevan', 'Shap', 'Muktatma' etc. In P.Y.'s novels psychoanalysis, remained at the core. In 'Ratricha Diwas' Mardhekar, the foremost poet experimented with the stream of consciousness so did Vasant Kanetkar. But 'Ranangan' by Vishram Bedekar was by far, the most successful novel on the subject written on the background of the II<sup>nd</sup> World War, it depicts the inner struggle of the Jew heroine.

#### **THE FAMOUS FOUR**

Most of the pen-wielding writer - artists, influenced by one theory or the other made use of them in their writings. Those who stood foremost and left their distinctive mark upon the Marathi novel. Between 1925 to 1947 four novelists stood in the front rank: Phadke, Khandekar, Madkholkar and P.Y. Deshpande. All of them were versatile, and had a readers' class of their own. Each enriched the Marathi novel in his own way.

Phadke electing to 'entertain' advocated the theory of 'Art for Art's Sake'. He paid greater attention to the craft and style rather than the content of the novel. An immaculate craftsman, he unfolded his plots artistically, with a well - built structure and in dainty style. He manufactured sleek novels with a set formula of easy-going simplified love of the upper middle class, which lulled the common man into an escapist stupor. His rival Khandekar, on the other hand, looked upon literature as a means to educate and foster good ideas in society. He challenged Phadke's formula and identified himself with 'Art for Life's Sake'. His characters were idealists and though equally imbued in love spoke earnestly about social-political problems. But both of these writers were basically romantists though in different ways.

Known for his urbane style and a majestic language with a flair and

flavour of its own, Madkholkar stood aloof from the above Art controversy. He depicted problems of educated married couples, tensions between them as they adjusted themselves to the old with the new ways. His 'Bhangalele Deool', 'Muktatma', 'Chandanwadi' and others deserve special mention. His later novels dealt with current politics - in which plots were woven round political characters. Being a veteran journalist, he found ample material for his novels, though he did not have any coherent political philosophy.

### **P.Y.'S DIFFERENT NOTE**

P.Y.'s novels 'Struck a somewhat different note from them all. They are characterised by a strong individualistic note. Intense in emotion, they reach deeper into the inner recesses of individual experience'.(1)

The reason is that P.Y. had a different attitude towards literary writing. As mentioned earlier, P.Y. did not take to writing out of any love of literature. He did not write to 'entertain' like Phadke, or to 'educate' like Khandekar, nor to 'portray life' like Madkholkar. He wrote to 'express himself,' portray his own experiences.

This is the first indication of a shift in the writer's attitude or approach to literature. This change has been noted by some discerning Marathi critics (2) And P.Y. makes no mystery of it. He clearly states that he took to writing to 'express himself'. He felt the first literary stirrings when he accidentally fell in love. It changed his whole outlook of life. P.Y. has also mentioned at other places, the motive behind his writing.

" The inspiration behind my novels is not any kind of intellectual belief or conviction, but my loyalty to my intense self-experience ". (3) or " Writing in my case is a natural and spontaneous expression of my life ".

1) Prof. Kusumavati Deshpande : ' Marathi Sahitya ' .

Maharashtra Information Centre, New Delhi, 1966, p. 58-59.

2) Prof. W. L. Kulkarni : ' Drishti Ani Drishtikon ' .

3) ' P.Y. Deshpande Yanchya Kadambarya ' - an article in Bhavitavya Weekly, 31-10-1948.



Then again "Spontaneous expression in words and action is the only meaning of my life". \*

These statements provide us a clue to P.Y.'s attitude towards his writing and also to an understanding of his novels.

The conclusion is obvious. As an 'expression of self-experience' his novels are bound to be subjective. They are all about himself, his experiences and his opinions. They tell us about the various phases of his life, the evolution of his thinking, his personality-growth. Taken together they tell us the life-story of the man behind them-P.Y. As such, P.Y. is never absent in his novels, rather he stands there as a central pivotal figure loudly advocating his ideas and feelings, overshadowing other characters and manipulating them and also the plot.

## HIS NOVELS

Between 1927 to 1978, P.Y. wrote ten novels. For the sake of convenience and in the context of different phases of his life, they can be clearly divided into four groups.

From 1927 to 1933: This group consists of 3 novels BANDHANACHYA PALIKADE (1927), SUKALELE PHOOL (1931), and SADAPHULI (1933). They were written when he was under the impact of love with faith in 'Navamatavad'. As such he was a staunch advocate of individual freedom and a vehement critic of all types of traditionalism. He believed that every individual has a right to choose his own partner and way of life.

P.Y.'s first novel BANDHANACHYA PALIKADE created quite a stir. It presents the portrayal of idealistic love and urge for individual freedom. The hero-Prabhakar - the son of an aristocratic traditional Brahmin family - falls in love with Maina - the daughter of a so-called prostitute. Actually she is not a prostitute in the real sense, as she is forced by adverse circumstances to become the mistress of a rich man. Though born on the wrong side of the blanket,

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\* 'Mee Ka Lihito?' (Article) Pratibha Prakashan, Aurangabad, p. 90-92.

Maina is pure, cultured and self-respecting. But Prabhakar's shocked parents very hotly oppose their marriage. When Prabhakar fails in converting them, he leaves home and marries her. Later Maina accidentally meets her father-in-law, wins him by her virtuous behaviour and is finally accepted by the family.

The theme was thought to be uncommon and bold in those days, if not today, and the novel brought immediate success. It was the first strong assertion of the individual freedom by a rebellious, intelligent youth. His advocacy of it was rational and convincing. The rationale behind such freedom was that "Each individual mind is unique in itself", the hero says, "His experience is entirely his own and as such society has no right to dump traditional ideas on him". The hero, a rebel, like his creator, takes an extreme iconoclastic posture and condemns all our religious books - "the Shrutis, Smritis, and Puranas should be burnt as they are the source of our obsolete, dead customs which suffocate the individual." Our marriage system, in which the marrying couple has no say, is in his opinion nothing short of prostitution.

The heroine too is not far behind. According to her, "the whole creation is bound by restrictions, except a human being who is endowed with a will, intellect and emotions. As a human being I choose to live in the unrestricted, free atmosphere!"

It was the first time that such a strong and intelligent defence of individual freedom was presented in the Marathi novel. The story was well-knit, the characters adoringly alive. The novel was appreciated by common readers as well as literary world for its boldness and its artistic form. And P.Y. was hailed as their champion by progressive section.

Popularity of this novel led P.Y. to write two more novels on a similar theme but with its other aspects. *SUKALELE PHOOL* shows two noble, self-denying educated persons in love. But they cannot marry because the hero is separated from his incompatible wife, but cannot be divorced, while the heroine is a child-widow. Though her doctor cousin is eager to marry her, she is not. She prefers to carry her

cross. Thus the loving couple, cherishing their tender idealistic love, part for ever. The novel is tidy and artistic, the story is not burdened with writer's musings or asides. The experience here is direct. The writer is successful in creating a delicate, poetic atmosphere required for this tender tragic story, with artistic dialogues, use of symbolism and psychology in character-portrayal.

SADA PHULI, though not as neat and artistic, is again the love-story of two persons belonging to different social strata. Tima, the educated beautiful daughter of a rich, position-conscious, ambitious man and Ashoka a poor but proud poet. Tima's is a complex personality. She is finical and vascillating, too duty - conscious and lacks warmth. She is divided between the choice of her heart and the choice of her father - a rich, England-returned well-employed suitor-Ashoka. She appears to be torn between love and duty and plays with both the young men. The triangle takes various turns. Ultimately it is Shantanu, the adapted son in the family and the key figure in the story who champions the cause of two lovers and helps them unite.

Speaking through the hero, P.Y. expatiates on his earlier thesis of the uniqueness of individual experience and its significance, without understanding which there can be no real progress. To him the tradition represented the 'static state' of society, while individual experience meant 'dynamism'. In structure this novel is more complicated and less effective than the two previous ones. Here the writer gave the story a philosophic framework. Also, the psychological complexity of Tima's character has not been clearly brought out. The reader fails to understand the motive behind her actions and reactions. These three novels established P.Y.'s reputation as a progressive novelist and a champion of modern generation. "Soon he won a substantial following".\*

From 1932 to 1942 : In this period P.Y. seems to have come out of his love-nest and started looking at the wide world. His next 3 novels came out after a gap of six years. VISHAL JEEVAN (1939), KALI RANI (1941), and NAVE JAG (1942).

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\* M.D. Hatkanangalekar: 'V.S. Khandekar', Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1986, p. 17.

These novels belong to the Marxist phase of his life. As a regional leader of the INTUC, he had entered into political arena fighting for the cause of the farmers and mill workers. He was arrested twice. He found in Marxism the only solution to fundamental problems of the farmers. Gandhism he thought, was rather tame and inadequate. These three novels depict P.Y.'s experiences as a Marxist labour leader over a decade. Also the development of his social consciousness.

The hero of VISHAL JEEVAN like P.Y. is arrested in the farmers' agitation and comes out of prison a changed man. His previous reputation as a writer appears to him insignificant. He wants to burn the new book he has written during his imprisonment, as he is afraid of the new thoughts it contained may not be liked by his wife and friends. He now thinks that individual life has meaning only in a larger context, and wants to fly away from his cosy love nest-his home. Yet he is doubtful how his wife would respond to his new thinking.

First part of the novel deals with the how and the why of the farmers' agitation he had led. The severe famine had affected the poor as well as rich farmers of Berar, he being one of them. But such single-handed, sporadic agitations were not enough to solve their problems permanently. To seek a broader base to his work, he leaves his home and goes to Bombay. Where he meets friends who think alike. There he finds himself attracted towards mill-workers agitation led by his friend's daughter. His wife later joins him there - signifying that his communistic thinking has been accepted by her.

Both KALI RANI and NAVE JAG are basically psychological novels set against a pronounced political background. The pattern of their plots is also somewhat similar, as they deal with psychological complexes of the two heroines. There is conflict of opposite personalities of the two couple the simultaneously intimate-distant relationship between Prakash and Rajani in KALI RANI due to Rajani's fear of the sex, and love-hate relationship between Tina and Taru in NAVE JAG. The origin of the complexes of these women, the tension caused by them, their gradual fading away into a harmonious, healthy relationship ending in marriage, the pattern is symbolic and

purposely chosen to illustrate the Hegelian theory of dialectics (of thesis - antithesis - synthesis). It depicts 'the process of change through conflict of opposing forces'.

The experiment was intelligently planned but did not quite succeed. P.Y.'s plus points in earlier novels turn here into defects, due to their inartistic handling. The story and philosophy in it do not fuse. Emotional intensity turns into 'extravagance of emotion'. Expression of self-experience degenerates into self-centredness, and mystical lyricism into abstraction, and airy nothings. With no effort to disguise the self, the writer plays the pivotal role, manipulating other characters, and what we get are longwinded, boring speeches and boring narrations from the hero, while other characters move about without bodies, like shadows. P.Y. is only preoccupied with the inner world of the hero at the cost of other constituents of the novel. The artistic balance as seen in *SUKALELE PHOOL* is lost here.

What has gone wrong? Did P.Y. lose interest in novel - writing? How did he lose his touch for which he was so much praised?

It seems P.Y.'s learning and his thoughts were not assimilated into his experience. As a result, his ideas remain mainly on the intellectual level and do not become a part of his experience, thus P.Y. could not convert his experiences into works of art. In his hands novel became a tool to express his ideas and opinions. Gone was the artistic skill of his earlier novels. Here thought predominates over his art.

"One feels disappointed to see a fine, meditative talent going waste due to lack of artistic discipline", to quote Kusumavati's words, (1) P.Y.'s novels suffered from extremism - extreme individualism, extreme emotionalism and extreme subjectivity in propounding his opinions, losing objectivity. "P.Y.'s novels had politics at the core, but it (experience) was smothered by extravagance of emotion and style". (2)

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- (1) Kusumavati Deshpande : 'Marathi Kadambariche Pahile Shatak,' Part II, Mumbai Marathi Sahitya Sangh, 1956, p. 69.
- (2) M.V. Rajadhyaksha : 'Contemporary Indian Literature', Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1957, p. 163.

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P.Y.'s popularity as a novelist was thus eclipsed. It was even said that form of the novel did not suit his genius. This opinion was strengthened by his next book ANAMIKACHI CHINTANIKA which was not strictly speaking a novel, but rather a loosely - structured narration. Not even that, they were reflections of the hero. The book gave ample scope for P.Y. to talk and reflect profusely about himself and was found to be a success. He did not seem to bother about aesthetic aspect of his novels and stopped writing them for next 15 years.

From 1952 to 1962: This was a period of spiritual upheaval in P.Y.'s life. It could be termed as his Twilight period. He was standing at the cross-roads and does not appear to be sure which way to turn. Two novels belong to this period : AHUTI (Sacrificial Offering) 1959, and CHINTANIKA (Meditations) 1953 to 1962.

Actually the latter comes first, as he began writing it in July 1953 in YUGWANI (a journal of Vidarbha Sahitya Sangh of which he was the editor then). Its first 6 chapters were completed by May 1954, while the 7th appeared 6 years later, after his meeting with J. Krishnamurti.

This was a period of great anguish for P. Y. He had lost faith in Marxism - and all other isms for that matter - which had shaken the very foundation of P.Y.'s existence. Abandoning all outside activities, he had shut himself in a shell. He immersed himself in deep philosophic studies with the hope of seeing some light from somewhere. Going from dialectical materialism to spiritualism was bound to be extremely painful.

This state of mind is reflected in the CHINTANIKA. This barely outlined story displays the moving tale of a man who is confined to bed in a hospital. His illness is peculiar which baffles the expert doctors and cannot be diagnosed. There is nothing else wrong with the patient except sudden non-functioning of his spine. Confined to bed, the hero reminisces about past life. His past appears to him meaningless and future dark. His broken spine is obviously symbolic of his uprooted life.

In the last chapter, written after Krishnamurti's meeting, the hero sees new light. He, like the writer, is suddenly cured and equally suddenly walks out of the hospital in front of the gaping doctors! He has found solution to his own problems as also to total human dilemma.

AHUTI appeared before P.Y.'s meeting with Krishnamurti. We get a glimpse of his gradual spiritual transformation, which he has described in its introduction:

"In the last 15 years I have witnessed a violent spiritual storm in which all my previous beliefs were shaken and uprooted. In seeking a new faith the study of Marathi saint poetry and Vedic philosophy showed me a new ray of light in the surrounding darkness."

"The stage to which my intellectual journey has reached has given shape to this novel".

"This novel is the outline of a new synthesis of all my past experiences. I think, without the touch of the spiritual, it is impossible to get a real vision of the relationship between the soul and the universe!"

The story of AHUTI is woven in P.Y.'s usual pattern i.e. it has a trio-Isha, a writer journalist - Vidhyadhar - a thinker and an aristocratic Zamindar's son-and Ahuti, an educated daughter of a film star. All of them are intellectuals and of a high spiritual calibre. Isha and Vidya are old friends, both foreign-educated but disillusioned by western culture, both in their way seeking solutions to human problems in Indian philosophy. Vidya attains some Yogic powers, falls in love with Ahuti at first sight. But his love is of spiritual nature. After a storm in a tea-cup, both are united. Spiritual touch to life is its main theme.

But emphasis in the novel is not on the love-story but on inadequacies of many aspects of Western civilization and greatness of Indian culture which is re-discovered by these two friends. A large portion of the novel is devoted to the discussion on this subject.

"Has a gap of 15 years changed P.Y.'s style of novel-writing?" One is tempted to say "No". We find P.Y.'s usual characteristics here too - the bare outline of the plot, economy of characters - and all of them more than life-size, a lover-couple, lengthy learned dialogues and a framework of some philosophy - that means the ingredients are the same, but its fabric is different. One finds this change at each step. It is dyed in spiritual mysticism. The nature of love has changed. The problems are different. Perhaps P.Y. was the first Marathi novelist to choose such difficult subject for a theme. He has succeeded to a large extent. But basic nature of his writing and lengthy dialogues and discourses mar novel's art.

From 1975 to 1979 : By this time the writer is perhaps aware of the adverse criticism on his style of novel-writing. We find this awareness reflected in his next two novels also : BHERIGHOSH KI DHARMGHOSH? and AMULAGRA.

The first one- P.Y.'s only historical novel (1978) - was written at Rajghat. Putting someone else in the centre rather than himself is a pleasant change. And the novel has turned out to be good - both in content and form. The novel deals with the religious conquest of emperor Ashoka, but portrays only the later part of his life. This is also P.Y.'s major novel and quite different from others.

This is the first novel where we do not find the writer telling his life-story. Being a historical novel, it has kept P.Y. away and made him look at the theme more objectively. Also, he has done his home work - the necessary research - well.

P.Y. we know, had been attracted to the Buddha since boyhood. This attraction grew with time but it was for his philosophy rather than this biography. In his 'Vanaprastha' at Rajghat P.Y. made an in-depth study of the subject. So much so, that it inspired him to write three books on it.

In Ashoka-the Buddhist emperor - P.Y. found a living example of that philosophy extended on a national scale. Ashoka stands here as not merely a philanthropic, religious expansionist, but also a sagacious



statesman, a shrewd, and clever strategist. Ashoka's religious conquest is a unique example in world history. Because in writer's opinion its weapon is not the sword or military strategy but religious force. And the latter is more effective than the former in the longer run.

To display this the writer has picked up suitable historical events and characters from Ashoka's life. In that sense it is a historical novel. But as Dr. Hazariprasad Dwivedi, a well-known Hindi critic, says in his introduction, "this novel is much more than that. History is newly defined here". In a rather similar vein to Toyanbe's theory of 'Challenge and response', P.Y. says, "History is not the story of dynasties and empires or military conquests but a process of man's collective will to forge ahead through conflict with material process. What was 'unbelievable' before was made believable by Ashoka - a conquest of the spiritual over the material".

According to this, the main effort here is to project in a new light, the various aspects of Buddhist philosophy covering the whole gamut of life. We see this displayed in Ashoka's life. He is not just a 'believer' but an 'embodiment' of that philosophy. The writer has been successful in giving new insights into Ashoka's character and events in his religious conquest. Ashoka had to fight against the opposing 'Shakta' Sect represented by his ambitious illegitimate son Jaluk and his wife beautiful enchantress Ishandevi - the Shakta Sadhaka. In this, Ashoka is helped by his third wife Tishyarakshita - the head of Buddhist women's Dharmaparishad, his youngest son doe-eyed Kunal and his guru Acharya Upagupta. The characters though extraordinary without exception, are finely portrayed. The plot is well-structured, everything well-set in the background of Buddhist philosophy. P.Y.'s tendency to discourse appears curbed here. On the whole the novel does make an interesting reading.

AMULAGRA (The Radical Cure) 1980 is P.Y.'s last novel which according to him is based on one of his fantastic dreams, has a sort of dreamy quality and reads like a fantasy. It is also based on a Buddhistic theory of human transformation.

Once raped by her lover, Anita revolts against all types of male

violence. Suddenly leaving her home, she takes shelter in an Ashrama where she meets an extraordinary doctor-Vishwanath. He is an expert in western medicine and well-versed with Buddhist theories. Her anger affects Anita so deeply that her fair skin turns black overnight. Dr. Vishwanath is known around as a doctor 'curing the incurable'. Using the Buddhist theory of 'Kaya Parivartan' (Body transformation) he experiments on Anita. The theory includes three stages or three aspects of body as 'Sahajkaya', 'Dharmkaya' and 'Sambhogkaya'. The experiment cures Anita and in the end lands her in marriage with her doctor.

The novel is surprisingly neat and tidy, plot well-built, dialogues short and precise. Though the reader has to wade his way through some heavy stuff which is beyond the understanding of average reader. But then P.Y. never wrote for an average reader! The Reader had to be acquainted with the subject he wrote about.

#### TO SUM UP

To sum up the essence of P.Y.'s novels and place them in proper perspective of the history of the Marathi novel is thus not easy.

With each phase of his life, P.Y.'s learning increased, his experience became more and more complex and abstruse. P.Y. found this complexity perhaps difficult to put into an artistic form of the novel. As a result, in addition to their unconventional subjects and themes they gradually became more and more recondite, abtuse and heavy. Readers are awed by his vast learning, his originality in choosing themes for his novels. But to understand them they had to be equally equipped with the philosophy behind them.

Even his sympathetic critics had to note these short-comings and their causes. That his learning did not assimilate with his experience, that he could not convert his experience into works of art, because his thought and art did not fuse together. That too much of subjectiveness degenerated into self-centredness. P.Y.'s personality was dominated by extreme individualism and his writing by self-experience. It was in a way beneficial but in other way harmful. "His self-centredness put

limitations to his writing", says Dr. A.N. Deshpande (1) P.Y.'s colleague and well-known Marathi critic, "Because of the high stuff in his novels they remained confined to the readership of an exclusive club of high brows and intellectuals". (2) Bapat-Godbole regret that "P.Y. was gifted with all the qualities that go to make a great novelist, but P.Y.'s novels did not have the fortune to become popular". (3)

"However, in the evolution of the Marathi novel, P.Y. has a permanent place amongst the first -rank novelists of his age." (4) He has earned his own special niche in its history. P.Y. gave many new things to Marathi novel. He introduced many new subjects in it, and providing philosophic framework for their themes, he brought many new areas of experience within its purview - and gave it a stature.

P.Y. has many firsts to his credit in novel-writing. First and foremost was his new attitude towards literature. Literature to P.Y. was not a 'means to something'. Till his time novel was used for some purpose or the other - as a means to 'entertain', to 'educate and reform' or 'to criticise life'. In P.Y. we find literature born to express his experience. This was a definite shift in the attitude of a writer. This point has been underlined by Prof. W.L.Kulkarni in his critical article 'Drishti Ani Drishtikon'. "In P.Y.'s novels", he says, "We find the first positive shift in the writer's attitude of not looking at literature as a 'means'."

Secondly, P.Y. brought into the Marathi novel a genuinely 'modern' outlook of looking at life. He looked at life's problems with a modern mind. As such he had global view of life. He looked at individual problems as basic human problems in the world- context. Thus he

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- (1) Dr. A.N.Deshpande : 'Adhunik Wagnmaycha Itihas' ('Kadambarichya Jagat'), Venus Prakashan, Pune, 1958, p.124-134.
- (2) Kusumavati Deshpande : 'Marathi Kadambariche Pahile Shatak', Part II, Mumbai Marathi Sahitya Sangh, 1956, p. 207-28.
- (3) Bapat - Godbole : 'Marathi Kadambari : P.Y. Deshpande', Venus Prakashan, Punc, p. 287-90.
- (4) Ibid.

gave to Marathi novel a new intellectual and global dimension.

Thirdly, he was the first to introduce new theories of psychoanalysis, while depicting his characters. Amongst his contemporaries like Khandekar and Madkholkar, we find a general understanding of psychology. "But in P.Y. there is a deeper understanding of the subconscious, inner human mind." \* Its portrayal was to become later on an important component of Marathi novel. P.Y.'s depiction of the complexes of Tima (Sadaphuli), Rajani (Kali Rani), Taru (Nave Jag), Anita (Amulagra) has been entirely original and new to the Marathi novel.

P.Y. was also the first to depict experiences of rural life and its special problems. In the first part of his novel VISHAL JEEVAN, he has depicted the sad plight of the Berar farmers, especially when they had to face recurring famines, and the Govt's apathy resulting in their helplessness. This portrayal is live and convincing as it was based on P.Y.'s own experience.

P.Y. may also be named in first to introduce unusual subjects like spiritual mysticism and philosophies, spiritual health-cures, and religious conquests. Sometimes he may not have succeeded in his experiments, but sometimes he did. That he failed making such novels popular is another matter.

P.Y. was also been appreciated for using mystic lyricism and symbolism, especially in his earlier novels. He retained that power till his last novel.

### **A WRITER OF LOVE**

P.Y. was, inspite of his obsession with philosophy, basically a writer of 'Love'. The statement would appear strange. But a close look would reveal that the central theme of all his novels is 'Love', however

\* Chandrakant Bandiwadekar : 'Marathi Kadambari , Chintan Ani Sameeksha ' : Anilkumar Mehta Publishing House, Pune, 1983, p. 48-49.

different their background. But this 'Love', is with a difference. This love is not of a 'boy-meets girl' or "they lived happily ever after" variety of Phadke. Nor its idealistic, romantic counterpart of Khandekar. P.Y.'s love is of serious, deeper and higher category, Power of all-absorbing nature and involving the two personalities for life. Love for P.Y. was not merely a romance, nor eroticism, but an ever-lasting bond between two hearts and minds, bodies and souls. "Love", says P.Y., " is a life-force, leading human being to higher and higher achievement and fulfillment."

All his novels-right from the first one, when a college youth he adored Shelley and Browning to his last one, when he was living like a Yogi, the central characters of his novels are couples-in-love. The bond between Prabhakar and Maina (BANDHANACHYA PALIKADE) and Vishwanath-Anita (AMULAGRA) is not basically different in nature. His couples fall in love at first sight, feel like souls met, and remain in love forever, however different or strong their personalities. It suggests the involvement of two free individuals, bound in exclusive devotion to each other for life. Their love may appear patternised to some but its nature changes with each stage.

In spite of these common characteristics, their loves have subtle difference. P.Y. has portrayed a variety of aspects and levels of love-physical, intellectual, romantic, platonic, spiritual or mystical-love of many heroes and heroins, they would appear to be different period-portraits of the same couple. All these couples are attracted towards each other at first sight, they feel like 'souls cleft in twain'. They overcome opposition and ultimately unite in marriage. One cannot help thinking the writer is presenting himself and his beloved in different garbs, and telling his own love story as it evolved through different stages of life. We must remember that P.Y. led a happy married life throughout. The exceptions are only two novels: SUKALELE PHOOL and BHERIGHOSH KI DHARMGHOSH? The first one is artistically P.Y.'s best novel, when P.Y. could write objectively and artistically and had not become so absorbed with his own self. The other novel is historical, where he had to keep himself aloof from

the story, and we do not meet the character P.Y. in it.

Nevertheless, P.Y.'s preoccupation with self has in some ways turned it into a plus point of his novels. It has given his novels of rare earnestness and high emotion which touches our inner recesses of mind. It has also given us a rich fare of his experiences and ideas.

To sum up, in content, style and approach P.Y.'s novels fall into a separate category of their own. They are different in nature from other Marathi novels written by his contemporaries. And though they did not become popular later on, they have positively a place of their own in the history of Marathi novel.

As remarked by some critics, " The intellectual, emotional world painted by P.Y. in his novels is not meant for common readers but for the selected few. The originator and the experimenter in him always wanted to tread the unfurrowed ground ". He had hitched his wagon to an unknown star. That he walked on that way till the end speaks of the originality of the man. He refused to fall in the common rut !

P.Y. thus belongs to an exclusive club of writers - a thinker, philosopher and an innovator. And his novels evoke a response which like the writer, is different and if understood, exclusive. He did not bother if it cost him in popularity.

### III

## AS A CRITIC & JOURNALIST

Apart from a couple of interviews and articles about his own writing, P.Y. did not dabble in literary criticism. He did not write book-reviews or their critical evaluations as Phadke, Khandekar or Madkholkar did. But he was definitely interested in the theory of literature. A theoretician that he was, he did put his mind into it and had a literary theory of his own. He has expounded it in 'Navi Mulyen' which consists of seven articles on Marxist theory of criticism and four of his speeches which reflect his ideas on literary theory.

The articles on the Marxist theory were first published in PRATIBHA - a literary journal of Bombay, in 1936. They are a rejoinder to SAHITYA ANI SAMAJ JEEVAN (Literature and Social life) written by the wellknown communist writer Lalji Pendse. Being the first book in Marathi on Marxist theory of literature, Lalji's book soon caught the attention of Marathi writers, P.Y. was among them.

It may be noted that P.Y. in 1936, was still an adorer of Marxist Philosophy and as such he should have gone the whole hog with its literary theory. But he did not. Instead, he criticized its weakness and illogicality of many points made by Pendse in his theory. P.Y.'s book can thus be called a 'Critique on Marxist Theory of Literature'.

### MARXIST THEORY

Attempts are made to describe and define the influence of society on literature, and to prescribe and 'Judge' the position of literature in society. This sociological approach to literature is particularly cultivated by the Marxist critics not only to study these relations between literature and society but to have their own clearly defined concepts of what these relations should be, both in the present society and as well as future

classless society. Thus they are not only students of literature and society but also the prophets of the future, its monitors and its propagandists too.

Marxist criticism is preoccupied with questions like the sociology of the writer, his milieu, his social ideology, the social content of his works of literature, the problem of audience or the social influence of literature. They are indeed important for the study of literature. But they all form part of its extrinsic study. This kind of study does not provide us with any 'objective criteria'. Therefore, to use them as norms for evaluative or judicial criticism is dangerous, as they are all non-literary, political or ethical criteria.

The social situation, one may admit, seems to determine the possibility of the realization of certain aesthetic values, but not the values themselves. \*

The Marxist emphasis on the economic influence on (ideology or) development of art, i.e. seeking the causal relationship between general development of art, and general development of society leads to some funny explanations. As such, it fails to provide a rational foundation for aesthetics and hence evaluative criticism.

Marxist criticism is also noted for its effort of directly linking the mode of economic production with production of art. Its concepts of class-art, proletariat - art, and applying them to judge the work of art is also peculiar. Their efforts of establishing exact relations between the production of literature and its literary foundation all these have failed to provide any exact criteria.

### **P.Y.'S CRITIQUE**

Marxist theory of class-art and use of class struggle as criteria for literary evaluation was vigorously propagated by Lalji Pendse. It came under the heavy fire from P.Y. According to P.Y. relations between art, society and communism are very delicate and complicated. Even though a staunch admirer of communist philosophy, P.Y. can see

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\* Rene Wellek Austin Warren : 'Theory of Literature', Chapter 9, p. 106.



the use of class-criteria for evaluating work of art as dangerous, even ridiculous. For support, he extensively quotes from Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Ralph Fox and other communist thinkers for his arguments.

Even Marx himself, he says, was actually aware of the obliqueness of the relationship between literature and society. In his famous book 'The Critique of Political Economy' Marx says, "Certain periods of development of Art stand in no direct relation with general development of society, nor with the material basis and the skeleton structure of its organization, witness the example of the Greeks as compared with medieval nations, even with Shakespeare".

Then again : "Distinction should always be made between the material transformation of economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural sciences, and the legal, philosophical, religious or aesthetic. In short ideological forms in which men become conscious of the conflict and fight it out".

Commenting on this statement by Marx, Ralph Fox in his 'Relation of Literature to Dialectical Materialism' clearly says that : "Marx fully understood that these activities of the human mind are of a peculiarly refined and delicate character and that it is quite impossible to relate them crudely and directly to an economic basis".\*

Lenin had clearly stated that, " The communist or proletariate Art must be built on the basis of old art processes. New class art will be produced only after the proletariate is educated and trained in the communist production-system". Lenin's opinion had been publicized in 1923 in 'Pravada' - the communist mouthpiece, as an art-policy of communist Russia by Trotsky who said further that, "A work of art should be judged by its own laws. The Marxian methods are not the same as the artistic".

But this art-policy was abandoned by Stalin after the death of Lenin and banishment of Trotsky out of Russia. In 1928 'Rap' (Russian Association of Proletarian writers) was formed with the aim of controlling the production of art and literature and literary policy of

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\* Ralph Fox : ' Aspects of Dialectical Materialism ', p.60.

Russia. According to Max Eastman this organization was created mainly to oppose and destroy Trotsky's art-policy. But the Rap's declaration that "Art is a class weapon" and its policy to produce uniform; propagandistic art and literature did not quite succeed. In 1932 the Rap was fortunately wound up.

But in NAVI MULYEN, P.Y. goes only half-way in opposing the Marxist theory of Art criticism. He had firm faith in basic Marxist theories of historical materialism and Marx's dialectics. When he says that, "History of mankind is the history of class struggle" and that the "mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life". P.Y. then translates the word 'Spiritual' as 'Cultural' (Sanskritic) and includes Literature and Art as part of cultural life, but on the other hand he firmly states that Marx's economic theory cannot be applied to Art and that theories of economic production cannot be directly linked with artistic production. He ridicules the theory of 'class art' advocated by Pendse. "There could be 'class-culture', P.Y. says, but the word 'class art' are totally meaningless." P.Y. also criticizes the weakness of the Marxian theory of the 'representativeness' of literature or the 'mirror' theory. According to it a writer inevitably expresses or mirrors his experience and conception of life. Literature therefore 'is' and 'should be' representative of his age and society and its greatness must be judged accordingly. P.Y. finds this statement as 'false' 'ideological' and 'meaningless'. The artist is an inseparable part of society, but he is not just a wooden block, lifeless like a 'mirror': Art is not a photograph of society. "The beauty and the skill of writer", says P.Y. "lies in the living dynamic humanity which is the outcome of an emotional-intellectual conflict between the society and the individual". Origin of Art, according to P.Y. lies in this conflict between the desires, hopes and ambitions, his daily struggle i.e. the consciousness of an individual for progress as against the oppressing traditional, and statusquo-loving, bourgeoisie, social consciousness born out of class opposition. In short art is the self-expressing, emotional revolt of an individual against the static consciousness of society.

While this series of P.Y.'s articles was appearing in 'Pratibha', it was

eagerly read, as Marathi readers were interested in Marxist ideas on literature. This battle between two pen-wielding communist theorists proved very interesting.

#### **FOUR SPEECHES ON LITERARY CRITICISM**

NAVI MULYEN also includes texts of P.Y.'s four speeches delivered at various literary conferences, which tell us about his ideas on literary theory.

- (1) KALA NIRMITI (Creation of Art) : Presidential address to the 5th session of Baroda Wangmaya Parishad ( 16th January, 1937).
- (2) WANGMAYA ANI WASTAVATA (Literature and Reality), speech delivered to Maharashtra Wangmaya Mandal (23rd November 1940).

When these two lectures were delivered, P.Y. was still under Marxist influence. Here he reiterates his literary theory wherein he discusses the origion of art, its creative process, the aim of art and its power. Art originates in the conflict between the onward-going individual's mind and the inter static society. He describes the creative process thus : first the social life vs. the individual life conflict between the two painful emotional agitation in the writers mind continuous conflict and opposition finally self - expression in a work of art.

"The aim of art", according to P.Y., " is to make life happier, more beautiful and noble". He believes that self-expression or creating art is the means of art. Art is thus an 'act of revolt of the writer, as well as a symbolic act'.

Such art, born out of revolt against the static, bourgeoisie society, its values, morality and religion supporting these, can be the only weapon of revolution. Dynamism is thus the truly characteristic of true art. That means P.Y. believes art to be the product of class struggle though he lays emphasis on the individual mind and uniqueness of art creation. But by class he does not mean economic division but the bourgeoisie and ' progressive' classification.

It is not difficult to see that P.Y.'s theory of art is based on Hegel's Dialectical theory. We have already seen his use of this theory in his

three novels VISHAL JEEVAN, KALI RANI and NAVE JAG, wherein he depicts the struggle between the two opposite consciousnesses of the two individuals.

Says P.Y. : "Artist's duty is not to propagate already accepted theories but present a new synthesis of experiences between the individual and the universe, a new humanism, new meaningful relationship between man and man and new humanitarian consciousness, and a new horizon appearing through this new synthesis". To him "these are the main characteristics of Reality as expressed through art".

"Therefore the aim of art is not to show what appears in life but what should be", he says, "this new consciousness is the touch of Reality. A real artist cannot keep distance between his life and art. Those who cannot do this are not artists but mere propagandists".

This, in P.Y.'s eyes, is the relationship between the Literature and the Reality.

### (3) YANTRAYUGIN PRALAYA AND THE DUTY OF ARTISTS :

This lecture was delivered only a few months after the use of Atom Bomb in the World War - II. Like other thinkers the world over, these events deeply affected P.Y.

An admirer of science and its achievements, he felt frustrated and horrified by the destructive power of science, and the futility of the slogan of ' Waging war to end all wars ! ' He felt science has brought the world to the brink of total annihilation of mankind, and as H.G. Wells said, " The world had come to the end of its tether ". World wars had shown that all political ideologies were equally meaningless as long as man did not change intrinsically; that the workers of the world cannot unite. The workers in the capitalist countries will ever remain the enemies of workers in the socialist societies, because of their conflicting economic interests.

"What is the duty of the artists/writers in such a situation?" P.Y. asks. " The answer", he says, " lies in the modern Indian Revolution which is based on non-violence, emphasizing the spiritual qualities

of man. The writers should teach man to develop courage, to refuse being a party to exploitation, domination and destruction of man by man'.

#### (4) ADHUNIK MARATHI SAHITYACHI BHOOMIKA (The Role of Modern Marathi Literature)

"The inspiration behind the Modern Marathi and other Indian literature", says P.Y. "is the power of cultural Renaissance which reflects the new humanitarian values and new way of life. Even though this way of life is called new, it is essentially Indian, it is born out of resistance and revolt against the old religious, moral traditions which were against individual freedom and equality. New values were born in the Indian inner consciousness."

For development of this inner consciousness everything else in the world should be given up. 'Atmarthe Prithivim Tyajet', As the wise men have said, "Give up the world for the sake of your soul". The role of modern literature is to kindle the new consciousness in the mind of the individual and keep the new values alive. The Marathi literature has just stepped out of old boundaries and taken a flight in the immense space. If Modern Marathi Literature is really the flight of the Indian genius, this is the time when it should prove itself.

### JOURNALISTIC WRITINGS

P.Y.'s weekly journal in Marathi BHAVITAVYA which he started in 1940 became very popular, because of its war analysis and crisp writing. It became a byword in every home wherever it went. And soon it established P.Y.'s reputation as a radical thinker. His learned articles, first in defence of communism and later in praise of Gandhism were forthright and thought-provoking. Some of the series of his articles were compiled in book form. Two such compilations were notable and they speak of P.Y.'s journalistic style. His preoccupation with political philosophies, of analyzing their pros and cons and presenting them boldly is evidenced here :

#### (1) SOVIET RUSSIA ANI HINDUSTAN : (Soviet Russia And India)

Here P.Y. discusses the '*Volte Face*' of the Indian communists during World War II. The Marxist ideology which provided the only alternative to Capitalism and Imperialism, had given hope to millions of freedom-loving, progressive people the world over by its promise of classless society and its experiment in Russia. The Russian Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky was later distorted during Stalin's regime into a very repressive and cruel totalitarian state. During the war Russia was first an ally of Nazi Germany and hence an enemy of Britain. Thus the Indian communists also became sworn enemies by Imperialist Britain and friends of Indian nationalists. But in 1941, Germany broke its treaty with Russia and treacherously invaded it, the Indian communists suddenly changed their stance. They who criticised Imperialistic, suppressive policies of Britain from 1935 to 1941, turned their coats and became anti-nationalists. They started calling Indian freedom fighters of 'Quit India' movement as fifth columnists and joined hands with the same Imperialist Britain in hounding them out by reporting on them. P.Y. exposing the communists, realised the true nature of communists.

## (2) GANDHIJICH KA? ( Why only Gandhi ? 1944)

This is another compilation of P.Y.'s articles which advocates the greatness of Gandhian philosophy. Disillusioned by the Indian communists and communism as a whole, P.Y. found solace in Gandhian philosophy which had expressed itself in 'Quit India Movement' in 1942. Largely biographical, these articles narrate why P.Y. was drawn towards Gandhism - for which he had not much respect previously. Here he tells that Gandhiji's philosophy of non-violent resistance was equally revolutionary as one witnessed in 'Quit India Movement', wherein the whole nation rose up as one man. Violence can never solve any problem permanently, while non-violent method of Gandhiji used as a weapon against all evil systems is the only solution to the contemporary problems of war-torn, violence-weary world.

P.Y. also extols Gandhiji's concept of decentralization as an effective answer to centralized economy which leads to centralization of power as found in capitalist systems as well as so -

**called socialist systems which results in nothing but state capitalism. Both of them are also varieties of Imperialism - the first a capitalist imperialism, the other an ideological imperialism.**

## IV

### THE TWILIGHT PERIOD

Between 1952 to 1962 - the twilight period in P.Y.'s life, the disenchanted P.Y. had seen the futility of struggle for material life and had turned to religious-spiritual world. He had taken to the study of Ancient Indian thought and Marathi Saint poetry. But this study was more or less on the traditional lines. There was no new direction to his thinking. What is more important, he did not seem satisfied fully with what he got out of them. This ended with Krishnamurti's entry into his life and a new phase began.

During this decade of exploring and probing, P.Y. wrote two novels, commentaries on the NASADIYA SUKTA & SAPTASHLOKI BHAGWAT, three big volumes of dissertation on Saint Dnyaneshwar's book AMRITANUBHAV and delivered two learned lectures in the prestigious LAD MEMORIAL LECTURES SERIES of All India Radio.

His two novels have already been covered in the previous chapter. While dealing with ancient Indian literature, commentary was the new form adopted by P.Y. It suited to his discourse-loving personality. The form is typically Indian adopted by our ancient learned scholars. P.Y. may have chosen it, because it did not have the inherent discipline of an artistic literary form, gave him complete freedom to perorate in any way he liked, yet left enough scope for creative thought. From this period onwards, we see P.Y. standing in a new role - a philosophic commentator. His future works will show that it suited well to his literary genius.

#### **NASADIYA SUKTA NEERAJAN (1958)**

This is a commentary in the verse form on 'Nasadiya Sukta' the 129th Sukta in the 10th Mandal (Chapter) of the 'Rigveda' - the first Veda of the Indian Aryans.



As Dr. S.D. Pendse, the erudite Marathi scholar says in the introduction, "Here P.Y. is reborn, he has become a Dwija (Twice born) - a brahmin in the real sense". In this book we find a metamorphosed P.Y. A rationalist turned into a spiritualist.

A one-time rebel, P.Y. in his earlier reformist zeal had proclaimed that, "All the Vedas, the Smritis and Puranas should be burnt down as they are the source of human bondage through customs and traditions". Now we find him reverently and humbly bowing to the Vedic sages and philosophers and standing as the modern commentator of the very books he once condemned.

The book is the outcome of P.Y.'s decade-long study of the Vedas and Upanishads. The verse-the form chosen by the writer, reminds us that the poet in him is still alive.

No one else except Abhitagni Rajawade, has written anything like a commentary on 'Nasadiya Sukta' in Marathi before. While, Tilak in his 'Gita Rahasya' makes a brief mention by extolling the incomparable ideas it contained. Some western philosophers like Kant took its real cognisance and translated it. P.Y. in that sense is its first Marathi commentator.

The speciality of P.Y.'s book is that it is the first complete extensive Marathi commentary on this Sukta. It encompasses the Sayana's Sanskrit commentary and the philosophies of the Shatdarshanas (Six systems of Vedic philosophy). And all this is set in a poetic form in Ovis (a Marathi meter) - about 1200 in number. Here we find in P.Y. an artistic creative commentator.

The importance of this Sukta cannot be overemphasized. It is the first such Sukta in which the Vedic seers have expressed their ideas of creation of the universe. That too in a very subtle, condensed form - as it consists of only seven stanzas of 28 lines! It was this 'Sukta' over which the Upanishads and Vedic philosophies have later built up their edifice. The Sukta expounds the relationship existing between the 'Atman' (Soul), the 'Brahman' (the superior most God in the ultimate reality and the 'Brahmand' (Cosmos). It describes the two states of creation - the 'Pralaya state!' (the state of dissolution of the Cosmos)

and the 'Pralayottar Sthiti' (post - dissolution and pre-creation state).

P.Y.'s commentary explains and interprets its meaning. It is replete with high - souled reflection and at places flights of poetic imagination. The verses are simple , lucid and direct, yet they contain the innermost meaning this Sukta contains.

This sudden poetic expression is the blessing of saint Dnyaneshwar, P.Y. says. It is not difficult to understand, as P.Y. was at the time studying the Saint's book 'Amritanubhav' which deals with the same subject. P.Y. was deeply impressed by it, as the Saint's mystic experience expressed in that poetry comes very close to or even almost identical to that expressed in the Sukta.

The word used by P.Y. for his commentary is 'Neerajan' which means the 'adoration' with lamps or candles, or to 'illuminate'. Its use is purposeful and significant, as P.Y. calls this Sukta, 'The fountain-head of all knowledge', 'the holy of the holies' and the 'nectar of all nectars'. It is the source of inspiration of the Upanishads. It is the religion of all religions-beyond religion, caste or creed. To know, the 'Nasadiya Sukta' is to know the creation of the Universe! The rendering of P.Y.'s verse can be made thus:

"Perceiving this there is nothing else to perceive!

Knowing this there is nothing left to know!

Tasting this is to taste everything!

As this is the nectar of all nectars!"

Talking about P.Y. as a writer, one tends to forget that he began his literary career with poetry. Many of his poems have been included in 'Nirmalya Mala' - joint publication of P.Y. and his wife! His novels had poetic strain no doubt. But to find that talent flowering in such an unexpected way is surprising. The Sukta gave him a sudden shattering insight, as he says.

### **ANUBHAVAMRIT RASRAHASYA**

This major work running into three volumes of 1800 pages could be called P.Y.'s 'Magnum opus' - not only in size but in content also. It is a commentary on saint Dnyaneshwar's book entitled AMRITANUBHAV

or ANUBHAVAMRIT. Tradition accepts both these titles. Considering the similarity of their subject, P.Y.'s turning from NASADIYA SUKTA to ANUBHAVAMRIT is not unexpected. In this outstanding poetic work, the Saint describes his own mystic experience of the 'Ultimate Reality' or God. As a piece of poetry it is unique - the only of its kind in Marathi. Myriad Marathi scholars have struggled to unravel and interpret its meaning in their commentaries.

But P.Y.'s is a commentary with a difference. It is not dry-as-dust-exegesis giving meanings of words and adding interpretative glosses according to individual understanding. P.Y.'s commentary is a sort of creative-critical appreciation giving flesh and blood to the original text. The special feature of P.Y.'s 'Rasrahasya' is his re-interpretation of Dnyaneshwar's mystic experience in the light of Krishnamurti's philosophy.

In his ATMAKATHAN - the introduction - P.Y. tells us how he started studying the text with the intention of writing on it. But he found the mystic experience described by the Saint so profound, distant and immense to grasp that he stopped working on it. In between he studied Krishnamurti and found his ideas throwing a new light on it and help reveal the inner meaning of the Saint's experience. As a result, we find impact of Krishnamurti's thoughts on P.Y.'s book.

P.Y.'s main thesis is that the nature and structure of the Reality as described by the Saint perfectly tallies with the one discovered by latest scientific theories. Only the science has not reached where the seer's mind has. It will come to these spiritual discoveries some day. It is already knocking on their doors! Dnyaneshwar appears to P.Y. the only saint after Buddha who recommends direct approach to the Reality- Truth-God! (as Krishnamurti also does) The Saint has named his book as 'Anubhavamrit' (Anubhav = Experience + Amrit = Immortal, non-dying, or nectar-elixir) which literally means Experience Immorta! or 'Elixir of Experience'.

Dnyaneshwar's book has no parallel. "It is of incomparable poetic beauty, philosophical profundity and immense wisdom," says P.Y., " Many saints have written about their mystic experience, but none can

equal the creative brilliance of Dnyaneshwar even in the world of literature. The book is Dnyaneshwar's testament of God-realization, his vision of the ultimate reality. It is the only book of its kind in which poetry of great beauty, philosophy and essence of life fuses into one intimate, direct experience". And as such, P.Y. asserts, it cannot tolerate any attempt to circumscribe it into any systematized thought-pattern.

Many such attempts have been made by Marathi commentators. They compare the philosophic thoughts in it to Shankara's ADVAIT PHILOSOPHY (Absolute Monism). It has also been labelled as CHIDVILASVADA (Bahirat & Dr. Pandit), ATMALEELAVADA (Laxmanshastri Joshi) SPHOORTIVADA (R.D. Ranade) POORNADVAITA (Poet Vinda Karandikar). "To label Dnyaneshwar's experience thus," says P.Y., "is to throw away the baby with water and hold fast to the empty tub!"

ANUBHAVAMRIT is a long poem composed of 800 Ovis (a Marathi verse form) divided into nine small chapters. The poem is intensely personal, yet profoundly cosmic, universal.

"Dnyaneshwar speaks of his experience of Reality which he feels vibrates into his whole being in the vast immensity of space, the creation takes place out of love-union of Shiva + Shakti (the goodness, the sacred principle and energy). Their love polarizes into the 'lover' and 'the beloved', but the lover becomes his own beloved, one becomes the two yet-in-one. In this experience tells the Saint, "The Seer in me vanishes, into the deluge of 'pure seeing'." He further says, "In reality we are 'that' - the world. We pervade everything, everywhere, all the time. We neither appear nor disappear, neither manifest ourselves, nor go back into the unmanifest. So, what is there to explain or expound of oneself by oneself? It is a state which is neither speech, nor non-speech. To talk about it is like drawing figures on water".

Dnyaneshwar holds hope for the liberation for everyone. He says, "Anyone - the liberated, nonliberated, desirous of liberation can have this experience, provided he can cut the umbilical cord that binds him to his worldly, time-space-bound experiences. Man is a bundle of past

experiences (Sanskaras) which build the whole ideational structure of his mind. This structure is built by four things: 'Avidya' (ignorance), Consciousness conditioned by words, 'Words' which are mere symbols of things 'Adnyan' (non-knowledge) and 'Dnyan' (knowledge). These four things keep one away from experiencing the truth. To have that experience, one must empty one's mind of all such Sanskaras and conditioning and enter into a 'no-mind' (na-man) state." \*

This English rendering sounds identical to Krishnamurti's language-which seems to justify P.Y.'s claim. P.Y. has great respect for the Vedic seers, the Buddha, Gaudpada, Shankara, Dnyaneshwar and Krishnamurti. P.Y. thinks, all these truth - seekers and philosophers say the same thing, though their method of saying appears different. From the Upanishads to Krishnamurti there is one long, great, grand Indian tradition of Truth seekers. Though Krishnamurti speaks in English and in modern scientific terminology, he speaks the essence of the Vedas. Only he presents it in a new form.

Therefore Krishnamurti is the key to P.Y.'s 'Rasrahasya'. P.Y. is convinced that the Saint's book, if studied in the context of Krishnamurti's new outlook opens doors of a vast, cosmic-vision of untold wealth of thought. P.Y. finds great similarity of thought between these two God-men. More so, in their approach to truth and in the use of language describing their experience. Many such parallels are shown. The Saint's words are explained in Krishnamurti's language.

Paras quoted above will amply show this similarity. Emphasis of both of them on a 'no-mind' state (na-man), choiceless awareness. (ni-vritti) necessary for such an experience, obstruction to it by the 'the word' and 'language' (Dnyaneshwar's 'Shabda Khandan') ('Dnyan-Vidnyan Khandan') 'knowledge' and 'non-knowledge', 'Jeevan-Mukta-dasha' (state of liberated mind), 'Nikaracha Atmanubhav' (extreme alertness or consciousness of self), 'Yogabhoomika' (as steady dispassionate state of mind) would bring out this similarity of outlook

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\* 'Anubhavmrut' - Ovis - 9 - 12 - 25. English rendering by P. Y. in 'Jnanadeva', Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1972.

and experience of the two great souls.

P.Y.'s 'Rasrahasya' touches several subjects : e.g. similarly between the scientific and religious process to reach Reality, evolution of thought in the six Vedic systems of philosophy, culminating in Shankara's 'Advait', approach to traditions - living and non-living, present world situation and challenge before mankind posed by science, redefining history and score of others. Its final message : without the man, denying the material world and looking into inner self, the world conflict and chaos would not end. And Dnyaneshwar's book provides us that vision.

Covering such variety has made 'Rasrahasya' run into three big volumes of hundreds of pages. That apart, the book is also soaked in author's love for this visionary saint and the novelty of rediscovering the greatness of his vision. However one wishes that proper editing could have avoided large chunks of repetitive and redundant material to make its greater impact.

#### **BHARAT ANI JAGTIK VICHAR (India and the World Thought)**

This is a compilation of P.Y.'s two lectures delivered in the 'Lad Memorial Lecture Series' organised by All India Radio, held in 1965 under the chairmanship of justice M.B. Niyogi - a scholar of East-west religions. By this time P.Y. had earned reputation as a thinker and learned scholar of Indian philosophy. These lectures amply illustrate this.

" What is the most important thought troubling the world today? Where does it originate ? In the context of the present world situation created by most destructive weapons by science, can Western thought serve as a beacon-light ? Can it accept this challenge and lead man towards peace ?"

P.Y. deals with these questions. With the world torn between two power blocks and science producing greater and greater lethal weapons, the world stands today on the brink of total destruction of mankind. The world thinkers find themselves non-plussed and intellectually bankrupt to solve this dilemma.

P.Y. believes that non-dualistic thought and conflict-free thought resulting in spiritual revolution can solve the dilemma. This revolution was envisaged by the Vedic sages, by the Buddha and now by Krishnamurti. He thinks, latest scientific discoveries have brought scientist - thinkers from Einstein to Openheimer nearer to religious mysticism. Science can bring material revolution but not a spiritual one.

As U.N. Charter says: "Wars originate in the minds of men". So also the process of spiritual revolution. So it is in the minds of men, that mutation - transformation of man must take place.

Quoting extensively from scholars of the East and West, P.Y. goes on to prove the Vedic thought continuing through the ages upto Krishnamurti. The teachings of this greatest Indian world - teacher today alone can save the world from annihilation.

#### **SAPTASHLOKI BHAGWAT (1961)**

This again is a commentary much smaller in size. Based on the Shlokas culled from the 'Bhagwat', it extolls the greatness of 'Bhakti' - the way of complete surrender to God for achieving 'Moksha' which is another name of total liberation.

## J. KRISHNAMURTI & P.Y.

Meeting with Krishnamurti was perhaps the most significant event in P.Y.'s later life. His writings then onwards bear a deep stamp of Krishnamurti's teachings. To understand and probe into P.Y.'s writings of this period, it is necessary to know what Krishnamurti's basic teachings are. P.Y. first came into his contact through his speeches collected in a book form and later through his meeting in person, sometime in 1961 (exact date is not known).

P.Y. at that time had lost his moorings and was groping for light. On his first reading of Saint Dnyaneshwar's 'Amritanabhav', he felt such an ancient book has no solutions to offer for modern man's problems. This feeling is typical of the mood he was then in. To add, P.Y. was at that time shattered by the suicidal death of his younger son. Krishnamurti's biographer Pupul Jayakar describes their first meeting, though she does not give details of what passed between them.\*

"Disillusioned with Marxism, an erudite, and known for his intellect and fierce temper, Deshpande came to Bombay to meet Krishnamurti with his wife Vimalatai. Sorrow had shattered them as their son was dead and Marxism had no answers. He had turned to his Brahminical past and had studied Vedas and Upanishads. The hymn to creation (Nasadiya Sukta) in Rigveda had evoked in him an instant of shattering perception."

Deshpande had a frail body, but his spirit had an amazing vitality. He told Krishnamurti, "I am a marxist, and I want to have it out with you.

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\* J. Krishnamurti : (a biography) Pupul Jayakar : Penguin Books, 1986, p. 215.



"I have to talk you with no holds barred. If what you say is true, I will drop Marxism and join with you!"

"As Deshpande was to describe later, he tried to wrestle with Krishnamurti but found none to combat at the other end. This made him frustrated, angry. The stronger, more vehement his enquiry, the emptier the field he faced. Suddenly all enquiry ended. Krishnamurti spoke : "The problem is not Marxism, but the death of your child". Deshpande could not proceed further. " Let us speak about that and of your sorrows," said Krishnamurti.

They sat before him in silence, while Krishnamurti spoke to them of death. When words ended, they walked out with moist eyes. Seeing them Rao saheb Patwardhan asked, " Is all well with you ?" Deshpande said, "All problems are over !"

They went back to Nagpur, packed up their belongings and came to live in a cottage on the banks of Ganga. In later years he and his wife were to be connected with every aspect of the work at Rajghat. P.Y. himself has written about the impact of this meeting in his introduction to CHINTANIKA :

"I had read Krishnamurti's all books by 1960. I was caught in a dilemma. During years of intense study, some fundamental problems of life had placed me in a quandary. Krishnamurti's liberating ideas helped me to come out of it when I met him, I felt as if I had met a friend of many previous births!"

P.Y. calls him a 'Jeevan Mukta'. (a liberated soul) and a revolutionary world-teacher. His teaching is revolutionary both in method and aim. Perhaps what appealed to P.Y. most in Krishnamurti was his denial of a Guru, guide or intermediary for seeking Truth, and his direct experiment based on unique method of reaching it. P.Y. admires Krishnamurti's global vision and the radical solution he offers on present world problems. P.Y. himself was preoccupied with the same. "The light thrown by Krishnamurti", says P.Y., 'is as original as it is revolutionary. Today science-worshipping, ism-mad man will have to listen to his teachings or else perish."

## KRISHNAMURTI'S TEACHINGS IN A NUT-SHELL

Krishnamurti initiated no new faith, or creed, nor a philosophic system. His teaching is neither esoteric nor mystic. He does not talk about God or religion, prophet or a book. Many persons have therefore criticized that he does not offer anything new. Yet he has re-oriented the challenge and changed the face of the problem intellectual world faces today.

What was the precise nature of the situation, when Krishnamurti began his new teachings ?

The old controversy between Heaven and Earth, God and Man, the spiritual and the temporal had taken a new form in Modern scientific age of a contest between Mind and Matter. The Sciences (Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Biology) gave matter enormous prestige. While the philosophies claimed superiority of the Mind - Not 'atoms', but the 'sensations' are the foundation of our phenomenal progress. The 'definitions' of Socrates, Ideas of Plato, Syllogisms of Aristotle, inductive methods of Mill, analogies, teleologies, Hegelian Triad are all activities of mind, they said.

With an unusual insight Krishnamurti gave a new direction to contemporary thinking. Prof. Dhopeswarkar has put this very succinctly. He says that Krishnamurti, like science and philosophy raised the question : "What is the prime mover of this universe ?"

The answers are given by various thinkers by various names as God, Spirit, Idea, Entelechy and currently as Energy which is equated by scientists as  $E = MC^2$ . Krishnamurti corrects it by saying that mind is also  $E = \text{Energy}$ . But  $E$  that is the prime mover is a composite or integrated mind-matter or psycho-somatic entity.

The main working of this psycho-somatic energy in our lives takes the forms of conceptual thinking. Its inherent defects are (i) fragmentation i.e. predominance of parts rather than the whole. (ii) Excessive reliance on the 'past' (conditioning) and (iii) derivative defect-predominance of 'I' = the Ego. \*

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\* Prof. A. D. Dhopeswarkar : Introduction to 'Yoga of J. Krishnamurti', Chetana, Bombay, 1976.

Thus it is on the nature and structure of mind that Krishnamurti throws new light. He wants man to understand this and explore his mind which is the common-ground of all humanity. Krishnamurti's teachings could hardly be labelled as a system or a school of philosophy. Over a period of forty years, we find his teachings unfolding themselves according to the needs of changing times. Yet some of his thoughts could be described as 'basic tenets' or 'Sutras' of his teaching. They are

- (1) Truth is a pathless land. You cannot approach it by any religion, sect or creed, neither by any dogma or ritual, nor through any philosophical knowledge or psychological technique.
- (2) Key to know the truth is self-knowing, a journey of discovery of oneself.
- (3) In this journey you are your own Guru, guide or master. None but you yourself hold the key to the kingdom of happiness of liberation. Liberate yourself of all authority of the sacred word, of prophets or priests.
- (4) Self-knowing can be done through self-observation. How to observe one self ? By "intense, but passive alertness" and "Choiceless awareness".
- (5) This observing is seeing and listening to 'what is' - the actual in the 'outer' as revealed in our relationship to man and nature; and in the 'inner' as revealed in our thoughts and feelings.
- (6) Empty the mind of the past experiences/impregnations (Sanskaras), and the future imaginings (what should be). Both these condition your mind. Live into the present i.e. the 'Now' of your existence. This is possible only by intense alertness.
- (7) This alertness will develop your faculty of the 'perceptual' over the 'conceptual'; seeing the present; over the 'past', the 'total' over the 'partial' or the fragmentary view of life.
- (8) This in the end will reach you beyond all your activities of the 'brain' and the 'mind', beyond 'time-and space'-bound memory and all its products-to the total silence. This silence is the source of all

creativity and eternal happiness.

- (9) The man in the I-Ego entity in his relationship to another creates society and the world. Transform the man and you will transform the system.
- (10) Today's world chaos is the projection of the individual chaos. Transformation of man, total change in his psyche and his vision of new relationship with Man and the Universe will create a 'New Man'. This is the only revolution that will end world conflicts. All other so called revolutions in history are mere re-adjustments.

These are the basic points on which the structure of Krishnamurti's teaching is based.

### **NEW DIMENSIONS TO KRISHNAMURTI'S TEACHINGS**

Krishnamurti's biographers Mary Lutens and Pupul Jayakar have both said that he spent more time lecturing in India than anywhere else. During his Indian visits from 1948 to 1985, a group of men and women belonging to various disciplines had gathered round him. Apart from public lectures, he held discussions and dialogues with selected intimate groups. "From these were to emerge Krishnamurti's great Indian dialogues," says Jayakar, "everytime a new dimension to his teaching was added". He was launching his associates on a journey of self-discovery without a beginning. P.Y. was one of them.

Jayakar finds three distinct periods of Krishnamurti's teachings. Earlier Krishnamurti spoke of self - knowing, of non - duality of the thinker and the thought, of observing 'what is'. In the 60s he has moved from the denial of the individual as separate from the stream of humanity, and spoke of the urgency of revolution in human stream. He stopped speaking of any specific problem, like greed or hatred. He had used words like brain, thought, consciousness inter - changeably as the past, as memory. In the 70s, his terminology became more precise. He was probing into the nature of 'observation' and the 'illusion'. By the 80s, he seemed concerned with universals and 'holistic' perception. The 80s saw the world change traumatically. Technology was taking long strides - computerization, artificial intelligence, genetic engineering

and cloning were revolutionizing the world. The tools for untold good and evil were there, but all of enormous dangers to the survival of mankind.

Krishnamurti was deeply concerned and thought, Man has to face this challenge of science, so that he can use these tools rightly. "Either the man explore within himself, or the perception, compassion and the essence of humanity will cease to be", he said. We see this concern in P.Y.'s writings also. But his emphasis was more on the destructive aspect of science.

In his last days, Krishnamurti spoke of the true religious spirit that probed, questioned and negated (as in the Upanishadic period). He thought it has now been wiped out in India. Yet it was still there, waiting in the soil. Now for the first time his emphasis was on the land, the physical land of India, the sacredness of it, its capacity to hold the source of creation. It was destroyed by the ugliness of politics, corruption and destruction of values. Yet he said, the seed has been sown here, on which the sacred could flower.

It is difficult to sum up Krishnamurti's vast teachings in such a small place. Also because of his style of putting difficult thoughts into concise, compact, pithy, aphorisms. Apparently they looked simple, lucid, clear, but on closer look they were found to be vast, distant, immense and deep - "defying a unified perception of them".

P.Y. attended Krishnamurti's lectures with an almost religious fervour and also participated in his selective discussions. P.Y. called him "a revolutionary world teacher of the modern scientific age". He felt, Krishnamurti was too tall and great to belong to any nationality. Yet the essence of his teaching was as ancient as the Vedas. In him P.Y. found integration of the Vedic and Buddhist teachings. He was, the latest in the long line of truth-seekers India had produced. That is why he agreed to go to Rajghat, and took upon himself the task of finding parallels, the essential similarity amongst them. In the works that he wrote after coming in contact with Krishnamurti, P.Y.'s effort had been to examine ancient Indian thought in the context of Krishnamurti's modern teachings and re-interpret them in that light.

Thus began P.Y.'s post-Krishnamurti period of life which was perhaps the best, most productive and fulfilling.

## THE FINAL PHASE

The years between 1963 to 1983 constitute the final phase of P.Y.'s life. From the literary point of view, this period was most creative and fruitful. During these twenty years of quiet stay at Rajghat, through Krishnamurti's written as well as spoken word, P.Y. had thoroughly digested the fundamentals and the essence of Krishnamurti's teachings. He further studied the Upanishadic and Buddhistic texts to find the underlying similarity between them and Krishnamurti's thoughts. His previous studies helped. He built up his own thesis on human existence, its relationship to the Universe, the nature and structure of human mind, and that of the Universe. P.Y.'s originality lies in exploring these similarities between the two thoughts and interpreting and integrating them in a new viable philosophy. It was a great challenge to his genius.

In these two decades of intense study and deep meditation, P.Y. produced best books of his life. They were original and valuable. They speak of his reflective genius, of his analytical, scholarly talent.

In this period he wrote two novels, life stories with the philosophies of the Buddha and saint Dnyaneshwar, for whom he had special corner, two commentaries on Vedic Suktas and the Gita, and an entirely new thesis on Patanjali's 'Yoga Darshana', in all eight books! Quantitatively not much. But in thought-content, scholarship and quality of a very high order. In them we get the best of P.Y. as the scholar-thinker-writer. The list contains his works both in Marathi and English.

Here we also get a positive view of P.Y.'s ideas on 'Man', his inbuilt make-up, his existential relationship with the world around him. These ideas finally mature into a kind of viable philosophy of life of his own. Though it encompasses his study of various isms, it is firmly

built on Krishnamurti's basic ideas i.e. its base is Krishnamurtism. In these books P.Y. seems to be developing his ideas moving towards a full-fledged philosophy of his own which he called "Jeevan Darshan".

## MARATHI BOOKS

### MANAVOPANISHAD : (1977)

This is the first in the series of P.Y.'s scholarly books written at Rajghat. It is a commentary-cum-thesis on some Vedic Suktas culled from 'Brihadaranyaka' and 'Chhandogya' - the two oldest and most important Upanishadas. As the title suggests ( Manav = Man + Upanishad), it is a treatise dealing with man, the inbuilt structure of his mind, his uniqueness in being gifted with the faculty of speech and his existential relationship with the cosmos.

P.Y. tells us that while studying these Upanishadas, he was struck by some abstruse, mystic Suktas in them. He delved deeper to understand their myterious language and deep meaning they contained.

"Naiveh Kinchinagra Asit/Mrityu Naivedam Avrittam Asit/Ashanaya, Ashanaya hi Mrityu". (' Brihdaranyaka ' - Chapter - I - Brahman - 3-Sukta - 1).

Max Muller has translated it thus : "In the beginning there was nothing (to be perceived) here whatsoever. By death indeed all this was concealed - by hunger; for death is hunger". (Ashanaya) \*

"Death is Hunger ?" After knowing its meaning with the help of Shankara's commentary, P.Y. in his own words "was overwhelmed with joy and a vision of life dawned" on him. According to it, these Suktas describe the state which is 'prior to creation' and also the 'state of creation'. These two Upanishadas are man's first inspired outpouring describing his vision of the 'Ultimate Principle' - which is the prime mover of creation. They describe the nature and the structure of that principle as manifested in the creation of this universe.

Science also tells us, says the author, that man is a unique creation-the epitome of its evolutionary process. The only species gifted with the

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\* Max Muller : The Upanishadas - part II , Dover Pubs, p. 74-77.



self-consciousness and speech. As such, he is the only one in this entire creation who can experience and express about his relationship with the 'Ultimate' or it can also be said that the Ultimate endowed him with these gifts for understanding and experiencing 'Its' existence.

P.Y. quotes a story from the 'Brihadaranayaka' which confirms man's uniqueness. In the dense forest - 'Nimisha' the learned sages were debating over the question - "Which is the greatest creation in the universe?" After a long debate the conclusion was: "Not the Gods, not Pitaras (dead forefathers), nor Assuras, Yakshas or Gandharvas and others, but only Man! Man was the greatest creation in this universe". "Because Man is the only creature who is not bound, as he can transcend the natural laws and the destiny and thus have freedom to choose".

The Sukta is: "Manushya Ivaikē Atikramanti/Na Devo, na Pashav, Na Sura, Nati Manushat Shreshtataram hi Kinchit!"

Nothing is superior to Man. Because he alone can transcend the natural laws (Atikramanti).

P.Y.'s main thesis is that if man were to understand the structure of this Universe that everything manifest, unmanifest, organic or inorganic is imbued with this 'Principle' and realise his existential relationship with it, he will lead a life of 'Brahmanushasan' (Brahm = the ultimate principle, God + Anushasan = be guided by or to follow). He will be guided by being constantly conscious of this existential relationship with the ultimate principle.

P.Y. further appears to interpret and expand Krishnamurti's theory that the Prime mover of this universe is an 'Integrated Mind-Matter or a psycho-somatic entity.' These twin aspects of the structure of universe are discussed in these Upanishadic Suktas.

To understand this relationship and live it, is the only way! Every other way will lead to conflict, greed and war, as history tells us. The Vedas too have given this warning in clear terms when they say: "Nanya Pantha Vidyate Ayanaya" (These is no other way!).

As in his other writings, the author discusses his thesis along with the latest scientific theories about the structure of the Universe, and atoms, time and timelessness, entropy etc. He compares these with the

vision of the Vedic Sages who understood the structure of the Universe better and went far ahead than modern scientists. "Science", he says, "has yet to reach there, so far it knows the structure of the atom, about velocity, but has yet to know what makes it move and why".

In the later part, the author discusses the nature of man's gift of speech. The structure of words and language. This he does with the help of some Suktas from the 'Chhandogya'. It describes the varied significance of the first creative word 'OM'.

Here again P.Y. expands Krishnamurti's ideas on death, fear, time and timelessness, mind's natural inclination to identify itself with the past and overlook the living present and finally on identification of the mind with speech (in Vedic terms 'Mana-Vak-Mithuna'). Taking his line from Krishnamurti's ideas, he elaborates them while revealing the inner, hidden meaning of these Suktas in modern terminology.

Thus, the first four chapters deal with the real meaning of 'Brahmanushasana', - what Brahma - the universal Principle teaches us. The latter chapters speak about 'Atmanushasana' what our Atma (soul) teaches us. The life which follows both these principles will be a life full of eternal joy, peace and happiness.

In this his first substantial, scholarly work, the author has brought in years of meditative insight, originality in interpretation, plus a wealth of meticulous details. With all this, the book is written in tidy, precise language - specially notable after his loose-structured 'Rasrahasya'. He tries to fit in Krishnamurti's thoughts in Vedic philosophic framework - simply and concisely, yet expounding them further in his own thesis.

The book shows that P.Y. is not Krishnamurti's follower or interpreter. But using his thoughts and integrating them with Vedic philosophy he has presented his own philosophy. He has done this more successfully, though briefly in his next book.

**NITYA NOOTAN BHAGWADGITA ANI JEEVAN DARSHAN**

This is P.Y.'s last Marathi work, written during his last illness.

It is small in size, yet important. Because it is the culmination of P.Y.'s life - long meditation in search of a philosophy of his own. In a very small space of 75 pages, with extraordinary insight P.Y. sheds a new light on the significance of the 'Gita' and presents a philosophy of life in a nut - shell.

### WHAT IS NITYA NOOTAN ?

P.Y. calls the 'Gita' as 'Nitya Nootan' - Eternally new (Nitya= eternal, constant + Nutan = new). He defines these words bringing out their significance. If what is called eternal, remains new, what is or was before, the word would be meaningless. So, we must first know - "What is meaningful ?" Meaningful is that to which we cannot apply the words 'Nitya' (eternal) or 'Anitya'. (non-eternal). Because they indicate time. But the 'meaningful' signifies that it has nothing to do with 'time'. 'Meaningful' and 'time' are not mutually related. Thus so on.

Research scholars say that the 'Gita' was revealed or written sometime between 1500 to 2000 years ago. Yet 'Gita' is a book which appears meaningful even to the modern man. This indicates that 'meaningful' is that to which the time-wheel of past-present-future does not apply or restrict. It also suggests that - that whose meaningfulness never becomes stale or meaningless is alone worthy to be called 'Nitya Nootan'. Therefore, even though 'Nitya Nootan' suggests time, that which is constant in time is not necessarily Nitya Nootan. In addition to being constant, if it is meaningful then only the word, 'Nitya Nootan' is justified. 'Nitya Nootan' means ever-new, eternally new. And Gita is such a book.

Next, 'New' is that which is born by breaking the old, the continuous, or the established. Gita was born by breaking the past continuous and remained ever-fresh and new. Even today, at this moment, it keeps on breaking the past-continuous. In other words its breaking the past is the eternal newness of Gita. We should try to understand the significance of Gita by first keeping this firmly noted in our mind. The previous commentators, says the author, have somehow overlooked this fact.

According to the author, the essence of 'Gita' lies in its dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. Arjuna is a brave Kshatriya, a veteran warrior fighting to wrest his kingdom from his villainous cousins. He knows the consequences of War. Yet he is suddenly struck with doubt and despair when he faces his Gurus, kith and kin, and his friends. He is assailed by questions : What is the use of this war ? Was it worth ? Was killing them for a piece of land right ? Thus Arjuna questions the very basis of the 'Kshatriya Way' (Kshatriya-Dharma).

This is the central problem posed in the 'Gita'. Gita is not a polemical, philosophical treatise. It is born out of a living human problem, which arose out of a life-and-death struggle and it provides answers to it. Unlike the other ways of solving such problems, prior to it, Gita is the new way, new approach to truth of life. And as such, it is a departure from the customary way of thinking which was based on logic, rationality and philosophy.

In his very questioning, Arjuna steps out of the customary, traditional way of thinking about life. Krishna provides answers and Arjuna is satisfied. But man's life does not remain questionless always. On the contrary, in evoking man to questioning constantly lies the significance of Gita. The man who questions and doubts is the man who really 'lives' and not merely 'exists'.

Questioning arises from Quest. P.Y. tells how questioning leads to the truth. When a man is dissatisfied with the existing way of life, like Arjuna, he enters the state of doubt and despair - named in the 'Gita' as 'Vishad yoga'. The first challenging question he faces is "What is real ? or non real ?" From there one starts asking, "What should one do ? or not do?" This in turn leads to the gate of real knowledge. Thus 'Vishadyoga' leads to 'Dnyanayoga'. Yoga is 'Dnyan' or 'Sankhya'. Sankhya means 'Samyak Khyati' (Balanced knowledge) hence 'Sankhya yoga'.

'Sankhya yoga' state brings revolutionary vision which in turn leads to the question of right or wrong action named 'Karma yoga'. In this state one sees his threefold personality - made of knowledge, desire, and action.

The 'Vishad yoga' state brings in emptiness of mind. In the womb of emptiness the creative process is born. Thus 'Vishad yoga' is a state inspiring creative power - of vision and action, lending the 'Gita' the true epithet or 'Nitya Nootan'.

The subject of Gita is 'Yoga' which is given 18 different names in its 18 chapters. Thus dividing the subject into 18 different kinds. The first one is the most important, because by discarding the past i.e. the past experiences and impregnations - the mind frees itself and enters into a proper state of yoga.

### **JEEVAN DARSHAN**

Part-II of this small work is named 'Jeevan Darshan' - a philosophy of life which is given in brief question-answer form. It deals with several subjects like freedom of choice, self-discipline, the responsibility that comes with it, time and timelessness, the trinity of the seer-seeing -seen, the nature of self-consciousness, the problem of freeing the experience from the mind, as well as from the 'word', which has tremendous power when it identifies itself with the mind and past experiences. P.Y. here elaborates the meaning of the Sukta in Chhandogya Upanishada discussed in his 'Manavopanishad'. He suggests a new word for it - 'Shabdanushasan'. It implies rejecting the word which has come by tradition and using it in its pure form without identifying it with the mind. This the author thinks will transform one into a new man.

While most of these subjects have been dealt with also by Krishnamurti, P.Y.'s genius lies in the fact that he explains their meanings in terms of Gita's philosophy which is accepted as the essence of the Upanishads. All this he links together into a philosophy of life which bears his own distinctive stamp.

Krishnamurti's thoughts have been interpreted and expanded by many other Krishnamurtiites. But it is said, none has tried to set them into a philosophic framework as P.Y. has done. That too in the context of Vedic philosophy.

### **KHARA PATANJAL YOGA (1979)**

As the name suggests this is a Marathi commentary on Patanjali's 'Yoga Darshana', which came out five years after its English version.

Though the author claims it is not its translation, the main body of the book, as well as author's new approach, his entirely new definition of 'Yoga' and the presentation of the Suktas are the same. Some new explanations have been added, their meanings further clarified at some places.

As in 'Manavopnishad', in this Marathi version also, the author's language has undergone complete change. Gone is the heavy, involved style of his earlier works. The Suktas are defined in clear-cut, precise terms, with brevity. This has made the book easy to understand and brought within the grasp of the common reader. So far this Marathi version did not have the fortune of its Foreign Language versions which have been very popular and have run into several editions. It is P.Y.'s most scholarly and original work. A work of his life-time, which brought him both fame and fortune. Its contents will be discussed while dealing with the English version which was written first.

### **NOVELS OF THIS PERIOD**

Two Marathi novels belong to this period : BHERIGHOSH KI DHARMGHOSH ? and AMULAGRA, their subjects are entirely different from his previous novels - and indicate the depth of his studies. They have already been discussed in previous chapter on his 'novels'.

## VII

### ENGLISH WORKS

Three major works by P.Y. belong to his post-Krishnamurti period: (1) JNANADEVVA (Usually spelt Dnyanadeva) (1973), (2) THE AUTHENTIC YOGA (1978) and (3) TATHAGAT BUDDHA (the untold story of the Enlightened one) (1984). These works show how far P.Y. had succeeded in integrating Indian thought with Krishnamurti's teachings.

What made P.Y. turn to English ? P.Y. was accustomed to write in English, as an editor of 'The Nagpur Times'. He had written sundry articles and given speeches in English. He was well versed with English language but never used it for expressing his original, creative ideas. The book on Dnyanadeva, written for 'Sahitya Akademi' had to be in English to fulfill their requirements. But the other two are his most important reflective works. As one who right from start chose its mother-tongue for expressing himself switching over to an alien language, and that too in the last lap of his life, seems surprising.

Was it the apathy of the Marathi readers who somewhat neglected him because he was now geographically far removed? or their tradition-bound minds failed to respond to his new writing as much as he expected ? or was it because he wanted a larger audience for what he had to say, and he thought the western minds already made prone to Krishnamurti's teachings - would be more receptive to the ideas he wanted to put across, through his new books ? Perhaps!

Because his next two books dealt with subjects in which the west has shown interest. The 'Yoga' philosophy and Buddha's teachings. P.Y. has presented these in a completely re-oriented form. No wonder these books, especially on Yoga were well received in the west- beyond his imagination.

**JNANADEVVA (Dnyandeve or Dnyaneshwar)**

Soon after his voluminous work on Dnyaneshwar (Amritanubhav Rasrahasya) Sahitya Akademi's assignment to write a biography of the saint was god-sent. It was a subject that had deeply affected him. When P.Y. wrote his 'Rasrahasya' he had been briefly acquainted with Krishnamurti's teachings. In between he was exploring various dimensions of his thought. He has presented these in this biography which according to the author are reflected in the Saint's writings.

Dnyaneshwar, as we know, was the most revered Marathi mystic saint poet (1275-1296 AD) who wrote at the early age of 16, a classic verse-commentary on the 'Gita' (in 9000 ovis) entitled 'Bhavartha Deepika' popularly known as 'Dnyaneshwari'. Besides this magnum opus, he also wrote two philosophical poetic texts - 'Amritanubhava' (only 800 ovis) and 'Changdev Pasashti' (65 ovis). In addition, he wrote a number of very sensitive, beautiful lyrics known as 'Abhangas'.

In fact Dnyaneshwar was neither the first Marathi saint poet - Mukundraaj, composer of 'Viveksindhu' had the honour - nor the first religious reformer. Sri. Chakradhar, the founder of the revolutionary 'Mahanubhav' sect, preceded him by three-quarters of a century. He was actually the co-founder of 'Warkari' sect with Namdeva. Yet Dnyaneshwar's name evokes a unique response in the hearts of millions of the Marathi people. "It is a response," says P.Y., "that cuts across all the mind-made barriers between man and man, and man and the world." He thinks, such a response is at once intensely personal and profoundly cosmic in its significance. It is difficult to convey the spirit of this response in English, to the people who are so alien to the language and the culture that is essentially Indian. It results in a failure of communication.

P.Y. finds Dnyaneshwar indeed a mysterious phenomenon of History. A saint and seer, a poet and philosopher, a reformer and founder of a sect, he stands supreme. Everything relating to him is extraordinary, almost superhuman. His birth, exiled life, his self-willed death, his vast learning and equally vast yogic powers, supreme beauty of his poetry and depth of philosophy, his reformist zeal and love for common



people - and all this in a short span of just 21 years ! It is so unrealistically real, miraculous! His sweet-tempered, modest behaviour even in the face of deep provocation, his maturity and the dignified way in which he carried himself - all had great appeal. It turned his enemies into followers. He was the guiding spirit of the 'reformist' 'Warkari' movement.

No wonder he is called 'Mauli', the Mother by millions of devotees. Literary scholars call him the 'poets' poet. P.Y. calls him 'a timeless wonder'.

What is the reason of Dnyaneshwar's peculiar spell on Marathi minds ? P.Y. thinks it is the way in which the saint carried his mission. "Dnyaneshwar walked over the dusty foot-tracks of medieval Maharashtra from village to village, talked with people in their ill-developed language which acquired rare richness in his talks. He talked of things that are difficult for scholars even today. Yet he talked in a manner that stirred millions of hearts. It awakened them from their age-long slumbering consciousness into an alert awareness of human destiny. Even after seven centuries the unlettered millions and the lettered few stand spell-bound before wonderous words of Dnyaneshwar. His profound works have drawn scholars of several hues and stature. Yet they fail to probe their depth fully".

Imbued with Krishnamurti's philosophy, P.Y. presents Dnyaneshwar's life and works in a new perspective. Here his grasp and presentation is better, more precise and mature than in his 'Rasrahasya'.

### **OUTSIDERS' LIFE**

P.Y. thinks, Dnyaneshwar led an 'Outsider's life'. It is wellknown that Dnyaneshwar's father Vitthalpant Kulkarni was ostracised by the then orthodox Brahmins, because of his grave mistake. He had reverted to a 'householder's life' (Grahasthashrama) after taking Sanyasa (the highest stage of life or renunciation). In this state four children were born to him - Nivritti, Dnyandev, Sopan and Muktabai. They were despised as "Sanyasin's children" - something unheard of in those days! They had to lead a life of abuse and humiliation for their father's

sin. For such a heinous sin only death was the punishment, the Brahmins said. So the father alongwith his wife killed himself by drowning in the Ganga. After years of misery and untold difficulties of exiled life, all these children became great Saints. But though their greatness was accepted, they were never admitted into Brahmin fold. P.Y. rightly observes the effects of such outsider's life. - living outside the frontiers of social conformity - "looking at the whole vicious structure of society called upon mankind to the dynamics of life as it is".

"The story of Dnyaneshwar's life," says P.Y., " is the story of an 'Authentic human being' - the outsider. He lived the life of such intensity of understanding, that his experiencing transcended time and all forms of temporality. It assumed the dimension of radiant immortality. It was in the light of such experiencing that he spoke of the 'Gita' - the Bible of Vedic religion".

### **DNYANESHWARI**

Dnyaneshwar's commentary on the 'Gita' is well - known, and is extremely popular. It has been revered as a sacred book in Maharashtrian homes to be recited daily. But his other two works, though smaller in size, but deeper as philosophy of life, did not have that fortune. In these two books P.Y. finds, " the very essence of Dnyaneshwar's unique genius which shines with radiant clarity and therefore remains outside the range of massive popular response. Here the saint's words seems to take wing in men's mind and land them in a world where everything temporal becomes utterly meaningless."

Describing his mystical experience in AMRITANUBHAV, thinks P.Y., "Dnyaneshwar speaks of the creativity in which the bewildering duality of subject vs. object liquidates into a union of radiant creation. Dnyaneshwar calls his revelation as 'Experience Immortal' (or 'nectar of experience') as the mature end-product of all my experiences. " He invokes all men to have it. All men, irrespective of their differences in the stages of their immaturity can taste the sweet nectar of my experience if they care to go to the core of these words... and see face to face the shrine within. Then the river of beings will rush forth like a torrent in the ocean of life. They will realise, there is nothing in this

world-organic or inorganic - that remains outside the sweep of this immortal experience."

This is how P.Y. summarizes the important verses (9-19-25) of AMRITANUBHAV. These words sound similar to Krishnamurti's words: "each one can enter the Kingdom of happiness. You hold its key. That key is your own self." To P.Y. Dnyaneshwar like Krishnamurti holds the promise of truth - realization to everyone.

DNYANESHWARI first appeared in the form of spoken word. It is a compilation of the 'Pravachanas'(lectures) he gave before a common audience who had gathered round him from Paithan and nearby places to Newase. When he was denied the Brahmin way of life and asked to serve the 'Shudras' - the low class of people - Dnyaneshwar mixed with them and chose to reach the message of the Vedas in the Gita to them who were denied hearing the sacred word.

Since Adishankara wrote commentary on the Gita, the book was considered as an exposition of 'Vedic Dharma'. P.Y. defines the words 'Dharma' and 'Karma' in his own way. In his opinion these two words define the 'Vedic view' of life. "Dharma", he says, "cannot be equated with the word religion as it is understood in the west. Dharma implies a universal law of life". In Lord Krishna's words, "it is the divine order that governs the universe". It is the inner core of everything interrelated to everything. 'Karma' is activity both menchanical and vital. If Karma is not charged with Dharma, it operates as a bondage, smothering freedom and activity.

Dnyaneshwar named his commentary as 'Yatharth Deepika' (inner essence of Gita). Writing about this essence P.Y. says, "the problem of man is how to transform the misery-making 'I-It' relationship into benedictory 'I-Thou' relationship. And Dnyaneshwar has unravelled and illumined this problem in a wonderfully unique way. His cosmic vision can be seen in his last benefaction - 'Pasayadana' - which comes at the end of Dnyaneshwari: "Now God permeating in the universe, should be pleased with my sacrificial offering of words and having pleased should grant this benefaction: Let darkness be dispelled from the evil men. May the sun of self-religion be seen by the universe! Let

every living being have whatever he desires!"

### CHANGDEVA PASASHTI

Dnyaneshwar's later two books are still deeper in content. 'Amritanubhav' is the poetic expression of his mystical experience of Reality/Truth-his voyage of self-discovery (this book has already been discussed with 'Rasrahasya'). The above is a small treatise addressed to Changadeva - a great Hathayogi proud of his miracle - making powers (the Siddhis). He went to test Dnyaneshwar's knowledge, but came back converted. This poem summarizes the teachings in 'Amritanubhav'. P.Y. gives its substance in Dnyaneshwar's words thus: "O Changdeva! as I see you in your existential identity (your Atma) my I-ness vanishes into nothingness. And I and you are lost in the union of our existential identities."

Summarising Dnyaneshwar's teachings P.Y. asks in the end: "What happens when one goes along with Dnyaneshwar in a voyage of self-discovery?" To reply in the saint's words he says: "As soon as the dichotomy of knowledge and ignorance is absorbed and negated, there arises the sun of radiant Reality (Vastuprabha) in our mind's sky" (AMRIT VIII/9).

"It then brings into being the wonderful nose to enjoy its eternal perfume, ears to listen to its own whisperings. Our lustrous eyes turn them into mirrors to reflect its own glorious universe" !

"Then the enjoyer and the object of enjoyment, the 'seer' and the 'seen' merge into one 'Advaita' (non-duality)."

"In this stateless state all efforts, all margas (the ways) of 'Bhakti', 'Dnyan' 'Karma' and 'Yoga' lose their significance. There is neither remembrance, nor forgetfulness. This state of 'Samadhi' (equipoise) becomes a movement of eternal freedom and creation. God himself becomes the Bhakta - the devotee, he pervades the whole space fully and tightly. Time and space cease to have any movement. It is a land of bliss eternal, in which we are the givers and takers of all things". (English rendering by P.Y.).

These words remind us again of Krishnamurti's thoughts on

silence, nature of God, cosmos, creation, 'touching the source', emptying the mind etc. It is the state of ideal 'Jeevan Mukta' (The liberated soul) as described by Krishnamurti. P.Y. brings out this similarity by the use of his words.

## **ABHANGAS**

Dnyaneshwar has also composed a number of very sensitive Abhangas of great lyrical beauty. They are considered even by modern literary critics as a high watermark of Marathi poetry. We find a different Dnyaneshwar here - so unlike the one we find in the above works... Dnyaneshwar 'a love-lorn Bhakta' pining for union with God - the lover. These lyrics are unique example of 'Madhura Bhakti'.

But P.Y. has not touched this aspect of Dnyaneshwar's personality, perhaps it was the seer - saint and the philosopher Dnyaneshwar, rather than the Bhakta-poet that appealed to him more. And he finds no words of praise enough for him.

## **THE AUTHENTIC YOGA**

This is perhaps the most important and outstanding work of P.Y. Behind it lies his intense study and deep meditation that gave the author a rare insight into the subject. Here his interpretation of Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras is entirely original and brilliant. The most remarkable feature of this book is the author's altogether new approach to the subject and his entirely original interpretation of the 'Yoga sutras'. The author's claim that, it is a fresh enquiry into the understanding of 'Yoga' as presented by Patanjali, is fully justified.

Yoga means various things to various people, the word is used so liberally. The literal meaning of the word 'YOGA' is to join or unite or union or combination. It is also used as a suffix to indicate different subjects and their methods e.g. Hathayoga, Rajyoga, Karmayoga etc. All the eighteen chapters of the Gita are described as so many Yogas.

In this confusion, the first question that arises is "What is yoga?" "No one, not even Vyasa, has yet given a precise answer to this question", says the author, "Patanjali in fact indicates the answer in the very title of his book-its original title as YOGADARSHANA. It

means Yoga is a 'Darshana' A 'Darshana' usually connotes a 'system of philosophy', thus the 'Sbatdarshanas' are called six system of Vedic philosophy. But Darshanas are much more than a mere system of philosophy . P.Y. defines it as "a way of approaching Reality based on a unique method of enquiry into the nature and structure of life". The author complains that the traditional scholars have denied the independent status of a Darshana to yoga, and have always considered it as part of SANKHYA system of philosophy.

The author asserts that Patanjali's 'Yoga Sutras' are statements of facts regarding the nature and structure of existential situation. The situation unfolds itself through the very act of 'Pure seeing' (Of Krishnamurti) which is not man-made or mind-made. It springs from the very nature of man's being. At the one end of this existential situation is the 'seer', at the other end the 'seen'. The interaction between the two entities explodes into a vision. This vision is simply the 'Choiceless Awareness' of the totality of 'What is' (in its existential authenticity). It is a vision untouched and untarnished by any mental activity.

"The uniqueness of Patanjali's 'Yoga Sutra', says P.Y. "lies in the fact that they take this primary act of 'Pure seeing' or looking at the world - as the very foundation of 'yoga Darshana'."

The author then goes on to define these Suktas one by one, and interpret them accordingly. Every student of Yoga knows that the first four Suktas are the quint-essence of Patanjali's Yoga Shastra. They put its meaning as if in a nutshell. They tell us about the basic requirements of the discipline that is yoga.

- (1) First Sūkta : ATHA YOGANUSHASANAM. (Atha + Yoga + Anushasanam). Atha = More now. The words presuppose something that was before. It demands total break from the past (the something that was before). It would be evident as we go along with the next 3 Suktas.
- (2) Second Sūkta : YOGAH CHITTA VRITTI NIRODHA. This is the definition of Yoga and P.Y. gives its entirely new

interpretation. He asserts that its usual, traditionally accepted interpretation is altogether wrong. He goes to the roots of the words to define it thus:

CHITTA (derived from the word CHIT) = to see, observe or perceive. VRITTI (root word 'vrt') = To choose, to like = The form which one's choosing and liking takes. NIRODHA = (Ni + Rodh), Rodha (root word Rudh) = to obstruct; stop, or arrest. Prefix Ni= slowing down. Thus Nirodha = slowing down of the choice making movement of the mind (Chitta-vritti) and eventual stopping of it by itself. The whole meaning of the Sukta would thus mean Yoga is that state of being in which the choice-making (ideational) movement of the mind slows down and comes to a stop.

- (3) Third Sukta : TADA DRASHTU SWARUPE AWASTHNAM Tada = then (when the movement of the mind slows down and comes to a stop). The seer gets established in his existential identity (SWARUPE).
- (4) Fourth Sukta : VRITTI SWARUPYAM ITARATRA 'Vritti Swarupyam' = Identification with 'vritti'. Itaratra = In all other states of being. The whole Sukta would now mean = In all other states of being the identification with choice-making movement reigns supreme.

(The author has used V.S. Apaté's Sanskrit-English Standard, Dictionary).

P.Y. complains that none of the commentators have cared to find the root-meanings of the three main words in Patanjali's definition. They have followed Vyasa who in turn is following conventional meanings. According to the convention usually accepted definition, the Yoga means 'willful control or suppression of the natural wandering tendencies of the mind'. But the precise meanings of the root words cannot be left to the mercies of the commentators.

Author's commentaries and exhaustive notes that follow each set of Suktas in all the four chapters of 'Yoga Darshana', continue this line of argument until the point is reached where the author says, "This is where yoga ends and a new mind begins". In other words, one becomes enlightened which is the aim of all the serious students of Yoga.

This definition and interpretation of 'Yoga Sutras' by P.Y. is entirely original and throws a new light on the subject. It is a valuable contribution to Yoga literature that exists in the country. The conventionalists in India may be a little wary in accepting it outright. Traditions die hard. But the western readers seem to have welcomed it. To them Yoga is a discipline of mind which modern man in today's fast mechanical life needs most. Yoga to them is a source of peace. No wonder P.Y.'s book originally written in English, has been welcomed by its serious students perhaps beyond all expectations of the author. The book was translated into German before its English version was published. Recently its Spanish translation too has come out from Buenos Aires. The German and English versions have run into several editions. P.Y. also rewrote it in Marathi with some minor but important changes. But it did not have the fortune of its foreign language - versions.

As a means to approach Reality, Krishnamurti does not recommend 'Yoga' as it is conventionally interpreted, because it asked for the control of natural tendencies of human mind and its emphasis on wilful concentration - thus converting it into a sort of technique. It is against Krishnamurti's principles of 'choiceless awareness', and 'passive alertness', though he does stress on the need of 'meditation' through awareness. P.Y.'s new definition and his interpretation of the 'Yoga Darshana' would now be seen closely related and similar to Krishnamurti's ideas on 'Meditation', wherein the emphasis is on 'awareness' with no mental activity or ideation - 'Mentation' as he calls it.

An associate of Krishnamurti and a writer of several books on his teachings Prof. A.D. Dhopeswarkar tells us in his book 'Yoga of Krishnamurti' of how P.Y.'s new views have been approved by learned groups here. P.Y. once delivered a lecture on the Yoga Sutras before a scholarly audience in Pune University and presented his new interpretation. No one in the audience raised questions or contradicted P.Y. "If P.Y.'s view is accepted", says the professor, "there would be no opposition or conflict between the ideas of Krishnamurti and Patanjali."



Some conventional critics may however say that P.Y. has foisted Krishnamurti's ideas on Patanjali's Suktas. Without entering into any controversy, the reader can be just asked to go through the original Suktas and find for themselves. Those who agree with P.Y.'s interpretation, would say that by throwing an entirely new light on the subject, he has done an immense service to a great ancient Indian 'seer' who wrote these Suktas with such scientific clarity and vision. P.Y.'s commentary could at least be called one of the many such others which would not be easy to contradict or set aside. It is a testimony to P.Y.'s genius as an analytical thinker.

**TATHAGATA BUDDHA :** (The untold story of the Enlightened one).

This untold story of the Buddha-the Enlightened One-brought out by PANCHSHEEL PUBLISHERS of New Delhi and financially supported by Indian Council of Historical Research, is another remarkable book by P.Y.

P.Y. claims that despite voluminous documentation what has come to be known as Buddhist scriptures, the inner story of Buddha's spiritual voyage of self-discovery and the significance of the facts leading to his enlightenment have not been told. The fact is that this story, the facts, indicate a real revolution in the being of man. In this book the author attempts to tell this 'untold story of the Enlightened One'. It reads like a novel. .

"There is only one man in the history of mankind," he says, "who came to be known the World over as 'Tathagata' the Enlightened One i.e. Siddharth Gautama who himself described his own realisation as 'Man become Tathagata Buddha'. The name is used for an 'Authentic Human Being', in whom the Truth and life always go together, and who therefore is rightly described as the teacher of the Gods and Men".

The facts that are covered in this 'untold story' are already well-known. But their significance when brought out by P.Y. comes suddenly as a revelation. For this story he selects only the known historical facts of the Buddha's life and weaves them artistically and imaginatively. Here we find the long - lost artist in P.Y. of the earlier novels. These facts are set into a purposefully chosen pattern to suit his thesis.

## THE BUDDHA'S TIMES

The period prior to Buddha's birth was marked by intellectual and spiritual turmoil ever witnessed by Indian society. Enquiring serious minds were engaged in an intense search of knowing the truth - the nature of the universe and its relation to man, the structure of man's mind, the prime mover of the whole creation. Prominent among them were the 'Brahmins' and the 'Shramanas'. They represented two different viewpoints which had been running parallel since ancient - most times. As followers of the 'Vedas', the Brahmins believed in the institution of 'Yadnya' and the allied rituals - the animal sacrifices, mantras, prayer, in the theory of 'Karma' and its consequences in heaven or hell.

During Brahministic period i.e. when the Brahministic texts were written, the Brahmins became almost human Gods, since they alone were the experts of the Vedic rituals. The order of 'Varna' (class/caste) must also have taken roots in this period. Opposite to the Brahmins were the 'Shramanas' - the ascetic wandering monks, unlike the former - who were usually married householders- (Grabasthas) the Shramanas were non-Vedic, abhorred the 'Yadnya' and its animal sacrifices, the ritualism. They used to be celebrates and wandered in the jungles meditating and seeking the Truth.

There were many such groups. The Buddhist scriptures mention a few prominent men as leaders of these groups. Ajit Keshkamble, Puran Kashyap, Makhali Ghosal, Sanjay Vellaliputta, and Nigantha Nathputta - better known as Mahavira - the founder of Jainism. They were mostly non-Vedic, had their own philosophies, and lived away from society with their disciples. They maintained that knowledge of the 'Supreme' was more important for man's existence than Yadnic ritualism. They did not believe in the four-fold varna system. But even amongst the Brahmins some remained celebrates and led ascetic life. They were called 'Vaikhanasas' and separate rules of code of conduct - known as 'Vaikhanas Sutras' - were prescribed for them. \*

Buddha's family followed Vedic religion. When Gautama became

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\* Acharya Narendradev : 'Bauddha Dharma Darshan', Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad, Patna, 1956, p. 1-2.

a wandering monk, he went to some such groups and learnt the technique of meditation from well known ascetics Allar Kalama and Udak Ram Putra. He followed it as long as he believed asceticism was the way to knowledge.

### **FACTS OF GAUTAMA'S LIFE**

P.Y. has picked up some of these characters for his untold story - for discussing their half-formed philosophies. He has mainly chosen the known historical facts of Gautama's life, leaving out all legendary material - shorn of all the monstrous accumulation of legend, his violently misconceived teaching, the facts of Gautama's life remain human and understandable. They reveal heroic efforts of a very sensitive, but robust enquiring mind pursuing the truth of life entirely on his own, against all odds.

Born in a ruling 'Shakya' clan at Kapilvastu, Gautama's early life was easy going and pleasurable. The prophecy on his birth by eight famous astrologers of the kingdom - that he would either be a great emperor or a great religious teacher had a two-way impact. His father shutting him away from reality, surrounding him by plenty and beauty. On the other hand, his inner discontent with the unreal life he led, made him feel he had taken a holiday perhaps too long from knowing the reality of existence. Then follows the sudden awakening at the sight of the diseased and the dead. He made a complete break with worldly life becoming a poor wandering monk living a rigorous ascetic life for six years, he wandered from group to group seeking answers to his questions. But none could satisfy him.

His subsequent refusal to continue fasting and self-mortification like other monks and asking for food horrified his five companions and they left him. For months Gautama wandered alone. He was perhaps the loneliest figure in history, battling with his questions.

Finally sitting under a bow-tree in profound thought, illumination came to him. He rose up to impart it to the world, he was re-united to his earlier five companions, to whom he gave his first sermons at Sarnath.

These first discourses are considered the authentic heads and embody Buddha's essential doctrine:

- (i) Following the Middle way thus avoiding the two extremes of sense-gratification as against self-mortification or asceticism.
- (ii) His description of the threefold nature of Reality as SARVAM DUKHAM (Everything is misery, suffering), SARVAM KSHANIKAM (Everything is momentary, perishable), SARVAM ANATMAKAM (Everything is without Ego, ATMA).
- (iii) The root cause of suffering is craving or desire for self-gratification for personal immortality and worldly prosperity.
- (iv) Enunciation of four noble truths : (a) existence of desire (b) the cause or origin of desire (c) the removal of the cause of desire (d) the eight-fold path leading to - the Nirvana.

P.Y.'s untold story' begins with the Gautama's birth and ends with his first discourses and not with his death or 'Mahanirvana'. This indicates that he too considers these first teachings as authentic. He does not bother about the great edifice of four systems of philosophy and complicated theology that was later added to his original teachings.

What appeals most to modern minds is the simplicity and clarity of Buddha's fundamental teaching. As H.G. Wells the world-known historian puts it - "It is in the closest harmony with modern ideas and is beyond dispute the achievement of one of the most penetrating intelligences, the world has ever known".(1)

"The Buddha is the first man", says P.Y., "who put man and his mind at the centre of his search for Truth", still more appealing is the fact that he sought enlightenment without the guidance or aid of any existing Guru, what is more, he asked his followers to do the same. "Atma deepobhava" (Be a light unto yourself know thyself)". (2)

(1) H.G. Wells : 'Outline History of the world', Cassel and Co. London, 1956, p. 393.

(2) Ibid.

Thus like other religions, Buddhism is not an 'Immortality Religion' which promises Heaven, divine mercy and redemption. It was in its pristine, primary form, basically a religion of conduct, not of any religious observances on rituals. It had no temples, no sacred order priests, nor had it any theology. Its emphasis was on renouncing self, the first person singular 'I', the ego, and not on renouncing active life. As it started. (1)

Spreading to the West, East and the South, it gathered complications of theology and lost its original simplicity and pristine character.

It is to this original character that the recent revival of world interest in Buddhism owes. The Buddha's pursuit of self enlightenment and not for God, his complete break from the past life, rejection of the sacred (Vedic) word, walking over all the philosophical thought of his time, his concern for the basic human problem and fresh method of approach and finally setting out alone on this endless journey are some of the aspects of Buddha's personality that have drawn many modern spiritual thinkers to the study of his message.

In these aspects the Buddha came very close to Krishnamurti - a point noted by most of the Krishnamurtiites. P. Y. is one of them.

It is significant that it was Krishnamurti himself who is said to have suggested to P.Y. to study Buddha's life and teachings, according to P.Y.'s son Dr. S.P. Deshpande. It is well-known that Krishnamurti was believed to be the incarnation of 'Maitreya' - the Bodhisatva of compassion. Any way, P.Y. has himself found great similarity between these two great world - teachers in their approach and method of seeking Truth, as well as in their Teachings. Krishnamurti's biographer and a member of his inner circle Pupul Jayakar finds him 'integrating' the teachings of the Buddha and 'Vedanta'. (2) The Buddhists held that Krishanji was speaking Buddhism, the Vedantins felt he was in the

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(1) H.G. Wells : 'Outline History of the world', Cassel and Co. London, 1956, p. 393.

(2) Pupul Jayakar : 'J. Krishnamurti', p. 488.

stream of 'Vedanta'. (1)

What is more, Krishnamurti himself said once, of his having seen the face of 'Maitreya' often. "I meet the Buddha. I have listened to him very deeply. In me the whole truth of what he says is abiding he has told me very carefully, "Be a light to yourself". The seed is flowering ... he was a friend, somebody whom I really loved. The seed of truth that he has planted by my alertness, awareness, intense listening ... that seed will flower." (2)

P.Y.'s great love for the Buddha combined with his equally great admiration for Krishnamurti has perhaps inspired him to write this 'untold story!' But in his introduction to the story he says that, "The main inspiration on embarking on this audacious adventure was the realisation that the astounding miracle of utterly peaceful and deeply humane cultural movement of a global dimension should have taken place over two thousand years ago, when history, geography and language were ranged against it (i.e. Buddha's message spreading all over the civilized world)." The author hopes that a future cultural revolution will help man to be a light into himself.

A similar global movement has started by Krishnamurti's revolutionary teachings. Both these world - teachers are a unique - phenomenon. The essence of their teaching is immense, touching something beyond human horizon, which defies a unified perception of it. The mystery of these minds is unfathomable.

Writing about the Buddha, the author asks, "How does such a mind come into being?"

Is it the result of tremendous evolution of a group of minds which cultivated the brain, the morality, the austerity for centuries? Is it the flowering of racial, social consciousness which had thought and thought about the truth for ages that might have produced a Buddha?

Krishnamurti has touched on this subject and suggests that, "a great revolution of the good exists, which when opportunity arose, brings

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(1) Pupul Jayakar : J. Krishnamurti, p. 435.

(2) Ibid p. 431.

an AVTAR or whatever you call it."

P.Y. also tries to explain the phenomenon of Buddha's birth. He does not defy the Buddha, nor does he delve into the legends surrounding him. But his explanation too is shrouded in mystery. He seems to think that the life force articulates itself here. It was as if the desire of a group mind or the social unconscious - being manifest. He thinks that the time was ripe for such a birth as centuries of quest for truth waited to be born. He introduces the character of 'Kaladevaa', the seer - saint living in the Himalayas, who had a vision of the birth of a great soul - the Enlightened one. The story opens with the gathering of eight famous astrologers who make their two - point prophecy. The author defines astrology as not only a mathematical knowledge dealing with probabilities, but is also supplemented by the science of meditation. It was based on the belief, he says that, "Human life was intergrally linked up with cosmic life". The words of Kaundinya the youngest astrologer would explain P.Y's opinion that his 'prophecy' came out with a mighty force as though "It used my body to proclaim 'It self '":

### **THE UNTOLD STORY**

The untold story is imbued with an atmosphere which has a dreamy, distant, far - away mystic quality, befitting an ancient story. The characters are the same that came in Buddha's real life. His parents, wife Yashodhara, the faithful servant Channa, Kaladevva, Kaundinya who accompanies the Buddha in his wanderings and is the lynchpin of the story. Besides contemporary philosophers, like Ajit Kesh Kamble, Velathputta, Gosal and Puran Kashyap living in their ashramas with their disciples. Their sectarian philosophies dissatisfy the Buddha who goes alone in his search. The minor characters like the king of Kashi, the great sage of 'Rishi Pattana' and the two wise merchants Tappasu and Bhallika are also used to play their roles in weaving the story. But in P.Y.'s hands their portrayal has an added dimension. They are all wise, knowing and talk in high flown language. They all contribute to that momentous event of arrival of the Buddha. The author has adopted the story-telling style of narration, with comments

bringing out the significance of events.

P.Y.'s language here also had undergone radical change. It has clarity and precision. It is not burdened with erudition and wordiness which marked his earlier writing.

But the 'Untold story' is not concerned much with biographical aspect of the Buddha's life as it is with his radical teaching. The author has chosen Buddha's first discourses to his five disciples of Rishi Pattana, as the core of these teachings. He interprets them bringing out the similarity of basic thought between the teachings of the two great world-teachers. Even the language and phraseology used here reminds readers of Krishnamurti's ideas. The book thus is the author's commentary on the Buddha's Sutras in Krishnamurti's language which the author puts in the mouth of his characters in his own narration.

For instance: "Quest for Truth demands an ever alert attention to everything within and without, from moment to moment".

"Meditation begins where Mentation ends. Meditation is most essential for quest of the great unknown".

"In aloneness the whole truth lies hidden".

"Forget all you have experienced or heard before. You may then be blessed by the great unknown. 'Right view' (Samyak Drishti) looks at the world with new eyes and sees man born in bondage as a result of built-in conditioning - a bondage" (p.105).

"Everything stored-up in memory is non-existing, dead and gone tomorrow. Only the truth is ever alive, transcending everything" (p. 104-5).

"A bonded man is rightly called 'Baddha Satva'. When a man walks out of this bondage he becomes 'Bodhi Satva' which is a long jump from bondage to freedom. When the energy encompassed into 'Bodhi Satva' explodes at some unexpected moment, he enters into a state of mind known as 'Sambuddhatva' - a man whose knowledge flowers into all embracing total wisdom" (p.109).

"The Middle Path is like walking out of the river, (which like



universe is in the state of flux) and looking at its flow by standing firm on the non-moving bank" (p. 119).

"The difference between the 'Home-bound' and the 'Homeless' way is in the attitudes. Home is not only a security of walls, but of ideas, Thoughts and beliefs" (p.119).

"One who is 'Buddha' knows that all the constituents of being are transitory (Sarvam Kshanikam), that they cause misery (Sarvam Dukkham), and they all are lacking an ego '(Sarvam Anatmakam)'."

When one knows this, his sense of 'I-am-ness' dissolves into nothingness. The 'Eye of Truth' reveals to him the world as it actually is (Yathagata). The four noble Truths and the Eight-fold path of Nirvana establishes one in these three fold facts underlying everything in this world-human and non-human. This is the nature and structure of the ever-persistent human situation. For self-realization is the total awareness of all this". (p. 131)

"Such a man becomes the centre of 'Dharm-Chakra-Parivartan' - the Religious Revolution, because without man Dharma remains incomplete in its cosmic existence and total action".

"Buddha's dying message to his disciples was 'Atma Deepo Bhava' be a light unto yourself. You will then know how to bring about a radical revolution in the way of human living".

This, in P.Y.'s words, is the essence, sum - total of Buddha's first discourses.

## **P.Y. ORIGINALITY**

This is the buddhism in modern garb. While this interpretation by P.Y. of Buddha's doctrine may not appear entirely new in the context of Krishnamurti's thoughts, his originality is evidence in building up of Buddha's story of life around them. He has skillfully woven the biographical material with his teachings. Also, his interpretation of events on Buddha's life show a rare insight into their significance.

In his originality of approach, his artistic arrangement of the material, character portrayal, direct, pithy dialogues and the rendering

of philosophy into modern terms, one witnesses P.Y.'s power as a creative writer of old times - in a renewed and much more vigorous form. It would seem, the full flowering of his genius.

On the whole, this 'untold story' gives one a rare artistic experience. Here P.Y. has regained his artistic touch. It may seem rather surprising that this should have happened in his English novel.

## VIII

### SUMMING - UP

From 1927 to 1987 - fifty years of constant preoccupation with writing is by any standard a long literary journey. In P.Y.'s case this journey was full of ups and downs, extremely varied and audacious. Starting with Romanticism and liberal Humanism, passing through Marxism and the Gandhism, later turning to religious mysticism and finally landing in Krishnamurtism (if we could coin such a word) made this journey fascinating but vulnerable, yet rewarding. Having discovered lacunae in all other 'isms', P.Y. ultimately found his destination with the help of Krishnamurti's philosophy.

P.Y. was not just a writer with a large, varied output. He was basically a thinker. Writing was just an expression of his thinking. His main concern had always been Man. His thinking centered around man's problems, his destiny. For getting solutions he turned to different ideologies which he advocated with full fervour, as long as he was under their spell. There was a reformer or preacher hidden in him. These changeovers were inevitable. In his earlier life he was an object of admiration and respect. But later of indifference, even faint ridicule. But he was not a turn-coat. He was a very serious-minded seeker. He did not flirt with ideologies. He lived them as deep convictions. And he followed them wherever they led him. They even changed his life-style.

His following various isms was therefore criticised as his changing faces. But P.Y. was not a man to be trifled with. Even his severest critics did not deny his depth of feeling and thought.

Right from his first work, P.Y. came to be known as a thinker-

writer in Marathi literary circles. His writing was marked for its seriousness, originality of approach, radicality and having a larger context. P.Y. always had a global outlook, a philosophic context to his works. His style of expression was forthright, direct and frank, even shocking at times. He was a born reformist and a rebel. He vehemently opposed dead old traditions. Most of our customs are dead-wood in his opinion and he was always at war with them. In his early reformist zeal he even advocated burning of our religious books which were the source of all these age-old traditions. Our venerating them was in his eyes 'Pret Pooja'- the corpse-worship. His intention used to be of arousing people.

Therefore whatever he wrote, be it a novel, a journalistic article or a philosophical text, it was eagerly read and discussed. He was a scholar, but he had special interest in history, philosophy and science. Political life also kept him abreast of world trends and brought him in contact with other intellectuals and high-ups in society. He was always one step ahead of his times. During his hay-days of active political life and literary achievements, his word carried weight. He thus influenced almost two generations of readers and writers of Maharashtra by his creative, provocative and invocating writings as well as by his stature, his personality and originality.

### **HIS DYNAMISM**

Dynamism was the key - word of his personality. He was short in stature but carried an impressive, charismatic personality. He had slender body but his spirit had an amazing vitality. He had fierce temper and did not tolerate nonsense or any kind of slap-dashism, or opposition, but he was a pure, noble-hearted, generous to a fault. In him were combined the qualities of head, heart and spirit. As long as he remained in active life, he was at the centre of activities and was quite a force.

His other traits drew men to him. He was a good conversationalist, though not an orator, not even a stylish speaker, but a forceful, thought-provoking talker, and many eagerly gathered round him forming a sort of Darbar, to hear him talk. It was said that

he was a better speaker than a writer, more lucid, precise and interesting. His admirers as well as critics equally appreciated his intellectual grasp of things and his analytical ability.

With all this, he had a vision of himself. He was a conscious of his originative, penetrating mind and razor-sharp intellect. He knew, he belonged to a different category of men - a special club of intellectuals. No wonder he thought of himself a man of destiny.

Time will prove how far he succeeded. P.Y. played various roles in life. He did not remain long in any one field. But whatever field he entered, we find P.Y. leaving his own stamp ... the one thing that even time will not disapprove. His writing is at places artistic, sensitive, symbolical, interesting, pithy, at others it is abstruse, clumsy, involved and dull and yet at others - imaginative, inventive. Yet whatever came from his pen was thought provoking.

### HIS CONTRIBUTION

P.Y. belongs to a bygone age and much of his earlier writing has only a historical value. Like most of the writers of that era, his literary adventure began with poetry. His first faint, literary stirrings were expressed in poetry when he fell in love with his wife - Vimalabai, also a poet. He continued writing poetry but that form did not suit P.Y.'s genius. Their first joint Publications was 'Nirmalayamala'. But it is a kind of poetry which does not linger long in mind. But his earlier novels were hotly discussed. They brought immediate success. But today they have mainly a contextual value. Their subjects were important in their times. Though they were innovative in many ways, they will not hold modern readers long, except a few serious students. Even his best three of the first group - 'Bandhanachya Palikade', 'Sukalele Phool' and 'Sadaphuli' have lost their newness though they are still readable, as landmarks.

In writing histories of literature and their various forms the usual effort is to trace the evolution of a particular form, while welcoming the new and rejecting or undermining the old. It should be remembered that the new generation of writers stands on the shoulders of the old, on what is built by the previous ones from where they leap ahead. If

P.Y.'s novels appear stale and old today the reason is that with the time the form has gone far ahead. Yet historically his novels have their own place. They have earned a niche in the history of Marathi literature. His later novels are yet to be properly assessed by Marathi critics.

### **A VETERAN JOURNALIST**

As a journalist too P.Y. left his own mark. His Marathi weekly 'Bhavitavya' will have a positive place in the history of Marathi journalism. Though it had a limited circulation, the journal achieved a height and popularity which many well-established ones could not. As the paper was born during world war II, its special feature - SANJAY UWACH (Thus says SANJAY - the famous narrator of the Mahabharat War) giving war news and its analysis was extremely popular. It came out in a book form later. Most of the P.Y.'s journalist articles, like all other writings of that kind, had only contemporary value. Some of them compiled in book form can even now serve as reference material.

### **MARXIAN CRITIC**

As a critic P.Y. had a positive philosophy of literature which was presented in his 'Navi Mulyen'. It has a lasting place in the history of Marathi criticism its basis being Marxism. But P.Y. never went whole hog with Marxian theory. He did acknowledge the relationship of the artist and society but it was not their causal relationship. Throughout his life P.Y. believed in the uniqueness of individual experience and creation of art as a unique, mysterious phenomenon. Therefore whatever ideology he accepted, he jealously guarded the individual freedom. P.Y. was a Marxist in the sense that he believed in Marxist ideology, but not its manifestation in Russia. Like all youthful, progressive minds the world over, he admired the socialist experiment in Russia in the beginning. But soon enough, he did not fail to notice it changing into totalitarianism, suppressing individual freedom.

The individual being was the centre of philosophy of life, literature, art. Art to him was the self-expression of an individual. Thus in a way, he propagated the Expressionist theory of art. He was the first to do it. Till then Marathi criticism was involved in a controversy between two art theories - 'Art for Art Sake' and its opposite

school 'Art for Life's sake'. P.Y. believed in neither and struck a new path. He did not see eye to eye with either Phadke or Khandekar, exponents of the two theories. "Literature and Art are not a 'means' to anything", he said, "but existed for itself as an expression of a unique individual experience". He was thus the forerunner of Expressionist theory which came into Marathi literature later. A well-known Marathi critic has briefly touched upon this new approach to literature by P.Y. but it has not been fully discussed into the context of his philosophy of Art.

Of late, attempts have been made to re-asses P.Y.'s writings - especially his social novels with a view to study his contribution to the Marathi novel. Of these Bapat and Godbole in their history of the novel 'Marathi Kadambari' (1973), Chandrakant Bandiwadekar in his 'Marathi Kadambari Chintan Ani Sameeksha' (1983), Pradnya Apte's 'P.Y. Yanchya Samajik Kadambarya' - (her Ph.D. thesis) are worth mentioning. Apte evaluates P.Y.'s contribution to the Marathi social novel. Bandiwadekar discusses in detail P.Y.'s introducing new psychology to it. He says, "P.Y.'s understanding of psychology comes from within. His use of symbolism clearly indicates that P.Y. has not used psychological back-ground in his novel as an experimnt but it has come naturally, out of an inner necessity. The author does not give any explanation or interpretation of his characters, actions or reactions, their thinking or desires, but has simply portrayed them. P.Y.'s special way of portraying the unconscious of individuals mind is found to be different from other writers of that period."

### **A CREATIVE COMMENTATOR**

The ten years of P.Y.'s life between 1952-62 constitute what may be called a saturation period. His malaise was spiritual, rather than political or social - though new trends in those fields he found disappointing. He thought, the whole social system needs to be restructured, revitalized. His penetrating study of the ancient scriptures reveal that they had lost their original revolutionary thought in the centuries-old traditional interpretations and distorted in ritualism. And scientific approach to their study was needed.

In his writings P.Y. tried to break this tradition. He interpreted them in the context of modern scientific discoveries. He found that even latest scientific findings have not been able to disprove what the Vedic seers had seen and understood. On the contrary he found similarity between the scientists and the seers in their quest for truth, only their methods were different. Both were seekers - the scientist seeking through physical experiment - the outer world, the seer seeing through the inner eye - the inner world. But he believed that the discoveries of both will in the end be synthesized.

With this conviction firmly rooted in his mind. P.Y. read 'Nasadiya Sukta' - the Rigvedic hymn of creation and was completely bowled over. It gave a sudden shattering perception - that the Vedic vision of the cosmos was not different, but only ahead of the scientific vision. P.Y.'s commentary on the hymn, so also the next one on Dnyaneshwar's 'Amritanubhav' reveal P.Y.'s perception of similarity between the two visions. This led him further to the studies of 'Brihadaranyak' and 'Chhandoyga Suktas' which also speak of creation. These studies resulted in 'Manvopanisad' his next book on the subject.

Hence forth we find P.Y. mainly in the role of commentator. But not in the usual sense, but as a perceptive creative interpreter. By now he was thoroughly imbued with Krishnamurti's new thought. In him P.Y. found unique combination of a 'Yogi' and a revolutionary world - teacher of modern scientific age. Krishnamurti spoke not in mystic traditional terms, but scientific terms. His approach to Truth was scientific but through individual mind. Krishnamurti's teachings helped P.Y. cross the state and stage where he had found himself stuck. This apart, he found Krishnamurti's teachings close to Vedic thought. Only their language was different. Thereafter there was nothing to hold P.Y. from probing into ancient Indian texts for corroboration of Krishnamurti's thoughts and searching for the similarity of their visions. P.Y. did this with zest and great seriousness. That put his scholarship to test. The outcome was the several books P.Y. wrote in English and Marathi. These are rare and valuable books. No such commentaries are known in Marathi. Literary historians will have to take their cognisance and place them on top-notch. They will remain



there for a long time to come.

P.Y.'s works in the last phase positively show a deep impact of Krishnamurti's thoughts. But these works are not just translations or mere reflections of these thoughts. It is in their application to ancient Indian thought and weaving them with modern scientific discoveries into a living philosophy that P.Y.'s contribution lies.

No doubt, P.Y. did have a deep admiration for Krishnamurti's approach, his method, findings. But P.Y. was not Krishnamurti's follower. He was too much of an egoist to become anyone's follower. He himself was a seeker. But not an ordinary seeker. He had an original, penetrating mind plus vast scholarship. His search had begun a decade ago before he met Krishnamurti. He was already walking the path ancient thinkers and mystics had trodden. His work on the 'Nasadiya Sukta' is an illustration. His studies had already built up a strong base. What Krishnamurti provided was the 'new Eye' or the 'new light' as P.Y. puts it. The rest was his own.

Comparing Krishnamurti's thoughts with P.Y.'s writings, one is struck by their gradual evolution. The former's thoughts gradually evolved as the situation arose, we see the difference in what he said in the 60s and the 80s. P.Y.'s work too evolved step by step into a mature, clear - cut philosophy of life that bears his own stamp. P.Y. was not just a translator or an interpreter of Krishnamurti, but an integrator of ancient Indian thought with Krishnamurti's modern scientific teaching.

If we go through P.Y.'s works, it could be said that P.Y. made an effort to show the continuity of Indian thought upto its modern version. From the Vedas, through the Buddha, through Shankara and Dnyaneshwar, upto Krishnamurti. Because we find a definite link between the subjects of his works - from 'Nasadiya Sukta' - the Sukta on creation, 'Amritanabhav' - a mystic poet's experience of the creation, Upanishadic Suktas in 'Manavopanisad' - again speaking of the creation, elaborating the nature and structure of that creation - Patanjali's yogasutras - the science of meditation leading to the experience of that truth of creation - 'Nitya Nutan Bhagwadgita' - the art of living

based on the knowledge of Truth of man's place in this creation. The choice of these subjects is not made at random, but shows the states of mind through which the author passed in his search. It is P.Y.'s 'darshana' in a way.

### **A SEEKER**

As mentioned earlier, P.Y. accepted ideologies out of sincere conviction and lived them. To him ideologies were not just intellectual exercises or fashionable play-things, but guidelines to a way of life, to be lived. While he remained in the nationalist struggle, he wore Khadi (Homespun cloth), led a simple life, and went to jail. When he accepted communism, he lived a life devoted to the labour, their upliftment, preached through pen and word of mouth and again went to jail. Under the influence of Marathi saints, he went through all the rituals, whole hog of Pooja, fasting, bead-telling and Dhyana (meditation) etc. But he was too much of an intellectual to let this go long. When he accepted Krishnamurti's teachings he left all worldly's things - his home, the house, family, his name and fame. At Rajghat he led the life of a recluse - a Yogi, which he continued at Nagpur after his return. In spite of the international reputation his book on 'Yoga' brought, he remained aloof from limelight. He spent his last days in study and meditation like a 'Dnyanayogi' - the one who knows.

Only a few know P.Y. of the last phase. Fewer still are the readers and scholars who have shown interest in his later writings. It may appear natural considering the philosophic nature of their subjects. None can predict how long they will remain in obscurity. Time alone will show.

But the few who have studied them will agree that P.Y.'s name will go down in the history of Marathi literature as an innovating novelist, a thinker - writer of acumen, a creative commentator of ancient Indian thought, who always dared to go against traditional interpretations presenting them in a new, fresh synthesized form. In foreign countries his commentary on Patanjali's 'yoga' has made his name familiar to serious groups of its students.

It is a kind of work that can give a sense of fulfillment to any writer.

## Summing-up

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Of the many obituaries written on him, none is more eloquent than the one which described him as a 'Truth-seeking pilgrim of Life'. In one role or the other this seeker born on the threshold of the century, stalked over it for full five decades !

P.Y.'s later writings suggest that perhaps he had the glimpse of that Truth which he sought so long. His dying words are also revealing "It is all happiness. All is bliss!"

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