



THE STUDY OF INDIAN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Dr . Sanjay Thorat

Associate Professor, M. V. P. Kanya College, Islampur , Tal. Walwa,
Dist. Sangli.



ABSTRACT

Tradition animates all sorts of discussions about influence, about blame, and judgment, about present actualities and future priorities. T. S. Eliot says that the poet is an individual talent, but he works within a tradition that cannot be merely inherited but can only be obtained 'by great labour.' Tukaram, a Shudra, an outcaste and a marathi saint poet, who continued to speak of the evils of the caste system and against its rigidity, infuriated his enemies. Tukaram's attack is on the caste system and against its inhumans practice. Several of his abhangs (poetry) challenged the authority of his enemies, hence, he was ordered to take the verses he has written and with his hands sink them in the water of the river. This was a phenomenon unique in the mainstream tradition of Maharashtra. Most non-Brahmins had to make a compromise with the Brahmanical code. One had either to evoke the displeasure of Brahmins or consciously uphold brahmnism. Even the outcastes like Dnyandev had to show conformity to the brahminical code.

KEYWORDS: Tradition, Modernity, tradition of Maharashtra, Vedic and non-Vedic, historical tradition.

INTRODUCTION

Tradition

In Marathi, in particular, *Dalit* and *Gramin* (rural) writers have lost their thumbs not knowing the para-literary tradition and change expected after knowing the cunning of Drona's request for *Guru Dakshina*. But Tukaram was a non-conformist to the core, and he refused to comply with the injunction of the authorities. He continued to write. He was forced to throw all his writings into the river. Miraculously enough, after thirteen days his papers floated up on the river. Tukaram's Poetry was destroyed. His great grandson tried to collect the *abhangs* from various places. After hundred years of Tukaram's disappearance (?), a devotee of Tukaram Trimbak Kasar wandering around various places for forty years, collected and compiled the *abhangs* from various sources, spread over oral tradition, particularly. In 1869 Alexander Grant, a British officer, a devotee of Tukaram, printed and published the *Gatha*, (book) of nearly 4500 Abhangs, of Tukaram. This was the only authentic collection of Tukaram's poetry. This is what I mean by tradition to be obtained by great labour without losing one's thumb.

Bhalchandra Nemade refers to two different traditions- Vedic and non-Vedic within one culture and prefers discontinuous historical tradition of Buddha, Charvaka, Mahaveera, Basaveshwara, Akkamahadevi, Chakradhara, Jnandeva, Namdeva, Tukaram, Bahinabai, Phule, Shahu, Ambedkar, Gandhi, Lohiya, Jayaprakash Narayan etc. not only for the merit of ideas and insights it can offer but also for its place in the process of acquiring Indian sensibility. Therefore, he ironically laments, 'If our scholars do not read Dnyandeva or Tukaram nothing much is lost, but they must study in depth some insignificant English or American authors. How can an international consciousness be nourished otherwise!' (1997: 234). Indian literary history is a conflict between *Brahmin* and *Shudra*. Indian literature is produced under the 'moral shadow' of high class *Brahmins*. So Nemade rejects their morality and accepts the *Shudra* tradition.

As the installed Indian literature is 'Brahmnic', the efforts have been made to search the substitute tradition of 'Gautam Buddha'. Acharya S. J. Bhagawat considers Buddha as a source of the starting point. According to Bhagwat, "The influence of Buddha's life can be seen even today in our language, society, culture and everything. There is a continuous tradition from Buddha to Gandhi. Gandhi is the most modern man in this tradition, so those who consider Buddha bad consider Gandhi also bad, and this clash is continued even today in Maharashtra" (1983: 103 Tr.).

1. *The Bountiful Banyan*

The *Bountiful Banyan* gathers its main biographical issues and themes from within the tradition. It refers to two different traditions: Vedic and non-Vedic, within one culture and prefers discontinuous historical tradition of Buddha, Charvak, Mahaveer, Basaveshwar, Chkradhara, Dnyandev Namdev, Tukaram, Phule, Shahu, Ambedkar, Gandhi, etc. not only for the merit of ideas and insights it can offer but for its place in the process of acquiring Indian sensibility.

2. *A.V. Matthew's Karmveer Bhaurao Patil*

A.V. Matthew's biography of Karmveer Bhaurao Patil is an amazing story of leadership and organization in rural education. The gathering of the materials and the writing of the biography occupied Matthew for more than Six years. This biography presents Anna as a symbol of the urge of the Rayats of Maharashtra to come into their own through education and political and social uplift. A.V. Matthew takes note of the influence of non-Vedic tradition on Anna and his monumental work in the social transformation of Maharashtra. Dr. D. R. Gadgil in his foreword to this biography points out Anna's place in the tradition of social workers in Maharashtra.

MODERNITY

In fact, modernity is a culture - specific phase of history but still we perceive it as a universal commodity. It is not an exportable commodity; each nation has its unique culture and civilization. In India modernity is nothing but westernization. Modernity cannot and should not be transplanted. Modernity must be shaped according to past traditions and present circumstances. We should create our modernity which suits our ancient Indian heritage and growth. The Western model of modernity in which all the *other* cultures and languages are ruthlessly eliminated is antagonistic to our perception of modernity. The real strength of Indian modernity will be tried on our indomitable *desi* values.

We Indians have inculcated all the external influences of Arya, Huna, Shaka, Kushana and Mughal by converting them into our systems. Due to this innate capacity, the external influences have been nativized here. Ashis Nandi says:

British culture in India was still not politically dominant, and race-based evolutionism was still inconspicuous in the ruling culture. Most Britons in India lived like Indians at home and in the office, wore Indian dress at home and observed Indian customs and religious practices. A large number of them married Indian women offered puja (worship) to Indian gods and goddesses and lived in fear and awe of the magical powers of the Brahmans. The first two Governor Generals, renowned for their rapaciousness, were also known for their commitment to things Indian. Under them, the traditional Indian lifestyle dominates the culture of British Indian politics. (1983:5)

But once the two sides in the British Indian Culture of politics, following the flowering of a middle-class British evangelical spirit, began to ascribe cultural meaning to 'the British (native Brahman) domination colonialism proper can be said to have begun' (1983:6). And there became the blind love for westernization more powerful & influential. So the western culture was accepted without any considerations, and the native modernity was completely neglected. In today's world, we find the western amenities such as T.V., Mixer Grinder, Computer, etc. are available in the middle-class families. We find the unavoidable pollution of sugar factories, English Education, News papers, cities, theatre culture, and individualism of western

modernism in the present world. Mahatma Gandhi has rejected all these as they are obstacles in the development of Indian society and culture. Still we are not aware of the fact that which things are to be modernized and which western thoughts are to be inculcated and nativized.

1. *The Bountiful Banyan*

The real strength of *The Bountiful Banyan* has been tried on our indomitable Indian *desi* modernity. *The Bountiful Banyan* involves deliberate and radical break with the tradition. *The Bountiful Banyan*, the four volume biography chronicles Anna's life, Struggles and achievements and activities based on a foundation free from considerations of caste, creed, sex or religion. Anna challenged the religion, the laws of Manu in particular, championed the cause of the common masses with deep and abiding concerns for the education of rural children and laid the foundation of a revolutionary system of education *The Bountiful Banyan* creates our modernity that suits our ancient heritage and has Indian growth by cultural restructuring through de-intellectualization.

2. A. V. Matthew's *Karmveer Bhaurao Patil*

A. V. Matthew's biography of Karmveer Bhaurao Patil is subtitled as an amazing story of leadership and organization in rural education. The first part of the biography registers and chronicles Anna's life story. The small second part of the biography sketches the events of the last three years of Anna's life and presents his philosophy of life which is an example of Indian native modernity. In his Foreword to the second part, Y. B. Chavan comments, "I am sure this Biography of Bhaurao will be a source of inspiration to the social reformers and thinkers for generations to come. It illuminates the problems of neglected and isolated sections of our society, which require sympathetic understanding and vigorous action.

METHODOLOGY

In the article some methods are exercising its political, economic and social rights, and he always recognized that education was a necessary means to reach this goal. In Indian Tradition is traditions- Vedic and non-Vedic within one culture and prefers discontinuous historical tradition. And modernity is a culture - specific phase of history but still we perceive it as a universal commodity. It is not an exportable commodity; each nation has its unique culture and civilization. In India modernity is nothing but westernization.

CONCLUSION

In short the article, Anna began his career as a fiery propagandist of Satyashodhak Samaj under the influence of Mahatma Phule and Shahu Maharaj. He raised his voice against the injustice of the upper classes. But then he turned to the positive aspect-the spread of education among the masses. He was a practical educationist who showed one way of transformation in society. Manual labours, eradication of untouchability, democratic spirit, importance to the education of the rural masses were some traits of his educational philosophy. He was able to create a band of devoted workers to support his work even after his death. His life-story is the very symbol of the urge of the masses to experience social-uplift.

REFERENCE

1. Chaudhari, Bahinabai. (Third edn). *Bahinabaichi Gani* (Marathi), Mumbai: Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd. Print.
2. Choudhuri, Indra Nath. *Welcome Speech*. Ed. Makarand Paranjape, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1997. Print.
3. Crystal, David. *The Language Revolution*, UK: Polity Press Ltd., 2005. Print.
4. Das, Sisir Kumar *A History of Indian Literature 1800-1910*, reprint 2000, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1991. Print.
5. Desai, Shantinath. Nativism in Modern Kannada Poetry: A Note. Pune:New Quest, May-June. 1984. Print.

-
6. Deshpande, G. P Selected writings of Jotirao Phule. New Delhi: Naya Rasta, Leftword Books Publication, 2002. Print.
 7. Devy, G.N. After Amnesia -Tradition and Change in Indian Literary Criticism. Hyderabad: Orient Longman. 1992. Print.
 8. Dhasal, Namdev. Interview by Satish Kalasekar, Pradnya Lokhande. Anushtubh, June-August, 1997. Print.
 9. Doniger, Wendy. The Laws of Manu, New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1991. Print.
 10. Eagleton, Terry. LiteraryTheory. New Delhi: Maya Publisher Pvt. Ltd, (reprint 2000) 1983. Print.