

# Lecture 8\*

## History of Hindu Dharma

Title: Resurgence of Hindu Religion (II)

Vaishnavism

Ramanuja

Madhva

- *All 12 lectures are listed in Appendix*

# Title: Resurgence of Hindu Religion (II)

## 1. Vaishnavism

Umesh Shukla

## 2. Ramanuja

Kishin Kripalani

## 3. Madhva

Umesh Shukla

- *All 12 lectures are listed in Appendix*

# Ramanuja Acharya



# Ramanuja

- Born 1017 CE
- Place: Perumbudur
  - 20 mi West of Chennai)
- Father; Kesava Somayaji
- Mother: Kantimathi

# Ramanuja

## Early Life

- Early studies at Kancheepuram
  - Yadavaprakasha, an Advaita philosopher
- A brilliant student
  - Frequently disputed teacher's interpretations
  - made him popular with other students
- Jealous teacher attempts to murder him
  - Saved by his cousin Govinda Bhatta

# Visishtadvaita Philosophy

- Well established system in Southern India
- Well known visishtadvaita philosophers were heads of important Vaishnava Temples :
  - Tirupathi
  - Srirangam
  - Kanchhepuram

# Vaishnava Temples

- Srirangam:
  - Yamunacharya
- Kancheepuram
  - Kanchipurna
    - Disciple of Yamunacharya
    - Sudra

# Kanchipurna

- Very pious
- Highly respected and revered by people respect and reverence for him.
- Presently, worshipped as a saint in a temple which has his image
- Ramanuja developed a tremendous respect for Kanchipiurna
- Came under his influence

# Ramanuja Takes Sanyas

- Encounter between Kanchpurna and Ramanuja's wife
  - Wife an orthodox lady
  - She disrespects Kanchipurna
  - Ramanuja leaves his home
  - Takes Sanyasa

# Episode with Nambi

- Proceeds to Madurai to meet Nambi
- Wanted Initiation from Nambi for japa of mantra: Om! Namō Narayana!
- Nambi drags it out
- Makes Ramanuja travel 18 times before initiating him after a solemn promise:
- “Ramanuja! Keep this mantra secret.:

# Ramanuja the Maverick!

- Ramanuja realizes the power of the mantra
- Immediately, shouts out to public at the top of his voice
- Nambi confronts Ramanuja and realizes his folly

# Ramanuja heads Srirangam

Yamunacharyya identifies Ramanuja as successor to Srirangam Mutt, with three wishes:

1. Visishtadvaita commentary on Brahma Sutra  
Perpetuate the names of:
2. Parasara, author of Vishnu Purana
3. Saint Sadagopa

# Writings

- Writes Brahma Sutra commentary known as Sri Bhashya
  - Follows visishtadvaita philosophy originally expounded by Bodhayana 400 BCE
- Wrote three other books
  - Vedanta Sara
  - Vedanta Sangraha
  - Vedanta Deepa

# Travels

- Travels through out India:
  - Kashi
  - Kashmir
  - Badrinath
  - Tirupati Hills
    - Resolves the issue if Tirupati is Shaivite or Vaishnavite

# Moves towards Mysore

- Persecuted by Shaivite Chola King
  - Kulothunga I
- Forced to go into exile
- Settles about 40 miles West of Mysore
  - Friendly kingdom of Bhatti Deva of Hoysla dynasty

# Melkote Temple

- Constructed a temple at Melkote
  - with great service from depressed classed
- Gave them rights to visit the temple
  - On fixed days
  - Limited privileges to this day
- Ceated a strong Vaishnavite community

# Return to Srirangam

- After twenty years:
- Chola king died
- Succeeded by a friendly Vaishnavite
- Ramanuja was requested to return
- He was happy to return but also distressed to leave his sorrowful followers
  - Builds a temple and installs his own image to be available to; his devotees

# Return to Srirangam

- Came back after some 20 years to settle in Srirangam until age 120
- Congregation of 700 Sanyasins
- Huge following

# Appendix

## List of Lectures

# List of 12 Lectures-Segment 1

## History of Hindu Religion

1. Ancient Civilization
2. Origin of Aryans
3. Vedic Period (Rishis and revelations)
4. Vedas (Content)

# List of 12 Lectures-Segment 1

## History of Hindu Religion

5. Period of Epics and Puranas
6. Buddhism and Jainism
7. Shankara and his Vedantic teachings
8. Ramanuja, Madhva, and their teachings

# List of 12 Lectures-Segment 1

## History of Hindu Religion

9. Bhakti Movement
10. Saints of India  
15-16<sup>th</sup> Century
11. Influential religious leaders  
17-18<sup>th</sup> Century
12. Contemporary religious leaders  
19<sup>th</sup> C to present