

## VINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR'S POEM:

### SAGARAS: SAGARA PRAN TALAMALALA (ODE TO THE OCEAN)

TRANSLATION BY ANURUPA CINAR

Savarkar was considered by the British as "One of the most dangerous men India had produced." The whole might of the British was required to squash him. The immense pressure of his activities took a toll on his health.

On July 29, 1909, Savarkar went to Brighton, around 50 miles south of London to recuperate. He remained there for about 10-12 days. His associate Niranjana Pal would visit him to give him moral support. The two would frequently roam on the shores of Brighton. On one such occasion both of them were sitting on the seashore surrounded by dozens of mirthful English men and women. In the midst of this mirth, Savarkar was immensely sad. Sitting in front of the vast ocean, his mind was grieving at the thought of his beloved motherland. Niranjana Pal described that momentous occasion 29 years later in an article *Reminiscences of Savarkar* dated May 28, 1938, in 'The Mahratta', Pune:

"Presently, he (Savarkar) commenced to hum a song. He sang as he composed. It was a Marathi song, describing the pitiable serfdom of India. Forgetful of all else, Savarkar went on singing. Presently, tears began to roll down his cheeks. His voice became choked. The song remained unfinished, Savarkar began to weep like a child." This song Sagaras (Ode to the Ocean) has become immortal in Marathi literature.

ने मजसी ने परत मातृभूमीला । सागरा, प्राण तळमळला  
भूमातेच्या चरणतला तुज धूतां । मी नित्य पाहिला होता

मज वदलासी अन्य देशिं चल जाऊं । सृष्टिची विविधता पाहूं  
तइं जननी-हृद् विरहशंक्तिहि झालें । परि तुवां वचन तिज दिधलें  
मार्गज स्वयें मीच पृष्ठिं वाहीन । त्वरित या परत आणीन

विश्वसलों या तव वचनीं । मी  
जगदनुभव-योगें बननी । मी  
तव अधिक शक्त उध्दरणीं । मी

येईन त्वरें कथुन सोडिलें तिजला । सागरा, प्राण तळमळला

शुक पंजरिं वा हरिण शिरावा पार्शी । ही फसगत झाली तैशी  
भूविरह कसा सतत साहुं या पुढती । दशदिशा तमोमय होती

गुण-सुमनें मीं वेचियलीं हया भावें । कीं तिनें सुगंधा ध्यावें

O Ocean, take me back to my Motherland

My soul in so much torment be! ||Dhru.||

Lapping worshipfully at my mother's feet

So always I saw you

Let us visit other Lands to see

The abounding nature, said you.

Seeing my Mother's heart full of qualms

A sacred oath you did give t'her,

Knowing the way home, 'pon your back

My speedy return you promised her.

Fell for your promise did I!

That worldly-wise n' able be I

Her deliverance better serve do I

'Pon returning, so saying I left her.

O Ocean, my soul in so much torment be! ||1||

Like a parrot in a cage, like a deer in a trap—

Oh so duped am I

Parting from my mother for ever—

Besieged by darkness am I!

Flowers of virtue gather did I

That blessed by their fragrance she be.

जरि उध्दरणीं व्यय न तिच्या हो साचा । हा व्यर्थ भार विद्येचा

ती आम्रवृक्षवत्सलता । रे  
नवकुसुमयुता त्या सुलता । रे  
तो बाल गुलाबहि आतां । रे

फुलबाग मला हाय पारखा झाला । सागरा, प्राण तळमळला

नभिं नक्षत्रें बहुत एक परि प्यारा । मज भरतभूमिचा तारा  
प्रासाद इथें भव्य परि मज भारी । आइची झोपडी प्यारी  
तिजवीण नको राज्य, मज प्रिय साचा । वनवास तिच्या जरि वनिंचा

भुलविणें व्यर्थ हें आतां । रे  
बहु जिवलग गमतें चित्ता । रे  
तुज सरित्पते । जी सरिता । रे

तद्विरहाची शपथ घालितों तुजला । सागरा, प्राण तळमळला

या फेन-मिषें हंससि निर्दया कैसा । कां वचन भंगिसी ऐसा  
तत्स्वामित्वा सांप्रत जी मिरवीते । भिउनि का आंगलभूमीतें  
मन्मातेला अबल म्हणुनि फसवीसी । मज विवासनाते देशीं

तरि आंगलभूमी-भयभीता । रे  
अबला न माझिही माता । रे  
कथिल हें अगस्तिस आतां । रे

जो आचमनिं एक क्षणिं तुज प्याला । सागरा, प्राण तळमळला.

Bereft from service for her deliverance  
My learning a futile burden it be,

The love of her mango trees, oh!  
The beauty of her blossoming vines, oh!  
Her tender budding rose, oh!  
Oh forever lost is her garden to me,  
O Ocean, my soul in so much torment be! ||2||

Stars abound in the heavens above, but  
Only the star of Bharat-land love I  
Here are found plush palaces, but  
Only my mother's humble hut love I  
What care I for a kingdom without Her?  
Ever exile in her forests choose I.

Deception is futile now, say I  
Let you not be spared, vow I  
Suffer the same pangs, cry I

Of parting with the dearest of your rivers!  
O Ocean, my soul in so much torment be! ||3||

O Ye of Foaming Surf, pitilessly you mock!  
Why go back on your word, oh!  
Why deceive my helpless mother,  
Oh why condemn me to exile so!  
Was it in fear of England  
Who flaunts her mastery over you so?

Fearsome though England may be, O  
My Mother is not feeble so  
Tell all to Agasti she will, lo  
Who in one gulp your waters drank!  
O Ocean, my soul in so much torment be! ||4||

