



THE DADA MOVEMENT

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Not by Politics Alone

Call it Politics?

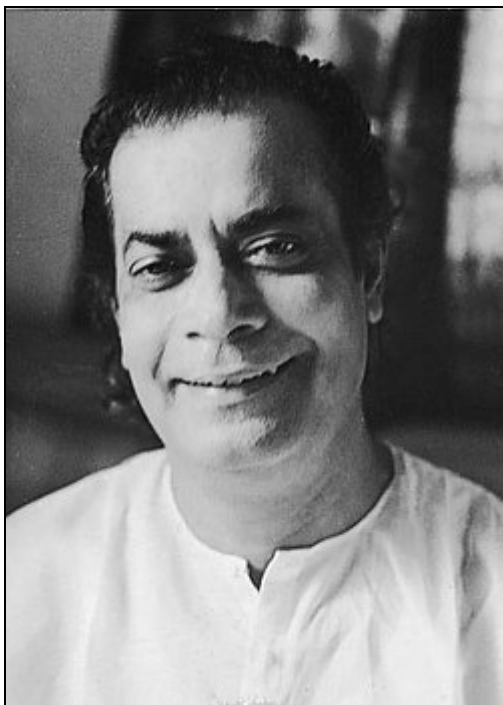
Cultural Fellowship in India

Hindus and Musalmans of India

Sing on dearest brother; warble your reedy song,
 Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe,
 O liquid and free and tender!
 O wild and loose to my soul --- O wondrous singer!
 You only I hear --- yet the star holds me,
 (but will soon depart,)
 Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.
 --- When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd.

WALT WHITMAN

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| <p>Very many thanks for your comments enclosed on the DADA MOVEMENT. Wishing all success to your book --- C.N. Parkinson</p> | <p>India will somehow master the overwhelming problems and emerge as the greatest spiritual leader in the world which is crying for leadership. --- Chester Bowles</p> |
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A God-man is so illusive and impalpable. This is about all that can be said: something is known, and something remains unknowable. Any attempt as such is likely to leave much that is elusive and inexplicable. Many love him, a good few adore him, and no fewer abjure him. A veil of mist keeps on.

In Dadaji we have such a God-man, around whom delightful sunbeams glow and delusive bubbles play. So, his great goodness happens to be as well greatly doubted. All that makes him at once a tower of light and a target of controversy. All the while, his love and compassion for man continues to be in action. However, a saint in service of modern man has to meet all the needs of his complex times. Man today lives in a one world while inheriting his local tradition. This book, therefore, has to take a world view of religious quests, in which ancient religions and modern philosophies compare notes and exchange inquiries.

Preface

Life is movement. The world strides forward and bends backward. Thus man goes on building and breaking. His civilization is every now and then on the swing. All the time human values undergo renewal.

Diverse is the motion and varied is its behavior. When, however, the move is inward, when life looks at itself and turns its insight on the indwelling spirit, then religion is on the way. The quest, then, is of the finite for the Infinite.

And why is this quest? The finite finds its own power little and limited; its own conquests short-lived and insecure. All that it has is fleeting, nothing is final. Comparably, man finds that the Power that runs the universe is solemn and sublime. To be secure and fortified, then, man yearns after an understandable relation with the Infinite. Impelled by doubt and discontent about his own limitations, man throws himself prostrate before the Supreme Power. Submission from fear and friction is gloomy: there is a glow of joy only when the heart puts in faith and pours out love. This is just how religion of love is grown and goes to work on sweetening life.

Indeed, knowledge of God is no more than a means: the end is love, while the beginning is awe. When forms multiply and hypocrisy manipulates, religions gives way: when grace and goodness prevails religion comes into vigor.

The great religion of Christianity as well as Islam arose at a definite period of history. Likewise, each had its Divine Founder: the Son of God and the Messenger of God. And fixed at this foundation, each has remained the sole and invariable inspiration all alone for millions of its followers. Of course, complexities arose in the course of time. Schoolmen appeared to answer doubts and resolve disputes. Nevertheless, each has remained the one unfailing light for the faithful, linking the whole past and the future of the give values.

Not quite so with the Chinese and the Indian religions. In both countries religion appeared at no known point of time. And no single human authority promulgated a particular faith that held sway over the whole country, nor had any human-divine arisen right at the very beginning. In that shadowy era, various priests and literati, sages and wise men laid the foundation of the varied and variegated beliefs in India, as in China. The earliest seers of the Veda sang hymns as it were in a chorus. Thus Hindu religion came into existence at a dim indefinite past and happened to grow up as a big banyan tree, with ever-renewing roots and over-spreading branches.

No divine definer of faith had sprung up here before Krishna of the Gita. And it was He who introduced Himself as the incarnation of God, even as God Himself. Incarnations have followed since.

Visions alter at varying angles, as age after age religious outlook changes scales to find new viewpoints, new objectives. So, now comes Dada. He comes in response to the unspoken wishes of an otherwise noisy time.

There as been no thinker nor any thought that has no challenge to face. Having had this in view, each of our Six Schools of Philosophy, with its ancient tools of reasoning laid down: what it was for and what it stood against. Impelled by a fine sense of intellectual trial, each framed in its point of view: "Now the critique on Yoga", "Now the enquiry into righteousness", "Now, then, there is the enquiry into Brahma". With this traditional guide-board, I may have leave to begin: Now an enquiry about Dada. Here is, accordingly, an attempt to analyze: how the stage has been set for Dadaji, how he means to lead men out of the jungle of dogmas and how does he lay out the way to happiness that does not wane.

An ardent enquiry has been at the back of each School (of Philosophy) in its own way. Indeed, passion for proof that may take one beyond doubt has ever been the very soul of mental activity. As Whitehead in his profound way affirms: "All earnest inquiry is a movement of thought."

Men feel uneasy when taken along an altogether unacquainted path. They like to get on from the partly known to the partly unknown. That is why Lord Krishna chose to take up some familiar old foundations: Samkhya, Yoga, and Vedanta and moved out to the new goal of the Gita, that has nevertheless been hailed as a charmingly original lead by men of all ages. In much the same manner, Dadaji talks of the old Indian disciplines as well as of fairly familiar western philosophies and recent sciences. Thus he squarely meets the modern man's queries, and all the same he strikes as distinctly original.

Dadaji comes right along the line of Krishna, and like Him he radically remolds the old into new values. And, a God-man that he is, the light that he holds naturally turns Godward.

When he first met Dadaji, Radhakrishnan (ex-President of India) exclaimed in delight: "My eyes are awakened." There can possibly be no more telling tribute, coming as it does from none less than Radhakrishnan himself. Indeed, Dadaji is...to borrow a revealing word from John Dewey...a "Director of soul-life." Verily he is a supreme master who sets the mind and the soul of man in meaningful movement. The chariot of the Sun God is nowise at rest and always in motion. Its wheels are ever on the move, all the while throwing out energy, light and vision, laying out for man his approach to a radiant end.

A movement of the kind made by Dadaji is one of remaking the mind, of molding the inner man. As such, any account of it can hardly be exact and accurate. Enlightenment made of mingled shadow and sunshine is bound to be imprecise and pretty impalpable. The worst of it: no such narrative can cater to sensation. Yet, search for sensation has been a modern craze. Therefore, men nowadays are so much attracted by miracles. Dadaji has quite a lot of that too, and of unusually astonishing quality. But he calls these just casual.

A miracle is a play of power and as such a big value. However, it is really good in so far as it is benign and benevolent, above any showmanship or selfism. An estimable miracle may well be comparable to gold. Even then, sunnier and sweeter than mere power is love and bliss, compassion and succor. However much precious, gold is after all a metal imbedded in the womb of the earth, while, with all their homely quality, water and crop, flower and fruit make the honey and beauty of life, as they sprout with an innate force from the heart of the mother earth for her dear children. Power is of great consequence but love wields a holier glory and greater majesty.

The unbodied God is the same as a bodied god. But it is only in the matter of redeeming man that the one acts through the other. In so acting, however, the deputed god-man, identical with God, dives into the mystic retreat of man's indwelling spirit and gently awakens it. Here, then, is a movement to bring life into bloom, to open the petals of man's lotus-heart at the dewy touch of the dawning twilight, to unfurl the flag of love and belief on man's long march to perpetual bliss. The creative urge does not end here and now. It moves on from age to age in ever new manifestations to meet the varying faiths of the altering times.

And in this performance it is better not to seek sensation. This is a work that calls for an environment of serenity and stillness. This is a work that goes on only deep at the root. Unseen in its underground workshop, the root runs the machinery to produce life force. Only in our outer region the result is visible. There we see the splendor of sprouting, the glory of foliage, the marvel of the flower and the wholesomeness of the fruit. Just so, in the tranquility of the soul, the music of the union of God and man keeps delicately ringing. Our ear of the inner mind has to be tuned to this inarticulate melody, audible at rare moments of inward communion.

March 27, 1977
Atulananda Chakrabarti

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