

= Morya Gosavi =

Morya Gosavi or Moraya Gosavi (Moray? Gos?vi) alias Moroba Gosavi was a prominent saint of the Hindu Ganapatya sect , which considers the elephant @-@ faced god Ganesha as the Supreme Being . Morya Gosavi is considered the chief spiritual progenitor of the Ganapatyas and has been described as the " most famous devotee " of Ganesha .

The lifetime of Morya Gosavi is speculated between the 13th to 17th century . Numerous legends recall his life . Morya became devoted to Ganesha when he started visiting the Morgaon temple of Ganesha . It is believed that due to the hindrance in Morya 's services to the god in the popular Ganesha shrine , Ganesha told Morya that he would appear in Chinchwad for Morya to worship , so Morya moved from Morgaon to Chinchwad , where Morya built a Ganesha temple . Consequently , Morya took sanjeevan samadhi by burying himself alive in his tomb .

Morya had a son called Chintamani , venerated as a living incarnation of Ganesha and addressed as Dev (god) . Chintamani was succeeded by six more Devs . The tomb of Morya Gosavi and the Ganesha temple at Chinchwad still attract many Ganesha devotees .

= = Dating = =

While Yuvraj Krishan places Morya Gosavi in the 13th ? 14th century , RC Dhere places him in the 16th century . Paul B. Courtright and Anne Feldhaus date him to 1610 ? 59 . The Pimpri @-@ Chinchwad Municipal Corporation dates him to c . 1330 to 1556 . His marriage year is given as 1470 and his son 's birth corresponds to 1481 . The Encyclopedia of Religion dates his death to 1651 .

Various legends associate Morya Gosavi with Humayun (1508 ? 1556) , Shahaji (1594 ? 1665) and his son Shivaji (1627 ? 1680) . His memorial temple has an inscription records that it was started in 1658 @-@ 9 .

= = Early life = =

According to one version of the story , Morya was born in Bidar , Karnataka . He was thrown out of the house by his father as he was thought to be of no use to the family . Morya travelled to the Ganesha shrine at Morgaon ? in neighbouring Maharashtra ? where he found a liking to Ganesha . He settled at Chinchwad , 50 miles (80 km) away from Morgaon . Another story declares him to be a son of a poor but pious couple from Pune , Maharashtra . Morya is believed to have been born due to the grace of Ganesha , whom the childless couple propitiated . After the birth of Morya , the family moved to Pimple , 40 miles (64 km) away from Chinchwad . After the death of his parents , Morya moved to Tathavade , 2 miles (3 @.@ 2 km) away from Chinchwad . Both legends declare he visited the Morgaon temple regularly , daily or monthly to worship Ganesha .

Another tale tells that Morya 's parents , Bhat Shaligram and his wife moved to Morgaon from Bidar . His parents prayed to Ganesha at Morgaon . Soon , Morya was born to them . Later , Morya became seriously ill and was not recovering so they prayed to Ganesha again . Soon , a Gosavi (priest) named Nayan Bharati came and gave medicine to Morya , curing him . Nayan Bharati also preached to Morya . Henceforth , the Bhat family took the family name Gosavi and Morya was known as Morya Gosavi .

= = From Morgaon to Chinchwad = =

According to a legend , on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi (August ? September) ? the largest festival dedicated to Ganesha ? Morya could not find a place in the temple , crowded by the laity and the wealthy Pingle family . Morya left his offering under a tree and then by a " miracle " , the laity 's offerings from temple were exchanged with Morya 's offerings under the tree . The laity accused Morya of sorcery and prohibited his entry in Morgaon . Ganesha appeared in a dream of Pingle and told Pingle that he was offended by the ill @-@ treatment of his favourite devotee Morya . So Pingle requested Morya to come back to Morgaon , but Morya refused . Ganesha thus gave a vision to

Morya saying that he would come to stay with Morya in Chinchwad . Accordingly , Morya found an image of Ganesha ? similar to the one worshipped at Morgaon ? while bathing in the river and built a small shrine for it .

Another tale tells that the head @-@ man of Morgaon was impressed by Morya 's pious ways and offered him milk every day he visited Morgaon . Once the head @-@ man was not present at his house , so a blind girl went to offer the milk to Morya . The moment she touched the threshold of the house where Morya was waiting , her sight was restored . Morya became famous due to this miracle and is credited to have cured the eyes of Shivaji (1627 ? 1680) too ? who would become the founder of the Maratha Empire later . To escape the crowds of people , Morya relocated to the forest , where present @-@ day Chinchwad stands . Due to his growing age , Morya found it hard to continue his visits to Morgaon . Once he reached Morgaon after the temple was closed . Tired and hungry , he slept . Ganesha gave Morya a dream @-@ vision telling Morya to offer his prayers to him and that he would reside with Morya in Chinchwad and incarnate in Morya 's lineage for seven generations . Morya woke to find the temple doors miraculously opened and offered his prayers . In morning when the temple @-@ priests opened the temple @-@ doors , they were astonished to see fresh flowers offered to the Lord and a pearl necklace missing . The necklace was discovered on Morya 's neck , who was imprisoned but then freed due to Ganesha 's aid . Morya found a conical stone rising in Chinchwad home , which he recognized as Ganesha and built a temple for it .

Another legend does not talk about his arrest , but says that Morya realised the presence of Ganesha at Morgaon but realised that there was hindrance in his devotion , so he moved to the forest near Tathavade to worship Ganesha . On every fourth lunar day after the full moon , Morya used to visit the Chintamani Temple of Theur . Once , devotees from Chinchwad requested Morya to visit the bank of Pavana River at Chinchwad . There , Chintamani ? the form of Ganesha worshipped at Theur ? is believed to have ordered Morya to marry . As per Ganesha 's orders , Morya got married to Uma , the daughter of Govindrao Kulkarni whose family was staying in Tathavade near Chinchwad .

According to a story , as per his guru 's orders , Morya performed penance at Theur by observing a strict fast for 42 days , within this period , he is believed to have " divine revelations " . After the death of his parents , Morya moved from Morgaon to Chinchwad . The present structure of the Theur temple is built by Morya .

= = Death and lineage = =

Morya continued to visit Theur , Ranjangaon (another Ganesha temple site) and Chinchwad . Morya had a son , whom he named Chintamani (Chintaman) . Chintamani was venerated as a living incarnation of Ganesha . But before that according to some experts , he helped the deposed Mughal emperor Humayun (1508 ? 1556) to escape to Kabul , when Humayun again became the Emperor of Delhi , he showered Morya with gifts . According to Dhere , Shivaji 's father Shahaji (1594 ? 1665) is recorded as a donor to Morya Gosavi .

After his wife 's death and his guru Nayan Bharati 's sanjeevan samadhi , Morya also took sanjeevan samadhi by burying himself alive in a tomb with a holy book in his hand . Morya left strict orders that his tomb be never opened . Chintamani built a temple over his father 's tomb . Chintamani is described to have shown his true form as Ganesha to the Varkari saint @-@ poet Tukaram (1577 ? c.1650) , who called Chintamani a Dev spelt also as Deva or Deo (god) . The lineage was henceforth known as the Dev family .

Chintamani was followed as a Dev by Narayan , Chintamani II , Dharmadhar , Chintamani III , Narayan II and Dharmadhar II . The Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1658 ? 1707) gifted Narayan the hereditary grant of eight villages , impressed by the latter 's " miracle " of changing a piece of beef sent by the former into jasmine flowers . (Beef is considered unholy in Hinduism and killing of cows ? considered sacred ? is prohibited .) Narayan II violated Morya 's orders and opened the latter 's tomb . According to the tale , Morya who was found still mediating in the tomb , was disturbed and cursed Narayan that his son would be the last Dev . Narayan 's son , Dharmadhar II ? the seventh generation of Morya ? died childless in 1810 ending the direct lineage of Morya , but a distant

relative of Dharmadhar , Sakhari was installed as a Dev by the priesthood to continue the temple funding . Devotional poetry of all the Devs still survive .

= = Veneration = =

Morya Gosavi is considered the chief spiritual progenitor and the most important saint of the Ganapatya ? the Hindu sect centred on Ganesha worship ? tradition and has been described as the " most famous devotee " of Ganesha .

Chinchwad has shrines to the departed Devs , chief of which is that of Morya . Morya 's memorial temple is a low plain building (30 ' x 20 ' x 40 ') with a square hall or mandap and an octagonal inner shrine , inscribed with a Marathi inscription : " This temple was begun on the bright twelfth of Kartik (November ? December) Shaka 1580 (A.D. 1658 @-@ 9) Vilambi Samvatsara and finished on Monday the bright fourth of Ashadha , Vikari Samvatsara " . The temples enjoyed the revenue from the eight villages given by Aurangzeb in the past . The tomb of Morya Gosavi as well as the Ganesha temple constructed by him still attracts many Ganesha devotees to Chinchwad . Devotees believe that though Morya Gosavi attained moksha (salvation) but " his presence continues to endow the shrine with sacred significance . "

On the circumbulation path (Pradakshina path) of the Morgaon Ganesha temple , there is a tree near the Kalpavrushka Mandir . The tree is believed to have the spot where Morya Gosavi underwent penance . An image of Morya Gosavi is worshipped in the temple complex too . Morya Gosavi is also credited to have popularized the Morgaon temple .