

**The Thematic Study of *Amrutdhara* originally Composed in Marathi by Swami
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Abstract

Ramchandra Godbole (also acknowledged as Swami Swaroopananda) was born on December 15, 1903, at Pawas; a tiny village of the district Ratnagiri (Maharashtra); located on the western sea-coast of Indian peninsula in a pious Brahmin family of Godbole (established in the same village for seven generations long) who was an ardent devotee of lord *Vishnu*. The rich righteous and religious tradition of the ages in his family had prepared like a fertile land for him. This incident is, aptly, illustrated by Saint Tukaram: 'It is out of the unpolluted and pure seeds that the juicy and tasty fruits come into being.'

'A genius is never born out of a mediocracy' says a renowned socialist while examining the impact of heredity on the life of man. Especially, in the kingdom of spiritual souls, great emphasis is laid on the sublimity of the dynasty. While describing the fate of the Yogis who have traversed some distance on the path of spiritual perfection but are constrained to give it up due to the sudden completion of the life-span, Lord Krishna assures, 'such a Yogi takes his birth again on earth in the house which is rich both in purity and prosperity. Or he is born in the family of wise Yogis only.' The Marathi title *Amrutdhara* ensures about Ramchandra Godbole's (The poet) own experiences at the stage of '*Sadhak*;' a kind of ways of self-motivated journey from mundane to spirituality. As mentioned above, *Amrutdhara*, written in the village Pawas, is the first literary work describing the divine dialogue of the spiritual poet with the Mother-Goddess *Jagadamba*. In 1935, while he had reached at the stage of *Sakshatkar* (Realization), Ramchandra Godbole had written the text. Though the text is very small; contained 162 *sakis*,¹² it is, absolutely, rich in the virtues regarding poetry and spiritual experiences.

Key Words: Seven Spiritual Perspectives of his life, Saki Meter, God's Play, Self-enlightenment, Infinity

"Without Self-experience, Learning Vedanta by Heart is Worthless..:"

"Jageejanmuneebhinav-jeevan-satkavivarhoi

Swaanubhvant:sfurtnavarasisatya-kavyanirmeen" //1// - Amrutdhara: 1

Swami Swaroopananda himself asserts to the readers about the whole process of composing the *Amrutdhara* in the very opening of the text by saying:

"Taking birth as a supreme true poet
With enlightened novel soul
(Leading distinguished life),
I'll create spontaneous true poetry
With self-experienced composition
In nine melodious tunes."//1//

This paves the road towards the concern that the whole poem is relied on the divine experiences the poet has possessed through. To attain the stage of Self-enlightenment, he has followed the ways sustained by the *Nath Sampraday* (Sect) since the centuries ago. Saint Dnyaneshwar, to whom Swami Swaroopananda himself has acknowledged as his *Guru* (guide),¹ has thought as one of the prominent followers of the *Nath Sect*. In other words, *Amrutdhara*, thus, is an expression of the spontaneous overflow of powerful divine experiences in which the experiences have been glorified by.

About the Text *Amrutdhara*:

The Marathi title *Amrutdhara* ensures about Ramchandra Godbole's (The poet) own experiences at the stage of '*Sadhak* (worshiper);² a kind of ways sustained for the self-motivated journey from mundane to spirituality. *Amrutdhara*, composed in the village Pawas (Ratnagiri), is the first literary work describing the divine dialogue of the spiritual poet with the Mother-Goddess *Jagadamba*.³ In 1935, while he had reached at the stage of *Sakshatkar* (Self-realization), Ramchandra Godbole (later on, after transformation, he is known as Swami Swaroopananda) had written the text. Though the text is very small; contained 162 *Sakis*, it is, absolutely, rich in the virtues regarding poetry and spiritual experiences.

About Thematic Concerns of *Amrutdhara*:

The very opening of the Marathi version of the selected text conveys that this poetry is dedicated to his mother by birth and by worship. It reflects through the quatrain: *Mataji-he jaganmatar / Bhagyawan tau*

nandan / Kari 'Amrutdhara' hya / Tuzya tuj samarpan //1//

Here, the Marathi words *Hya Tuzya* (these are of Your's), clearly, indicates that this poetic composition is not only taken place by his 'spontaneous overflow' but also by the divine grace of the Mother goddess *Jagadamba*. Moving ahead with the actual text, it is seen that Ramchandra worships the *Guru-Tradition* of *Nath Sampraday* of which he is a keen follower. The first eight *Sakis*ⁱⁱ refer to this tradition. The first seven (The Marathi word *Sapta*) *Sakis*, clearly, remember the various *Gurus* (Masters) who are associated with the *Nath Sampraday*ⁱⁱⁱ from the very beginning.

It is observed that the text, further on, glorifies the way of 'being in worship always' to attain the stage of Self-realization. Thus, from the point of view, this text renders *Bhakti* (The devotion) tradition of the ages' long. Panini; a Sanskrit grammarian, speaks of "*bhakti* that comes to mean "devotion" or "love." In the early period, the Sanskrit noun *bhakti* was meant as 'a sense of belonging.'¹

There are, majorly, seven perceptions found and studied with the help of original text. These perceptions message the whole idea of the text on which it is relied on. Those seven perceptions are, respectively, as: The poet's steps toward his self-purification, his journey towards the spiritual unconscious, his self-reliant doctrines or advices, his worship of *Soham* (I AM THE SOUL), his life in the actual stage of self-knowledge, his self-manifestation through *Soham Sadhana*^{iv} and his life in infinity. All these concerns are classified, further, into the two parts: Themes and Concerns and The Stages of

Self-realization. In the first part, 'the quest for self-realization' is highlighted, while the second part cooperates with 'the ways' for attaining the quest. It is found under this component that the poet Ramchandra Godbole speaks in *Amrutdhara* about self-realization as his dream of being a social, his journey towards his self-consciousness, his doctrines for achieving the reliance in self and his forms of worship come up through the worship of *Soham*. This is the form of worship rejuvenated from the *Yoga*. The poet himself has attained the worship through the three forms of *Yoga*, as said in *Geeta: jnana* ('insight'), *karma* ('action'), and *bhakti* ('devotion') – the last is the most fundamental. All these paths become, for him, conducive to detachment from the world. Regarding these views, let concern the thematic perceptions as follows:

i) The Poet's Steps toward His Self-purification:

It is mentioned, above, that the selected text *Amrutdhara* has composed in his one of the stages of self-enlightenment. There are four stages of self-enlightenment: *Baddha*, *Mumukshu*, *Sadhak* and *Siddha*.⁴ The one lives life as an ordinary being at the very first stage. Though he is bound within the surrounding, he has the quest of meeting the God. When this quest turns into the intensity the second stage arises. Here, the one becomes more conscious about the trouble, sorrow and grief in his life. He also realizes the paucity of worldly life and, therefore, he tries and follows the ways to remove the self. By following the ways, he feels inside fresh and becomes aware, from inside, about something divine. Thus, this stage is considered as third. At this stage, he feels

the whole worldly life totally different than that of the previous. Through maintaining the continuity in *Sadhana* (worship), he becomes the *Siddha* (devoted worshiper). At this stage, the one, always, feels the wholeness of the worldly world. He also experiences the oneness of the world, all differences are vanished and through this; he becomes one with the almighty.

While the poet penned down the text, he was very much close to the complete transformation. The text, thus, becomes autobiographical and sketches his journey for self-purification from the second stage. According to many, he was in the third stage and, in the past, he experienced a lot of grief. Through that sorrow, he felt, intensely, the quest of meeting with God (*Jagadamba*). Swamiji has expressed these emotions at the very beginning of the text *Amrutdhara* through reciting the lines:

“*Asato Ma Sad gamaya,
Tamaso Ma Jyotirgamaya
Mritor Ma Amritangamaya
OM Shanti, Shanti, Shantih*”

These lines in the Source Language Sanskrit are translated in the Target Language English as:

“Lead me from the Unreal to the Real;
From Darkness to Light;
From Death to Immortality.
OM, Peace, Peace, Peace.”

And, thus, he has asked to *Jagadamba*; to whom he, always, calls 'his Mother,' for his consent of writing *Amrutdhara*. After gaining the acquiescence, he has started composing *Amrutdhara*. By this text, the poet has devoted his writing to *Jagadamba*.

According to Swami Vidyananda, one of the followers of Swami Swaroopananda, *Jagadamba*^v is a form of *Prakruti* and a bridge between *Prakruti* and *Purush*.^{vi} II Therefore, he says, Swamiji calls himself the son of *Jagadamba* in *Amrutdhara*. These feelings are recorded in the very opening Saki of *Amrutdhara*.

Swamiji says that to be born on this worldly earth is not his task but doing something supreme is in his hands. Therefore, he expresses, at the very beginning of the SL text *Amrutdhara*, his various wills for being supreme on this earth. This same view is revealed through the words of Sri Aurobindo;^{II} the twentieth century's Indian poet and mystic:

*"This world was not made with random
bricks of chance*

*A blind god is not destiny's architect,
A conscious power has drawn the plan of
life,*

There is meaning in each curve and line."

Among the other wills, he has chosen the supreme will of being a disciple of *Jagadamba* and of spreading the message of *Jagadamba* in this physical world. Thus, he speaks about his various wills for being 'supreme' on this earth as well as about his selected will in the sakis 1-9.

ii) The Journey towards the Unconscious:

When Swami Vidyananda has delivered lectures on *Amrutdhara* at Pawas for seven days, he, strongly, proposes that the poet has composed the text in his *Sadhakawastha*.^{vii} He has, also, proposed there that his journey towards the unconscious had started in the days of sickness. In that sickness, according

to Swami Vidyananda,⁵ his body consciousness burned and the self-consciousness aroused. Therefore, on this account, there are found two centers in the universe. The death of the one is referenced in the Saki 27.

Here, in the *Saki 27*, the poet, strongly, asserts the death of his physicality, the death of his quest of physical demands etc. and, now, symbolically; conveys the message that he has a rebirth for the higher truth. This presents, here, his journey towards the absolute center i.e. 'I.' This whole phenomena is, for the poet and composer, like passing an exam and therefore, he, as in the *Saki* first, calls *Jagadamba* for the grace abounding. This will has taken place in the *Sakis* 34, 35 and 36. Through these three *Sakis*, Swamiji's sense of total surrender is expressed. Thus, the readers understand about the process of disappearing 'I.' The same thoughts have expressed through the further few *Sakis* 40, 41 and 42. After saying about the expression of total surrender, the poet says in the *Saki 46* about the expression of devotional worship aroused in the death of his mind. And through this devotional worship, the puzzle of the worldly world has been solved. The poet feels this worldly world 'a stage.' Saint Dnyaneshwar feels it '*chidvilas*,^{III} while Ramkrishna Paramhansa calls it 'God's play.'^V This sentiment has fulfilled in the *Saki 51*. Thus, as the readers feel, here, the poet becomes altruistic, inwardly-outwardly, in this journey.

iii) The Poet's Reliance on the Self-reliant Doctrine:

Through the altruism, his physical identity of being 'I' is, completely, vanished. Therefore, he demands

Jagadamba the alms of devotional worship for the welfare of the whole world. This aspect has been reflected, lucidly, in the Saki 52:

*Jagajananeetav bhakti-
sudhecheepawanbhikshaaghaal
Daaripaatalaapahaatuzahaabhaagyavantka
ngaal //52//*

It is seen in the TL Saki as:

Oh Universal Mother! Give me thy
Holy, pure alms of worship's ambrosia
Look, this pure fortunate but destitute
Devotee came to Thy door. //52//

And in the Saki 55, he stresses the importance of devotional worship with its effect on the seen-unseen as well as experienced-unexperienced world. In the further Saki 56; the poet, especially, focuses on the consequences of that devotional worship where he experiences the oneness of the whole world. These two *Sakis* are considered, rhythmically, as balanced. Thereafter, the Saki 58, structurally balanced, speaks about the presence of the formless-oneness of the God in this whole world that gives him immense pleasure. This sense becomes extensive in the mind. In the Saki 53, it is seen that he has become stoic and therefore, he feels that he is liberated from the sense of emancipation. After narrating this whole experience, now, the poet tells the common reader the actual ways toward their betterment. Thus, he tries to make them aware about the truth by berating the phony people. This sense of admonish towards the falseness and hypocrisy has been uttered in the following *Sakis* 59-63. Further, with a sacred love and on his own experience, the poet shows the

actual paths toward upliftment. These various methods are highlighted in the following *Sakis* 66 -71. Going through the pages ahead, it is become clear that the poet was at the stage of *Sadhak* (Worshiper). The next four aspects reflect the poet's *Siddhawastha*, the destination of the journey in which he has developed the *Soham* method for self-manifestation.

iv) The Adoration of the Self for *Soham*:

The poet supports the words narrated in the *Bhagwadageeta*^{viii} by telling that the anger, lust and greed are the doors of the hell.^{vi} He, further, says that the whole worship will be worthless if they are in the mind. Thus, he asserts, for *Saham*, the necessity of the purification of the mind and the self in the *Sakis* 89, 90 and 92. And moving ahead, he states the ways, in the *Sakis* 96 and 97, to purify the mind and for being virtuous. Swamiji says with his own experience in the Saki 104 that as the *Soham* expression increases inward, the whole world outside is occupied by him. This aspect leads to the understanding of Swamiji's life in the self-knowledge.

v) Swamiji's Life in the Self-knowledge:

The poet expresses in the text *Amrutdhara* that what he has, actually, felt and what is, actually, happening in the third stage. He has written the text in this stage and therefore, he is narrating his ongoing experiences. Thus, the same philosophy in the *Upnishadas* is told in different words in the *Sakis* 112 and 113. Through those experiences and the grace of *Jagadamba*, he realizes the true sense of being one with the

world. This is revealed in the *Saki* 114. Though living life in the self-knowledge, he has never departed from *Soham* and, therefore, he, again and again, emphasizes the importance and the power of *Soham* through the *Sakis* 117, 118 and 119. Through this practice, Swamiji has reached closet to the fourth stage of Self- realization i.e. *Siddha*. This is classified in two small aspects: the self-manifestation and the infinity.

vi) The Self-manifestation through *Soham Sadhana*(method):

In the *Sakis* 134-138, Swamiji solves the puzzle of the nature of *Soham*. Then, he remembers the whole process of the transformation. He, sometimes, regrets, here, for doing wrongs in life. The sense of repentance is, once again, reflected in the few *Sakis* of the ending part of the text: 139, 140, 141 and 142. He credits *the Soham Sadhana* for vanishing his physical 'I.' He is enlightened with the fearless body, now. Therefore, he speaks in the *Saki* 145. By coming towards the end, he puts an ink on the paper for conveying the actual method of *the Soham Sadhana* by which the bourgeois can experience the principle of oneness: "*I am Brahma.*" The *Sakis* 146- 149 are structured for convey the message. At the ending part of the text, the poet narrates the particular effect on the body through which the mind becomes purified from the seven sins and six enemies. The *Sakis* 152, 153, 155 are informed about this. The idea of the poet's complete transformation is rendered through.

vii) His Life in Infinity:

Swamiji, now, becomes, completely, free from all the worldly bondages, from the worldly pleasure, from the physical mortal demands etc. He has reached at the horizon beyond the worldly sight. Here, the researcher finds that all the differences are vanished and the absolute amalgamation of Swamiji's 'I' with the final spirit is taken place. Through this absolute union, Swamiji, truly, experiences '*Sat, Chit and Ananda.*'^{VII} Here, through '*Sat,*' Swamiji has experienced the life in the one reality that is beyond all time and space as a supreme transcendence. *Sat* can, ultimately, be described as '*absolute or primal existence.*' Through '*Chit,*' he has experienced the life in the absolute reality which is fully of Conscious Power. This absolute reality possesses all knowledge about the past, present and future. It is the source of all knowledge. Through '*Ananda,*' he has realized the whole life in the absolute supreme reality that lacks nothing. This life contains all and encompasses everything. Here, '*the state of bliss*' becomes an integral part of life. Therefore, Swamiji says that his *Soham Sadhana* has been turned into the whole. Thus, he expresses his actual condition in the infinity, at last, in two *Sakis* 160 and 161:

Mee-

*toopanastaavaleaalesaadhaneespoornatva
kanakanaatkondaleekaleeknityasattatva
//160//*

*Stheryapradnyepratitvatkrupepoornatapasy
aazaali*

*tvadaadnyesanusarunaatatheulekhaneekha
lee //161//*

This state of being 'One' with the 'Complete,' as revealed in the *Saki* 160, is, beautifully, conveyed in the philosophy of Hinduism through the Sanskrit lines:

“Om!PurnamadahPurnamidam
Purnatpurnamudacyate
Purnasyapurnamadaya
Purnamevavasisyate.”

These lines are translated in English as:

“Om. That (God) is complete. This
(Creation) is complete.

From the complete springs forth the
complete.

If the complete is taken from the complete,
the complete remains.”

Thus, with the help of chosen text *Amrutdhara*, the thematic concerns such as Swamiji's steps toward his self-purification, his journey towards the spiritual unconscious, his self-reliant doctrines or advices, his worship of *Soham*, his life in the actual stage of self-knowledge, his self-manifestation through *Soham Sadhana* and his life in infinity have been discussed. These aspects toward Monism are, similarly, well-expressed in another composition entitled as *Sanjivani Gatha*^{ix} that contains 262 *Abhangas*. These concerns enlighten the studious readers about his 'actual purpose' of life. For attaining the actual purpose, he has traveled, widely, through the various spiritual kingdoms.

Furthermore, the meaning has been generated that the poetic verse text *Amrutdhara* expresses a visual fascination with God and *Sakis* that bemoan the deity's absence and invisibility. It assures about the

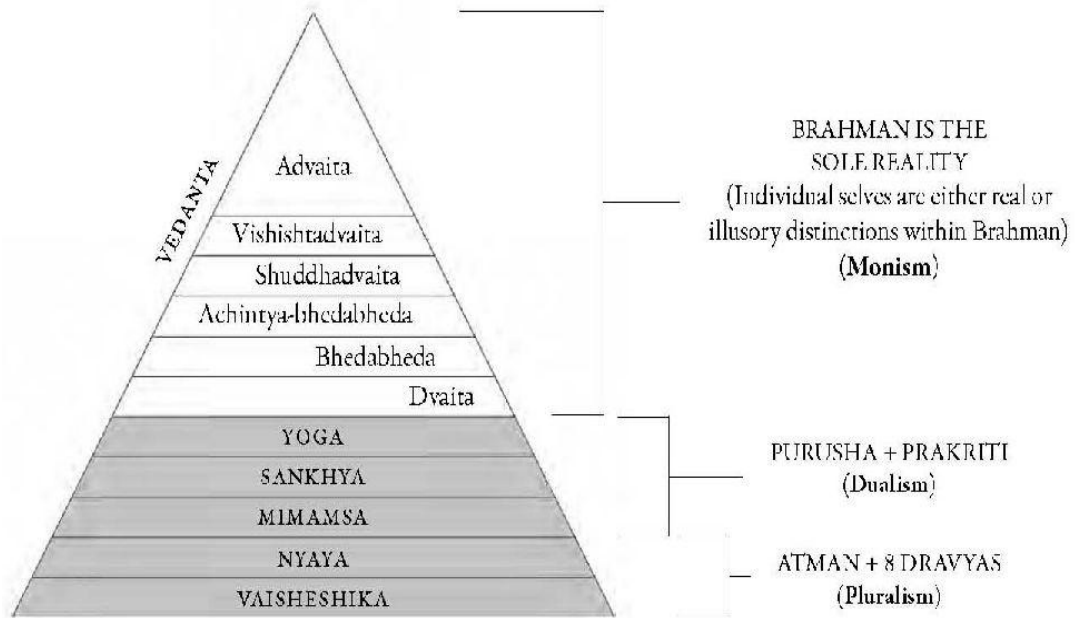
presence of God, everywhere. From these views it is realized that his is the poet who adopts a *Saguna* (“with qualities”) approach, accepting that God is to be worshipped by means of images. Therefore, the poet has always worshiped the Mother-goddess *Jagadamba* to the will of being transformed from mundane to the spiritual. From that journey towards self-transformation, he has understood and, thus, put the view, originally expressed by *Shri Jnaneshwar*, through *Amrutdhara* that true knowledge consists in knowing God in the non-dual form and that devotion should culminate in *Advaita bhakti* (The worship followed by Monism). The devotee should realize God as all-pervasive; and wherever he casts his eyes, he should see God therein. This shows that the poet has become a *Jnani-Bhakta* (Devotee by knowledge) of the highest order described in the *Gita* in the verse 7.17. This message is again, deeply, conveyed in the book *Sanjivani Gatha* where the poet Ramchandra Godbole, heartily, longs about everyone should perform his duty as a *yajna* (a work without expectations) and offer his or her actions as flowers at the feet of God.

Along with this text, the poet has sung three stanzas. These are thought similar to the stanza pattern reflected in *Upanishad*. These stanzas are formed both into five lines and free verse that convey his complete amalgamation with the Mother-goddess *Jagadamba*. These verses mark, further on, a perfection of the poet's worship. Yet, these lines leave behind the poet's expression of being a true and a very satisfied servant of the Mother *Jagadamba*.

At the end, the poet praises for the Mother-goddess *Jagadamba* through *Varprarthana*

(The Prayer for Being in Grace). This prayer is not only structured in the eight rhyming couplets but also has a divine resemblance with Saint Dnyaneshwar's *Pasaydan*^x. It eludes the peace of the whole world and, thus, reveals the demand of 'grace' for variety of subjects such as the grace of GOD as demanded in the first couplet, the grace for both overcoming six enemies and being, always, in the state of total surrendered as reflected in the second, the grace for mental aloofness at the time of acting on mundane duties as demanded in the third, the demand

of grace for being free from any worldly bounding as revealed in the fourth, the will of grace for being in a state of always worshipped as taken place in the fifth, the grace for experiencing 'oneness' of GOD in all physical bodies as well as in all worldly life as called for in the six, the grace for being in amalgamation with 'I' and the Almighty GOD as willed in the seventh and the grace for experiencing, continuously, the experienced *Advait* (Monism) as longed in the eighth. This whole journey is presented in the following diagram^{IV}:



After *Var-Prarthana*, the Marathi text contains four *Abhangas*. First twelve lines (three *abhangas*) are composed in quatrain. The last one has been picked out from the book *Sarth Dnyaneshwari*. The first three *Abhangas*, composed by the poet himself, are seen, purely, autobiographical and have been sung, originally, for the composition of the text *Sanjivani-Gatha*. The expressions of the quest of being a spiritual, being an incredible happy and being One with the Almighty, always, are experienced in the first three stanzas. The last couplet originally composed by Saint Dnyaneshwar provides the base-source to the title of the Marathi text *Amrutdhara*. This is reflected through the following lines: "*AmrutachiyaSagari / Je labhesamarthyacheethoree // Te chi de Amrut- Lahari / Chuleeghetleyaa //*"

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End Notes:

ⁱ O, Mother Goddess *Jagadamba*, I am your son so fortunate that you have given me the inspiration to compose this poem. Therefore, I devote all these nectar showers to you.

ⁱⁱ *Saki* is very old traditional meter used for composition the spiritual texts in Marathi. It contains the 28 syllabus with a classification 8+8+8+2+2. This meter involves in itself very intensity that makes a composed text highly voracious and spontaneous.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Nath Sect* is one of the oldest religious and spiritual ways of living a life that has been pioneered by Aadinath (Lord Shiva) in Maharashtra. Guru Machindranath, Gorakhnath and other seven are the prominent followers of it. At the turn of 13th century, both Saint Nivruttinath and Saint Dnyaneshwar were the chief followers.

^{iv} This is method of transforming a physical and worldly body into the spiritual. It comes up with the incarnation of YOGA in the body. Deep breathing is one of the techniques of SOHAM.

^v According to Hindu Philosophy, *Jagadamba* is one of the precious forms of the Almighty. It is said to be as the Mother of the whole world.

^{vi} According to Dr. Anne Besant, in the translation of *Bhagavadgeeta*, *Prakruti* is Nature and *Purush* is Spirit.

^{vii} This is thought as a second stage in the journey towards spirituality. Though it is closely connected to the worshipper, it is found beyond that.

^{viii} This is an epic- book narrated by Shri Krishana in 700 *Shlokas* (A couplets with particular meters in Sanskrit). This is told to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. This book is thought as a diamond in the Hindu Philosophy.

^{ix} It is a book composed by Swami Swaroopananda himself in the form of Abhanga. It contains 262 Abhangas and is an expression of his spiritual insight and experiences.

^x It is a closing poem of Saint Dnyaneshwar's *Dnyaneshwari*. *Dnyaneshwari* is marked as a critique of *Bhagavadgeeta* composed in old Marathi.

RESEARCH INNOVATOR