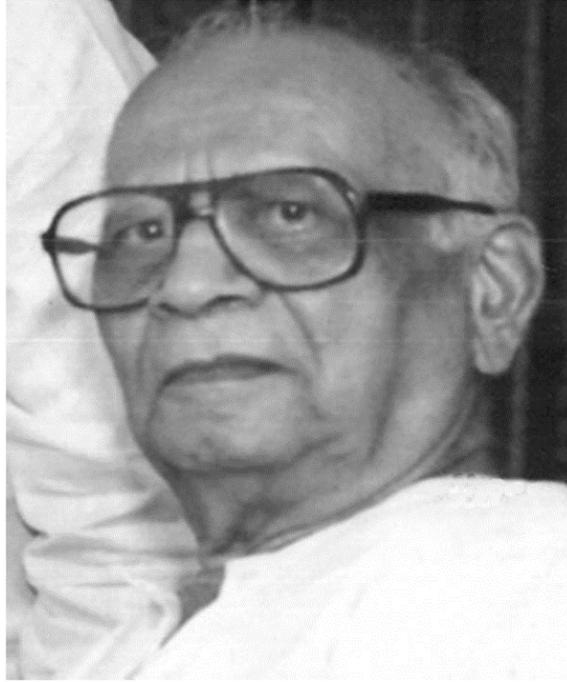


Nanasaheb Goray

- Ideas and ideals



by
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1. The Pole Star

The history of the Socialist movement in India which started with the formation of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934 and had a galaxy of stars like Dr. Sampurnanand, Acharya Narendra Deva, Jayaprakash Narayan, Asoka Mehta, Nabakrishna Choudhury, Achyut Patwardhan, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Rammanohar Lohia, Minoo Masani, S.M.Joshi, N.G.Goray, E.M.S.Namboodiripad, Mohanlal Goutam, M.L.Dantwala, C.T.Narayanaswamy, Charles Mascaranhas and Purushottam Tricumdas is a story of diaspora.

While Mahatma Gandhi's ideology snatched Jayaprakash Narayan, some like Dr. Sampurnanand, Nabakrishna Choudhury and Asoka Mehta drifted to the Congress, some others like E.M.S. Namboodiripad and Mohanlal Goutam went over to the Communist Party. Some like Minoo Masani ended up in a liberal party like the Swatantra Party, while some like Achyut Patwardhan and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya drifted away from politics itself and some others like Rammanohar Lohia split the party and went their different ways.

But right from the days of the Nasik jail in 1934 where the Congress Socialist Party was conceived till the Socialists merged with the Janata Party in 1977 and lost their separate identity – i.e., from *natalis* to *mortis* of the socialist party and the socialist movement - it was only Narayan Ganesh Goray, popularly known as Nanasahab Goray, who remained in the mainstream party of the socialist movement - like a Pole Star.

A short stature with a tall intellect, small build with a broad mind, 'Goray' - the fair one - not only in skin colour but also in mind and heart, was a person who refused to be a legend, who remained self-effacing, refusing to be recognised, but always standing up at every call of duty at colossal personal sacrifices. He was a rationalist *par excellence*, not in the Kantian sense of the term but as one who made reasoning his *forte*. And that made him an incisive analyst of any situation. G. G. Parikh smells a 'peculiar arrogance' in Goray of his this capability – peculiar because it was an arrogance that would not show itself.

Once Goray had said that he never knew what defeat was in his life. One would wonder: what a conceit! He had been defeated in his very first election to the parliament. So what? It was not a success or defeat of the *Vyashti* that he was speaking about but about the *Samashti*. He explained, 'I fought for the freedom of the country and saw India become free. I fought for the freedom of Goa and saw Goa become free. I fought against dictatorship and saw it coming to an end. For whatever I fought in my life I saw success'. G. P. Pradhan has rightly encapsulated his personality – *neither elated at success nor depressed at defeat*. His was egalitarianism with equanimity.

In the nurture of nature

One need only spend a few days in any of the villages of the picturesque Konkan where nature is bountiful in its majesty, to experience the ambience in the midst of which Goray was born and grew, to understand how a politician like Goray, who became a member of the Lok Sabha, Mayor of Pune, a member of the Rajya Sabha, Indian High Commissioner to U.K., General Secretary and later Chairman of the Praja Socialist Party could also write poetry, write short stories, write plays for children and romantic travelogues and even draw sketches. Or else one should at least read his “*Shankh aani Shimpale*” – Conches and Shells – to verbally experience the beauty of the *Konkan*. The lush green thick *Sahyadri* mountains surrounding the villages of Konkan would make anyone a poet. Goray was born in one such village, Hindle, in Ratnagiri District of Maharashtra, on 15th June 1907. He would turn nostalgic whenever he referred to the games he would play with his only sister, Gangu, on the sea beach, collecting conches and shells and building castles of sand.

Goray was born in a religiously strictly traditional but economically relatively comfortable family of that remote village. So in his childhood Goray was seeped in traditional orthodoxy. His father was employed in the education department of the Government. In Goray’s own words “Those days even my father who was getting a salary of 50-60 rupees per month was considered well off. Hence I could not experience studying under the street lamps or washing the clothes during the night so that I could wear them in the morning. ‘Ask whatever you need for your studies and eat whatever is required to keep your body healthy (only vegetarian)’ – is what my father would tell me”. Goray himself admits that in his childhood perhaps he was more orthodox than many volunteers of the RSS.

However the first turning point in his life came in 1922 when the school in which he was studying, in 4th class, was closed down and he entered the New English School started by no less a person than Lokamanya Tilak. He had for classmates S. M. Joshi, R. K. Khadilkar and V. M. Tarkunde. Goray says “Had I continued in the same old school I would not have become what I have today, I would have perhaps become a scholar, perhaps an officer, but not an activist rationalist”. His baptism came soon thereafter.

By the time he came to the end of his secondary school, he had already read all the four Shakespearean tragedies - Hamlet, Macbeth, Romeo-Juliet and Othello -, novels of Walter Scot, Ramayan by Tulasi Das and the Marathi translation of Mahabharat and the Arabian Nights. By June 1925 Goray entered the Ferguson College in Pune. While in college he read all the plays by Kalidas and his *Kumar Sambhav* and *Raghuvamsh*. He later even translated ‘*Meghadoot*’.

In the Furnace of Freedom

Goray's tryst with his political destiny started at a very young age of 21 years when he joined the Youth League which was then led by socialist leader of Mumbai, Yusuf Meherally and Nariman. Goray considered himself a 'radical nationalist' and by radical nationalist he meant one who was for social transformation and against rituals and customs and was against capitalist society. The two dominant influences on him at the time were Gandhiji and the Russian Revolution. It would appear a contradiction to some, since Gandhiji was an apostle of non-violence and Russian Revolution was an epistle in violence. At the time, Goray perhaps would agree with Gandhiji that consistency was an ass, more because of his fiery youth than his intelligence. However, Goray, like many others of his time, thought that Russia was 'building a new civilization based on Marxist principles' and was hence attracted to it.

Goray, S. M. Joshi and Shirubhau Limaye had decided in 1927 itself to participate in the freedom struggle. So when Gandhi went on Dandi March for his salt satyagraha, They plunged into it by abandoning their studies. A group of youth offered satyagraha at Alibaug, a small port on the western coast and S. M. Joshi was the first to be arrested followed by Goray. When Mahatma Gandhi was arrested and incarcerated in the Yervada Jail, Goray planned a march on the Jail. Sensing trouble police arrested Goray the previous evening, produced him before a magistrate who sentenced him to undergo imprisonment for four months. He too was lodged in Yervada Jail.

In an interview recorded by Parliament official Ram Sharma on 15.7.1970, Goray reminisces about his first incarceration and says "That was how my prison life started in 1930. At that time going to prison was a new experience and I must say that the British prisons at that time were very hard. All of us were classed as 'C' class prisoners and given very hard labour and extremely poor food and clothing. The whole of the prison term was like a nightmare." He was made to grind grains, and to eat 'salty *roti*' which was a very stringent punishment in the jail, in which the prisoners were made to eat *rotis* mixed with a large quantity of salt, morning and evening. But there were 'moments of exultation and excitement' also. Gandhiji himself was in the same prison and "some times we could catch his glimpse" exults an excited Goray.

When he emerged from these four months in the prison, Goray was a totally different person. He says that he emerged from the Yervada prison with a degree in humanism. He then threw away his 'sacred thread' and decided to marry a widow and never looked back.

After serving his very first four months' term in prison, Goray resumed his studies. But not for long. After the Round Table Conference failed Mahatma Gandhi again started civil disobedience movement in 1932. Goray and his friends were this time not even allowed to offer satyagraha. They were just picked up by the police and detained for two months and thereafter they were produced before the Magistrate who sentenced Goray for a term of imprisonment of two years. Goray was lodged again in Yervada prison.

However, after a few months he was suddenly shifted to Nasik Jail where he completed the remaining portion of his jail term. It is here that Goray met Jayaprakash Narayan, Asoka Mehta, Minoo Masani, Prof. Dantwala others. About his term in Nasik Jail Goray writes “this period was full of events and some of the major decisions which shaped our political career in the future were taken in that jail... we spent our time in reading and endless discussions, reviewing the national movement, reviewing the leadership that was provided by Gandhiji and his colleagues, critically evaluating the role that was being played by Soviet Russia and the Communist Party of India and trying to come to certain conclusions”.

Two serious questions faced this Nasik Group. As Goray and others were under the influence of the freedom struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi and were hence part of the Indian National Congress, the first question was whether to break away from the Congress and start a new party based on socialist ideology or to remain inside the Congress and give it a socialist orientation. The second question was that since the authoritative interpretation of Marxist dogma could then be given only by the Soviet Russia, how far could they accept such Marxism totally. Goray says “the decision that we took at Nasik Jail was of historical importance”. They decided to launch a socialist party ‘within’ the Congress and decided to stay clear of Russia’s interpretation of Marxist theory.

When the Second World War started, Goray, along with other socialists, was hoping that Mahatma Gandhi would give a call for an all out fight against the British to seize freedom. Socialists had drawn plans to go underground and lead the movement. Goray writes “we would resist arrest, we would go underground, if necessary, and we would even take to violent action. The only saving clause was that we could try to avoid, as much as possible, violence against persons. But so far as the destruction of government property was concerned, we would not stay our hand”.

But then Mahatma Gandhi’s position was not to embarrass the British during the war and hence instead of mass civil disobedience he started ‘individual *satyagraha*’. Vinoba Bhave was chosen the first *satyagrahi*. While Jayaprakash Narayan opposed the individual *satyagraha*, Asoka Mehta offered *satyagraha* and was jailed. Goray also enrolled himself to be a *satyagrahi*. But Mahatma Gandhi was insisting on non-violence not only in action, but also in thought. Goray wrote to Mahatma Gandhi that he could not fulfil the condition of non-violence in both thought and action and sought his advice. Mahatma Gandhi immediately wrote back to say that if he did not believe in non-violence in both thought and action, he was free to go his way.

Goray had given a speech in Gulbarga, then in Hyderabad State ruled by Nizam, and now in Karnataka, that India could not side with the British in the War. Goray was arrested and sentenced to one year’s imprisonment for the speech and lodged in Gulbarga prison. When the call for ‘Quit India’ was given in 1942, Goray was already in Nizam’s prison in Gulbarga.

Immediately after his release from the Gulbarga prison, Goray plunged into the underground movement from its headquarters in Bombay. But within three months the hideout was detected by the police and Goray was once again arrested. A case which later came to be called the ‘Maharashtra Conspiracy Case’ was foisted on Goray and 50 others. Goray says “the Government found it impossible to substantiate the

charges, not because they were not true, but because it was not possible for them to produce any witnesses.” Still Goray and others were imprisoned and stayed so till April 1946. “Those were the glorious days indeed, when we lived the life of patriots in the real sense of the term” exults Goray.

Though Goray emerged from the furnace of freedom movement scalded bodily but honed intellectually, he would not countenance asking for either encomiums or for rewards, he would not ask for freedom fighters’ pension, for he was (too modest for such trivialities). But as late as on 2.10.1987 the Government of India gave freedom fighters’ pension to Goray voluntarily without his asking for it.

From Pupa to Papillon

The ideological journey of Goray is like his emergence from darkness to light. In his childhood he was steeped in Hindu religious orthodoxy. As he grew up he became a rebel, threw away his sacred thread, married a widow much to the consternation not only of the orthodox society but also of his loving and caring parents, and passing through the straits of Marxism ended up a confirmed democratic socialist – not only in thought but also in action. That is why he calls his short biography “*Timiratuni Tejakade*’ – from darkness towards light. But that was an understatement. It was not just a journey it was a metamorphosis – from being an orthodox Hindu, through being an adventurous and romantic patriot, he emerged as a confirmed democrat, a profound socialist and not just a secularist but an outright anti-communalist - a metamorphosis from Pupa to *Papillon*.

This metamorphosis in his ideological life did not come due to any angel or a miracle. It was a very gradual process just like a democratic socialist transformation. Goray cites instances such as when he was going with his father, a young person coming opposite them suddenly sat down and after they passed him got up and went his way. When asked by young Goray why, the old Goray said, because the person was a ‘*mahar*’ an untouchable and he sat down so that his shadow would not fall on Gorays who were *Chitpavan* Brahmins - not just Brahmins but Brahmins purified by fire. This must have made an inconspicuous small dent on young Goray’s foliating mind. While some girls of the neighbourhood would wear colourful saris ornately, a few other young girls would be wearing only white saris and would hesitantly beckon him and request him to get the barber from the city square so that they could get their heads tonsured, he would wonder why, and when he came to know that it was so because they were widows, that too must have made a small dent on his mind. Numerous instances such as these slowly chiselled at his innocent mind – chipping away his orthodoxy, a little at a time, ultimately leading to the metamorphosis and turning the orthodox adolescent into a fiery rationalist youth.

When Goray came under the influence of Yusuf Meherally and thereafter came to interact with persons like Jayaprakash Narayan, Asoka Mehta and others in the Nasik prison, his ideas started taking shape. Goray came under the influence of two ideologies – that of Marx and Gandhi. One faded and the other adhered. Perhaps Goray had read Karl Marx’s Communist Manifesto during his first incarceration which left an indelible mark on his mind and life. Goray says that the Communist Manifesto made him look at his surroundings in a totally different perspective. “It was not a lifeless essay, it was a tempest” says Goray.

It is interesting that though he responded to the call of Mahatma Gandhi for *satyagraha* and was jailed for it, he was more fond of Marx than of Mahatma at the time. Of his earlier understanding of Marx and Gandhi, Goray says “As young socialists we used to take special delight in condemning those who differed from us either as reactionaries or utopians. Gandhiji’s thoughts were, according to us utopian, unscientific and reactionary, while those preached by Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trosky were scientific”.

But then the terror unleashed by Stalin in Russia eroded that consideration and as Goray’s analytical faculties worked overtime, he slowly realised that it was Marx who was a utopian and Gandhi, a scientific thinker. “I feel no hesitation in saying that some of Gandhiji’s thoughts I find more scientific than those of Marx and Engels. I go a step further and say that it was the latter two who have spoken or written more like utopians than scientific political thinkers”.

Goray noticed the ‘fault lines’ in Marxian thinking. He realised that “those who conquer power by the use of arms will keep it for themselves and they will be reluctant to hand it back to the people” and hence “the dictatorship of the proletariat gets metamorphosed into a dictatorship *over* the proletariat”. He says that his studies of both comparative history and Freudian psychoanalysis also convinced him of the shortcomings of the Marxian theory.

But as Marx could not make him a Marxist, so could Gandhi also not make him a Gandhian. He accepted neither as his ‘master’, and as a corollary did not accept anyone as his disciple but his graduation from Marxism to democratic socialism came gradually through Gandhism.

While Goray’s democratic socialism did not make him an anti-communist, his secularism made him an anti-communalist. On 1st of May 1938 a huge May-day procession was taken out by the workers in Pune. It was viciously attacked by the communalists. The Congress Socialist Party was publishing a journal ‘Congress Socialist’ then. Goray thundered in an article in the ‘Congress Socialist’ of May 14, 1938, “Who attacked the May Day procession? Who assaulted men like Senapati Bapat and [Gajanan] Kanitkar? Who tore up the National Flag? The Hindu Mahasabhaites and the Hedgewar Boys did all this.... They have been taught to hate the Muslims in general as Public Enemy Number 1, to hate the Congress and its flag which is pro-Muslim, to hate socialists and communists who are anti-Hinduism.... They have their own flag, ‘the Bhagwa’, the symbol of Maratha Supremacy. And their leader is called ‘*Rashtra Dhureen*’, i.e *Fuehrer*!”

Reacting to a camp of RSS volunteers in Pune, Goray said “The *swayamsevaks* have gathered there in large numbers. What is surprising about it? When water stagnates in a pool, worms are bound to writhe in it” and about the parade of RSS volunteers, he said, “Let not the lathis of these 35,000 *swayamsevaks* fall on the heads of dalits”.

Even while throwing a brickbat at Nanasaheb, an RSS activist Ramesh Patange writes in his Marathi book ‘Me, Manu Ani Sangh, “That a senior, elderly, learned socialist leader could react this way sent my blood boiling”. The activist narrates an incident that speaks volumes about Nanasaheb though from the point of view of an RSS activist. “1988 was the birth centenary year of Dr Hedgewar. A committee called

Hedgewar Birth Centenary Committee was set up in Maharashtra. Dr Shivajirao Bhosale, Chancellor of the Marathwada University (now Dr Ambedkar Marathwada University), gladly agreed to be the chairman of the committee. Socialists are adept at creating obstacles in any big programme organised by the Sangh, and naturally, Nanasaheb Goray, was the high priest of socialists in this respect. He opened a front against Shivajirao Bhosale.

“A meeting of the birth centenary committee was to take place in Pune. Dr Bhide, Vice-Chancellor of the Pune University agreed to chair the meeting. This incensed Nanasaheb Goray. According to him it was not proper for the Vice-Chancellor to accept the chairmanship of a committee of the Sangh, since the Sangh is wedded to the concept of Hindu Rashtra, which is against the spirit and ideology of our constitution, which is secular and socialist. Since the Sangh work is unconstitutional, those in government positions should not be chairmen of the committees of the Sangh. Prof. Bhide did not come to the meeting.

“Madhav Gadkari, editor of Loksatta, a Marathi daily wrote a long article supporting Nanasaheb Goray. Although socialists are small in number, their nuisance value is great. Dr Bhosale was in a quandary whether to keep the Vice-Chancellorship or the chairmanship of Dr Hedgewar Birth Centenary Committee. Finally, he renounced his position with the Dr Hedgewar Birth Centenary Committee of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh which was trying to realise the dream of Shivaji and Shahaji Bhosale. Nanasaheb Goray’s destructive rancour and hatred won the day. Dr Shivajirao Bhosale’s courage deserted him”.

Goray was a member of the first National Executive Committee of the Congress Socialist Party formed in 1934. He was made a Joint Secretary in 1948 when the Congress Socialist Party left the Indian National Congress and became the Socialist Party. When the Praja Socialist Party faced turmoil in the Betul Conference in 1953 due to Nehru-JP talks and Asoka Mehta’s thesis ‘political compulsions of backward economy’ Goray was entrusted with the responsibility of being the General Secretary of the PSP. He later became the Chairman of the PSP.

Goray always valued principles more than personalities. When the leaders of the PSP decided in the foundation conference of the Samyukta Socialist Party held in Varanasi in 1964 to leave SSP and revive the PSP, Goray was with them though it meant parting company with his elder brotherly S.M.Joshi who chose to remain in the SSP. Interestingly while S. M. Joshi continued as the Chairman of the SSP, Goray had to take on the burden of becoming the Chairman of the PSP. His love for S. M. Joshi neither stopped him from following his principles, nor did his parting company with S.M.Joshi diminish his love and esteem for him. In Nanasaheb’s own words “our lives are like parallel rails going in the same direction”.

Goray presided over the Bombay Conference of the PSP held in 1965, the Bangalore Conference held between 25th and 28th November 1966 and the Kanpur Conference held between 30th December 1967 and 1st January 1968.

Goray was also active in the Trade Union field. He was the President of the Sakhar Kamgar Federation (Sugar Workers’ Federation); President of Poona Electric Supply Company’s Employees Union; President of the Hind Oil Kamgar Sabha and Oil

Companies Depot Superintendents Association, India. He was elected to the Court of the University of Poona from the Trade Unions' Constituency for two consecutive terms.

If today the whole world considers the Rochdale Pioneers as the originators of the co-operative movement, India also can be proud of 'Naigaum Pioneers' - its own version of Rochdale Pioneers. Goray believed that constructive work was as essential as struggle in building a socialist society. Hence Goray wanted the trade union workers to be educated in the ideology of democratic socialism and undertake constructive work. So he used to conduct study classes for them. Once in 1948-49 a group of youngsters from Naigaum ward in Bombay employed in the mills were discussing with Goray, one worker asked Goray to give them a program so that they could implement it. Goray immediately said that the co-operative movement was an integral part of the socialist movement and hence they should each contribute Rs. 10 and start a co-operative food grains store for themselves. Thus began an experiment in consumers' co-operatives which blossomed into "Apna Bazar", now a household name in Mumbai and Maharashtra.

Goray goes to Goa

"The Goa Freedom Struggle is a colourful episode in my political career" says a cheerful Goray. Goray would often visit Karwar, Savantavadi and Belgaum in connection with his political work. There many people from Goa would meet him, and amongst them in particular, Peter Alvares, and would narrate the miseries of the Goans living under the Portuguese rule. Goray started wondering what he could do in the matter. In 1954 the Goanese Literary Conference met in Karwar which was presided over by Goray. In his presidential speech Goray announced that if the Government of India was not going to do anything about liberating Goa then people of India will have to take necessary steps in that direction.

After going to Pune, Goray met S. M. Joshi and told him that he wanted to take a batch of volunteers and enter Goa to offer *satyagraha*. S.M. agreed with Goray and immediately called a meeting of all political parties in Pune. Thus in April 1955 the Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti (Goa Liberation Aid Committee) was formed in Pune with Tatyasaheb Jedhe as the President and Goray and Jayantrao Tilak as the General Secretaries.

The Committee decided to send batches of volunteers to Goa from May 1955. Goray says, "I led the first batch in May 1955. It consisted of about 56 volunteers and I had the privilege of having as my colleague Senapati Bapat, the veteran freedom fighter of India. The batch was pounced upon by the Portuguese police. Every one of us was mercilessly beaten and excepting myself, every one was thrown out again into the Indian territory and I was singled out and taken to a Portuguese jail".

The second batch of sixty-eight *satyagrahis*, under Madhu Limaye, was severely beaten up while trying to cross over and Limaye was also arrested on 28 May. Both Goray and Madhu Limaye, with many others were tried by the military court and sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment and a heavy fine and on failure to pay the fine to undergo imprisonment for a further term of two years. They were confined in Fort Aguada. On 15th August scores of volunteers were shot dead by the Portuguese police.

The batch led by Madhu Dandawate was also beaten up and pushed back into the Indian Territory.

Later Goray wrote his experiences in the Portuguese prison in a book entitled "Behind Portuguese Prison Bars". Later, on the intervention of the Amnesty International the prisoners were released in February 1957 after serving about 18 months in the prison.

Even after his release from Portuguese prison, Goray continued his efforts to secure the liberation of Goa. *The Hindu* dated May 29, 1957 reported that the 'Prime Minister Nehru had a 90 minutes discussion with the socialist leaders Nanasahab Goray, Acharya Kripalani, Nath Pai and communist leaders S.A.Dange, Prof. Hiren Mukherji and A.K.Gopalan on 27th May. However Nehru was non committal on the question of liberating Goa'. It took another three years for the Government of India to throw the Portuguese out and liberate Goa.

Goray also fought for liberating Tibet from the Chinese occupation. PSP held a public meeting to rally Indian support for the Tibetans. Goray who was then the General Secretary of the Party said that the uprising in Tibet was a national struggle against Chinese 'colonialism' and that the Chinese assertion that the uprising was confined to Khampa tribesmen only was a deliberate attempt to mislead the world. He said that the whole of Tibet was fighting bare handed against the military might of the Chinese.

Goray in Parliament

In the first general elections for the Lok Sabha held in 1952 Goray contested from Ratnagiri South constituency as a Socialist Party candidate and lost to Moreshwar Joshi of the Congress by 19,257 votes.

Not losing heart by his defeat in the first general elections, Goray contested in the second general elections in 1957 as a candidate of the Praja Socialist Party, but this time from Pune (then known as Poona). Goray had just then been released from the Portuguese prison in Goa and his popularity was high. He won with a thumping majority defeating his Congress rival N. V. Gadgil, who was then a Cabinet Minister in Nehru's government, in a straight contest. He polled 143822 votes, i.e., 59 percent of the total votes polled. In Parliament Goray had for his colleagues stalwarts like Surendranath Dwivedi, Asoka Mehta and Acharya Kripalani.

Goray contested in the third general elections held in 1962 also from Pune as a candidate of the Praja Socialist Party. However, this time around, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh put up a candidate and ate into the opposition votes. While the Congress candidate S. S. More polled 115402 votes, Goray polled 66996 votes and the combined votes of the opposition candidates – one independent and the BJS – were 219609 votes. But then the people of Pune elected him the Mayor of Pune Municipal Corporation in 1965.

When the 1967 elections came, Goray was in the Praja Socialist Party and his colleague S.M.Joshi was in the Samyukta Socialist Party. Joshi was also leading the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti formed to agitate for the inclusion of Marathi speaking areas of neighboring states into Maharashtra of which SSP was a part. The SSP and

the SMS decided to field S. M. Joshi from Pune. Joshi was a former colleague and a fellow socialist, albeit in SSP. Goray did not contest the elections.

Goray was then elected to the Rajya Sabha from the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly constituency with the help of the surplus votes of the Congress which were given in return for the support the PSP was giving to a Congress government. He was in Rajya Sabha from 03.04.1970 to 02.04.1976, the years which proved to be apocalyptic to Indian democracy. India was in turmoil. Congress had lost ground in the 1967 elections to the Lok Sabha and had lost power to the opposition parties in eight states. It was more a defeat for the Congress than victory for the opposition parties. Even then the opposition parties were in a hurry to form alternative governments without the requisite preparations that are required to make a government succeed. But then due to defections by the elected representatives the coalition governments formed by the parties in opposition to the Congress fell like nine pins.

When the elections were announced in 1971 for the Parliament some opposition leaders felt that it was the opportune time to defeat the Congress at the Centre also, by forging an alliance of all opposition parties irrespective of their ideologies. Congress(O), Swatantra Party, SSP and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh formed what came to be called a 'Grand Alliance' to defeat the Congress. The PSP under the leadership of Goray refused to join the alliance. Goray said "For me defeating the Congress is not the main objective. It is important to politically educate the masses. More important is as to who will replace the Congress?"

When the PSP met in conference at Baroda from 3rd to 6th of February 1970 presided over by Goray, the then Congress President Jagjivan Ram sent a telegram to the Conference asking for the co-operation of the PSP in the elections. The conference decided to have a 'meaningful dialogue' with the Congress. But then the PSP could not accept the number of seats which the Congress was ready to concede to the PSP. By then S. M. Krishna and K. Lakkappa who had won the 1967 elections to the Lok Sabha from Mandya and Tumkur constituencies of Karnataka as the PSP candidates had gone over to the Congress. The Congress claimed to contest from the two seats by fielding S. M. Krishna and K. Lakkappa on the ground that they were now in Congress. The PSP also claimed to contest from the said seats on the ground that socialists had won from there. The two parties could not come to an agreement. Hence the 'dialogue' failed to become 'meaningful'.

Between 1967 and 1971 the political scene in India had undergone a sea change. In 1969 Indira Gandhi split the Congress in an effort to isolate the old guard of the party which was trying to control her. In the Presidential elections she proposed the name of Sanjeeva Reddy but sensing that he may dismiss her government if elected, she prompted V. V. Giri to contest and supported him and as a result Giri won the elections. The rise of Mujibur Rehman in East Pakistan and the Pakistan's efforts to suppress him and the resulting emergence of Bangladesh with Indira Gandhi boldly marching the Indian Army to liberate Bangladesh brought her once again centre stage. From the 'Dumb Doll' as some opposition leaders had ridiculed her, she had emerged as 'Goddess Durga' the demon slayer.

PSP met again in Sakarwadi of Maharashtra between 31st December 1970 to 1st January 1971 presided over by Goray and decided to go alone in the elections. Thus PSP contested the 1971 elections to Parliament alone whereas SSP contested as part of the Grand Alliance. Congress swept the polls. While the SSP got three seats PSP got only two seats. Both parties stood the risk of losing recognition by the Election Commission as national parties. The PSP then met in Bulandshahar of Uttar Pradesh on 7th and 8th August 1971, presided over by Goray, and called for the merger of the PSP and the SSP. And when the two parties merged, Goray gladly gave up his presidentship to facilitate the merger.

In Defense of Democracy

Sweeping the 1971 elections to the Parliament, Indira Gandhi became drunk with power. She started behaving like an autocrat. Goray watched Indira Gandhi's rise to power from the floor of the Rajya Sabha and predicted her ascent from thence to absolute power of a dictator. He was not an astrologer, nor a soothsayer, yet with his acumen of political analysis he predicted the coming of dictatorship years before it actually arrived. He wrote an editorial in *Janata* of 22nd July 1973 and said "The difference between a dictator of admittedly totalitarian country and the head of a democratic federal union, whose federating units have ceased to function, can be only notional. In fact when major States like Andhra Pradesh and U.P. have come under President's rule and so many other States are rapidly qualifying for it, is not Smt. Indira Gandhi already functioning like a dictator?.. one fine morning the Indian people will wake up to learn that they are under a dictatorship, limited or otherwise".

As predicted by Goray, the Indian people woke up on 25th June 1975 to learn that they were under a dictatorship as Indira Gandhi imposed internal 'emergency' on the country. Thousands of opposition and even ruling party leaders like Chandrasekhar who were opposed to Indira Gandhi were arrested and imprisoned without trial.

The fact that Goray had been elected to the Rajya Sabha on the support of the surplus votes of the Congress did not deter him from criticizing the Congress for imposing emergency. He had once earlier called Gandhi, Nehru and Patel as the Triad of the Congress after the triad of the Hindu Pantheon, Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, but that had not stopped him from asking for the resignation of Nehru. Goray wrote critically about emergency in *Janata*, of which he had become the editor, and hence *Janata* was banned by the government which had imposed censorship on news papers and periodicals. Then Goray started editing a smaller version of *Janata* clandestinely under the title 'People' and circulated it. He toured Maharashtra extensively from village to village and campaigned against the imposition of emergency.

Goray became the rallying point for the rump of opposition that remained in the parliament. On July 22, 1975, Goray spoke in the Rajya Sabha on behalf of the opposition. Addressing the Chair, Goray said "Sir, let me begin my speech by making a candid admission that our perception of the situation and your perception of the situation differ in a fundamental manner.. .. what has happened is considered by some of you as the dawn of a new era while we on our side consider that it is the beginning of a long night of authoritarian rule, of suppression of liberty and, may be, even of disintegration of this country".

In his speech, Goray answered each of the charges made by the government against the opposition in general and against Jayaprakash Narayan in particular. Criticising the press censorship imposed by Indira Gandhi, Goray said “Is this the tryst with destiny about which Jawaharlal Nehru had spoken?” Answering the charge that JP had asked the police and the army not to obey illegal orders of the government, Goray said “If JP made a statement like that you send him before a court of law, send him to 5 years’ or 10 years’ imprisonment. Lokmanya was sent for 6 years. Mahatma Gandhi was sent for 2 and half years. Jawaharlal himself was sentenced for three years. ... If you say that Jayaprakashji’s forces are running amuck, are you as a counter measure running amuck yourself?”

Then he said “So, Sir, my plea is that it is really an action and reaction. You are angry with us, we are angry with you. I know that we have differed. Still there is no other way for us. If you think that the only way is to shut the mouths of all the Opposition, then, I tell you, you are not only harming the opposition, you are not only harming democracy, you are harming yourself”.

After reading out a joint statement of the DMK party, Congress(0), Jan Sangh, BLD, CPI(M), PSP, Socialist Party, Akali Dal and independent members Umashankar Joshi, K. S. Malle Gowda, U. K. Laxman Gowda and Dwijendralal Sen Gupta, which said “Taking all relevant facts into consideration and bearing in mind in particular the fact that leading members of Parliament have been incarcerated, we are satisfied now that no useful purpose will be served by our taking part in the further proceedings of this session of Parliament, for it is clearly in no position to discharge the functions of a free and democratic parliament,” Goray led the opposition withdrawal from the House.

After JP’s release from the prison, Goray played a crucial role in coordinating between opposition leaders and in forging the Janata Party. The Congress Socialist Party had its first conference in Bombay in 1934. Its progeny, the Socialist Party met in conference for the last time also in Bombay on 27th and 28th November 1976, presided by Goray, and decided to merge with the Janata Party launched by Jayaprakash Narayan, obliterating its independent existence as a socialist party. Goray and the socialists sacrificed even their identity in defense of democracy and both had no regrets for it.

The Blossom Face

Pu. La. Deshpande, the famous Marathi literati says “if those who read Nanasaheb expect that he ought to have written more, they are not at fault, as it is no fault of Nanasaheb that he could not write more. Nanasaheb should be congratulated for what he wrote because he could write so much while living in a society which feels that on every moment of his life the public has a right”. Politics and poetry harmoniously rubbed shoulders in Goray.

Goray was not only a prolific reader, for he read ‘Baburnama’ when he was 80 years old, but also a prolific writer, for he wrote about his ideological journey “Timiratuni Tejakade” also when he was 80. His writings extended from a critique of Karl Marx, to the skits for kids to poetry.

Goray’s literary career began when he translated the biography of the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru into Marathi. He then went on to translate ‘Divided India’ written by the first President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, ‘Why Socialism’ by Jayaprakash Narayan and ‘Our India’ by Minoo Masani. He also translated Dr. S. Radhakrishnan’s book on Mahatma Gandhi. And his talent for translation extended to Sanskrit poetry too. He translated Kalidas’s *Meghdoot* also. Goray’s political writings include books on ‘Imperialism’ and ‘Acharya Narendra Deva : Father of Democratic Socialism’. He also wrote a history of the United States of America. He wrote about his experiences and feelings within the four walls of a prison when he was incarcerated for the first time in the Gulbarga jail. In the evening of his life when he used to visit his only daughter who was staying in USA, he wrote ‘Pittsburgh Diary’.

Goray, who wrote critically about Karl Marx, also wrote stories and plays for children. “I knew about the plays on the households of men but until I read Goray’s ‘Bedukwadi’ – House of the Frogs’ - I did not know that even the households of frogs could be so interesting” wrote a critic on reading the play which Goray had written for children. His short stories written for children are collected in ‘Chimutai Ghar Bandhatat’ – Sister Sparrows build houses. The letters he wrote to his 10 year old daughter Shubha and her friends are collected in ‘Karwande’.

Goray was also a journalist. In 1947 when the Socialist Party of Maharashtra decided to publish a weekly named ‘Janavaani’ – People’s Voice – Goray was chosen to edit the same. He also used to write regularly for ‘Rachana’ a magazine started by his cousin Bandu Goray. He edited Marathi weekly ‘Sadhana’ from January 1981 to January 1984. He also edited ‘Janata’ weekly from 1967 to 1977. Even when he became India’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom in 1977, he regularly wrote a column in Marathi daily news paper ‘Loksatta’.

His urge for poetry was such that even when he was writing about Islam and Koran his pen would scribble verses. That may be the reason why another well known Marathi literati Vasant Bapat calls Goray ‘a sculptor of letters’.

When Goray reached four score years, his admirers, for he had no disciples and followers, brought out a souvenir – ‘Goray Gourav’. His colleague G. P. Pradhan asked him to write his own biography. Goray refused and said “Poet Bilhana has written an epic entitled ‘Rajatarangini’ on the royal families of Kashmir. I am not born in any royal family. I am not a royal person. On the contrary like “Nripasadane naama Kevaye” - ‘who are we in a royal palace’ – I rather fall in that category. So when my friends suggested to me that I should write something centred round myself I was in a fix. I had decided long back that I should not write my autobiography. Whoever writes autobiography must at least be feeling that there is something ‘special’ in him, because it is not possible for any one to feel like writing his own autobiography, only to criticise himself. Self-respect and self-righteousness are the inseparable parts of autobiography. In some autobiographies it surfaces defiantly and in some others it may appear wearing the mask of humility – that is all the difference. But I did not want to do any of these”. Humility personified.

But Pradhan was more than a match for him. Pradhan suggested that if not biography, Goray should at least write the story of his ideological evolution. And Goray did it and titled it ‘Timiratuni Tejakade’ – ‘from Darkness towards Light’.

Any writing on Goray would be incomplete without mentioning about his ‘Narayaneeyam’ an interlocution with the Bhagawadgeeta, a celestial poem, with 301 verses. But to the misfortune of many, of whom fortunately I am not one, the verses are in Marathi. In Goray’s understanding, whether of human nature, or of human society or even of the universe, there was no place for God. Goray believed more in science as the deliverer of the human race than religion or God. If Krishna i.e., Narayana enunciated his philosophy through the medium of Arjuna, i.e., Nara, Goray says that it would not be inappropriate if he also enunciates his philosophy through the medium of the very same Arjuna - but caveats that the fact that his name is also Narayana is only a coincidence.

Goray once had told G. P. Pradhan “If only Sumatibai’s health was good today I would have gone and lived in Hindle for a year or two. Gardening in the backyard of the house, sitting on the shore of the sea watching the waves and reading and writing in the serene atmosphere of the house in Hindle were my wishes which have remained unfulfilled”.

A son, a father and a husband

French Existentialist philosopher Jean Paul Sartre says that one is what one wants to be. He tells about an incident in which during the Second World War a few French resistance soldiers who were being chased by the German soldiers hide in the house of a French farmer. The German soldiers tell the farmer to inform them where the resistance soldiers are hiding or else they will rape his daughter. Sartre says that by betraying the resistance soldiers and protecting his daughter the farmer can become a 'good father' and by letting the German soldiers rape his daughter but not betraying the resistance soldiers, the farmer becomes a 'good patriot'. The choice is his.

Was Goray a good son to his father and mother, a good husband to his wife and a good father to his children? Goray was confronted with such hard choices all his life. His decision to marry Sumati came as a shock to his orthodox father and mother. Their only son had decided to marry a widow – an unthinkable taboo amongst Chitpavan Brahmins. Goray had to live separately from his loving parents and in poverty. By refusing to marry Sumati, Goray could have become a 'good son' but he chose to be a good 'socialist'.

Only the birth of Goray's child made his parents relent. Even then Goray lived on the first floor of the house with his wife and child and his orthodox parents lived on the ground floor of the same building. The elder Gorays did not leave their orthodoxy and the younger Goray did not leave his socialism.

When his four month old son was very sick, Goray had to go on his political tour. Entrusting his wife with the responsibility of taking care of the child, Goray went on his tour only to return on hearing that the child was no more. Perhaps that is the reason why Goray showered his daughter Shubha with so much of love. By not going on that tour perhaps Goray could have become a 'good father' but then he chose his call of duty over the health of his baby.

Leaving Goray free to do his political work Sumati took up a job as a teacher and took the financial burden of running the household on her feminine shoulders. And once during the Emergency Goray had to go to Patna and see Jayaprakash Narayan. Goray went on to Patna and when he heard that Sumati was on her death bed, immediately started back but learnt on the way home that Sumati had breathed her last. By not going to Patna to see JP, Goray could have stayed with his wife in the last moments of her life and become a 'good husband'. But Goray chose once again his call of duty over the fatal ill health of his wife.

Not that Goray did not shed tears at the tragedies that befell him but that still would not deter him from answering the calls for duty. Once when I had been to Pune I wanted to see Goray's house. I was surprised that Goray did not even build a house, let alone a palatial one like many other politicians, but lived in the same old ancestral house, he had inherited from his father. He had donated a portion of the house for the Samajavadi Mahila Sabha for running their social counseling centre. While his daughter lived with her husband in USA, his foster daughter, Radha Shirsekar, lived on the first floor and the ground floor had been let out. Of course, all socialists of that era lived very simple lives, and Goray was no exception.

The unfulfilled wishes

Goray was not my Guru, for he neither accepted any one as his Guru nor let anyone accept him as his Guru. He was a Dronacharya with no Arjuna but many Ekalavyas - I being one of them - the difference being that since he did not accept any one as his disciple and hence the relationship was one sided, there was no question of his asking for the Gurudakshina of the right hand thumb of any of his Ekalavyas.

Some time in early seventies a study camp was held for socialist workers in Khadakwasla, near Pune. I was very young then and was proud to be one of the invitees. When I spoke in the camp many eyebrows were raised but Goray defended me and said that they should listen to the young man. In the evening when he was going for a walk, he beckoned me and took me along. With his hand on my shoulders he said, 'Bapu, no use you continuing as a lawyer. You leave all that and devote yourself for socialism'. How much I also wanted to do so! But that remained my unfulfilled wish and still hauntingly continues to be so. Was it also one of his unfulfilled wishes? How presumptuous of me.

In 1980 Goray decided to retire from active politics. But he continued to guide party workers. In 1984 he decided to retire from active life. Goray was now 86 years old but was still active not only in spirit but also in flesh. He was invited to speak at a May Day function in Pune on the 1st of May 1993 and he promised to speak. He was a socialist and in spite of his age he had wished to speak. But he could not keep his promise. He died on the morning of 1st May 1993. He had made a will donating his body for medical research. But then his only daughter Shubha could not countenance it. She wished a decent cremation for her affectionate and illustrious father. The living won over the dead.