

VINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR'S POEM:

MALAA DEVAACHE DARSHAN GHEU DYA: ALLOW ME TO SEE MY GOD

TRANSLATION BY ANURUPA CINAR

Savarkar waged a social war while interred in the Ratnagiri District, especially in eradicating birth-based caste distinctions and untouchability in Hindu society. He was instrumental in founding the Patitpavan Mandir in Ratnagiri in 1931. This was a revolutionary step. It was the first temple built in India to open its doors to all Hindus irrespective of their caste. To mark this occasion, Savarkar composed a Marathi poem *Malaa Devaache Darshan Gheu Dya* (Allow me to see my God) that expressed the anguished cry of ex-untouchables who were being denied temple entry. The poem was sung by two boys of the Bhangi (Balmiki) caste. Members of this caste carried out scavenging work and were considered untouchables.

Narayan Sadashiv alias Ulhas Bapat, Savarkar's associate, was an eye-witness when Savarkar composed this poem. In his reminiscences (*Smritipushpe*, self-published, Pune, 1979, page 63,) Bapat remarks that Savarkar must have shed at least a handful of tears when he composed this poem. Such was the intensity of feeling that Savarkar had for the plight of ex-untouchables.

मला देवाचे दर्शन घेऊं द्या !
डोळे भरून देवास मला पाहुं द्या ॥ धृ ॥
जो तुम्हिच करा दिनरात
मळ काढित मळले हात
म्हणुनीच विमल हृदयांत-
हृदय त्या वाहुं द्या !

मी तहान जल तो जाण
मी कुडि माझा तो प्राण
मी भक्त नि तो भगवान-
चरण त्याचे शिवुं द्या
तो हिंदु-देव मी हिंदु
मी दीन तो दया-सिंधू
तुम्हि माझे धर्माचे बंधु -
अडवुं नका जाऊं द्या

To see my God in his temple
Allow me, I beseech.
Let my eyes have their fill of Him
Please, O please.
Defiled my hands are
Cleaning your filth night and day.
To cleanse them in the Pure heart
Allow me, I pray.

I am but the body, he its life,
I am the thirst only he can sate.
I am the Wretched, He the Compassionate,
Oh let me fall at his feet, prostrate.
I am his devotee, he my Lord,
I am a Hindu, he my Hindu God.
O Fellow Hindu Brothers,
Bar not, beg I, my way to my God!