

# Opinions on

Dr. V. H. Date's *Notes on the Brahma-Yoga of the Gita*

## The Brahma-Yoga

### of the Gita

BY

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ADHYĀTMA SĀHITYA VĪKĀSA SANSTHĀ

C/o Dr. V. H. Date

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## The Publisher says:—

NO ENGLISH

The *Brahma-Yoga of the Gītā* has broken the limits of closed thinking and artificial walls which are unfortunately maintained even now by the followers of the great Vedānta Schools. Its central teachings are: 1. that there will never emerge the illuminational, the direct and the concrete, blissful knowledge of Brahman, unless one receives the grace of God through a powerful God-realized Master; 2. that all kinds of altruistic works, penances, sacrifices, philosophic contemplation on virtues, and yogic postures, though useful as means, will never be a substitute for God-realization; 3. that what is now-a-days loosely talked about, as *Anāsaktiyoga* and as the *Niṣkāma karma-yoga*, can never be achieved without the fulfilment of the prior condition of Āsakti or attachment to God; 4. that *Bhakti*, *Jñāna* (experience of God) and *Vairāgya* are interdependent, and must grow together; 5. that experience of spiritual equality of all creatures before God must be the basis and the source of all other kinds of unity, equality and fraternity; 6. and that, finally, man is only an instrument in the hands of God, and that his duty lies in participating in the nature of God and in his works, as also in leading the erring humanity towards fellow-feeling, God-realization and the bliss of it.

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Vināyak Hari Dāte is a familiar name in the modern philosophical world. He came into prominence with the publication of his *Vedānta Explained*, 2 vols. and the *Yoga of the Saints*, which elicited the eloquent commendation from the eminent Philosopher-Saint, Prof. R. D. Ranade, that "it is a work which will command our respect, and that it is the outcome of his own deep conviction and personal experience."

Dr. Date began his career as early as 1932 as Professor of Philosophy in the colleges at Belgaum and Kolhapur. Subsequently, he came over to Rajasthan in 1947 and was associated with Universities of Jodhpur and Jaipur. During this period many brilliant students had the privilege of working under him and got the degree of Ph. D. He retired in 1963 as a Reader and Head of the department of Philosophy, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

A NEW APPROACH TO THE GĪTĀ (FROM THE "HINDU" OF  
MADRAS 10-12-1972)

Professor Date's substantial volume under review is a refreshingly original interpretation of the Gītā. Avoiding the purely liberal forum and sanctum approach, it takes up the position described as Brahma-Yoga. This outlook sees in Lord Krishna's gospel a mystic God-consciousness which can only be had through absolute devotion backed by Jñāna and initiated by a God-realised Guru. Going to the Guru is not a mere ritual or an act of formality. It is a spiritual necessity. Unaided spiritual practices are not warranted. The art and science of divine life, as set forth in the Gītā, outline a discipline based on sound morality and absolute, joyous, conscious, unreserved surrender to the Lord. It is only a God-centred existence that can give us the strength to fight the temptations and build a new social order in the image of justice, equality and liberty. Attempts to practise 'Anāsakti yoga', or secure 'Lokasangraha', or 'Sarva-Bhūta-hita' are doomed to failure in the absence of deep and abiding God-love. The Lord's Imperative '*always be united to Me*' is the precondition for fruitful implementation of all duties. All activities to be successful must be God-centred, and not God-eclipsing and ego-promoting moods.

Besides the free translations of the verses, Dr. Date has given us elaborate comments disclosing his sensitivity and deep insight into the meaning of the verses. The perception and the presentation of the author are fluent and their impact on the reader is elevating and intimate. Dip into the comments of any verse, you emerge spiritually instructed. The volume carries two highly useful essays "Adhyāya-wise essentials of Brahma-Yoga" and "A view in advance" which provide the guide-lines for following the author's interpretation. In short, the work is a highly satisfying work on a sublime scripture.

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BRAHMA - YOGA OF THE GĪTĀ—By V. H. Date.

Munshiram Manoharlal, 54 Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi - 55.

THE AMRIT BAZAR PATRIKA, OCTOBER 1, 1972 (Pages 672; Rs 75)

The learned author whose earlier work 'Vedānta Explained' has earned him a wide reputation as a scholar in the field of spiritual discussion, presents in the book under review the basic theme of the Gītā—the Brahma-Yoga of which the exponent is Śrī Krishna Himself. Dr. Date, it appears, has delved deep, perhaps deeper into the subject and has been eminently successful in establishing his thesis. He is perfectly right when he observes that it is the Brahma-Yoga alone that breaks the limits of closed thinking and artificial walls which the Vedāntic followers still maintain. We gather from the Preface that about half a century ago the author began his close and earnest study of the Bhagavad-gītā as a reaction against the one-sided views and pre-conceived notions of many a scholar and commentator regarding the message of the Lord Krishna. Thus a mature thinking and perfect comprehension (which is only possible by dint of 'Sādhanā' in the line laid down in the Gītā) have gone behind the making of this remarkable exposition of the Brahma-Yoga as propounded in the Gītā. What is significant in this book is that it contains the essentials of the main teachings of the Vedānta. The second chapter entitled 'A View in Advance' is of absorbing interest. We congratulate the author as well as the publishers for presenting such a book having a lasting value and an appeal to the spiritual seekers.

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THE STATESMAN, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1972.

Mr. Date's highly scholarly work tries to prove that the blissful knowledge of Brahman can be acquired only through God-realization. All altruistic work, penance, sacrifice, philosophical contemplation on virtues and yogic postures are useful, but only up to a point. Bhakti, Jñāna and Vairāgya are interdependent and must grow together.

... The kernel of its teaching is the attainment of the Brahmic consciousness through the two-fold sādhana for the Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute. This is the Brahma-yoga of the Gītā, 'the well-knit theme of all the Adhyāyas' as asserted by the learned author of this book. The Gītā calls upon mankind to rise to a supreme poise. Equality of will and rejection of the idea of fruits (Karma-phala-tyāga) are only means for entering into the divine consciousness. This is the theme ably dealt with by the author of this monumental work.

This work is the result of hard labour of above half a century during which time the author read and reread the Gītā more than hundred times, went through 15 standard commentaries in Sanskrit, and also read works in English and Marathi, besides several articles on the subject. His hard labour and patient researches have resulted in the production of this comprehensive work of considerable merit containing the gist of the main teachings of the five great teachers of Vedānta and their followers.

To enable the general reader to understand the main theme of the Gītā, i. e., the Brahma-Yoga and the way to attain it, the first few pages of the book contain the chapter, 'A View in Advance'.

—S. P. S.

The Marudhar Publishers have published the following books by Dr. V. H. Dāte and they can be had from Messers Narendra and Brothers, Kallas' Street, Jodhpur.

1. *St. Tukārāma-ki-Abhanga-Gāthā.*

(in Hindi Verse) Containing one thousand Abhangas  
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2. *Meditations of Saint Tukārāma.*

(English rendering of No. 1 above) 1976. Rs. 35/-

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Printed separately from No. I. Rs. 1/-

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(Eng. rendering of No. 3), 1976. Rs. 1/-

Other Books of Dr. V. H. DATE can be had from  
Messers Narendra & Brothers, Adjacent to Marudhar Printers  
Kallas' street, Jodhpur.

1. 'Vedānta Explained' (Two vols. in English) Rs. 100/-
2. *Brahma-Yoga of the Gītā*. (in English) Rs. 75/-
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5. *Siddhānta Dāsabodha*. (both in Marathi and in Hindi)

Works Contemplated

1. *A Call from the Bible*.
2. *Crumbs from the Table of the Saints*.
3. *Parables and Dialogues in the Upaniṣads*.
4. *R. D. Ranade and his Spiritual Lineage*.

Subsidised Publication of—

'From Idealism to Mysticism' by Dr. M. L. Sharma. Rs. 25/-

V.H. Date. Brhma Yoga of the Gita- New Delhi, Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, 1971. In-80°. Introduction 24 pages and 648 pages of text.

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The celebrated Gita has been the subject of <sup>h</sup>comentaries by the greatest philosophers of mediaeval ~~and~~ India. It has been considered by them to be as authoritative as the Vedanta, the "End of knowledge" and the Upaniṣads. Since the 18th century, the Gita has regained its vogue when the translation of Wilkins made it appreciated by the Europeans. During the British Rule it was a Book of National interest to the Indians which did honour to the country besides its Government and whose doctrine inspired into the people a sentiment of dignity of wisdom dominating an adverse fate. The ontological conscience dominated the political situation. It is thus that Krishna, incarnation of supreme divinity taught to Arjuna, son of the God Warrior Indra, to surmount the anguish of battle against his relatives by raising his mind to the serenity of detachment from all personal interests in the accomplishment of his duty to the state and to the conscience of glory of the Being in itself, the unique substratum of all the things ~~in~~ flux in flux. Thus the Gita has sustained the movement of Gandhi.

The Gita always merits the admiration and the exegeses, not only by the role it has played in Indian culture, but more because it is always popular and inspiring in the present society.

This is a commentary which has been written in English around the text in Nagri Script by Mr. Date. This ~~com~~mentary is ~~un~~full and significant of the eminent ~~importance~~ importance which is presently attached to this text in India and for the general diffusion of Indian thought.

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#### Publishers-

Bulletin of the French School of the Far-East Volume-62.  
Paris-1975.

#### Address:-

Adrien Maisonneuve, 11, rue Saint- Sulpice, Paris (6).