

**R. P. Paranjpye :**  
**(Raghunath Purushottam Paranjpye)**  
**The First IMS Librarian**



**(16 February 1876 – 6 May 1966)**

R. P. Paranjpye was born on Feb. 16, 1876 at Murdi near Dapoli in the coastal Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. His father, Purushottam Keshav, was a landlord and agriculturist of Murdi. He was educated at Maratha high school, Bombay, Fergusson College, Pune and Bombay University before entering St John's College, Cambridge in 1896.

He graduated B.A. as Senior Wrangler (first Indian to achieve this coveted title at the University of Cambridge) in 1899. (Math. Trip., Pt. II, 1st Class, 1900 ; M.A. 1903). Paranjpye was elected a Fellow of St John's College in November 1901 and stayed as such until 1907, but returned to India in 1902 to become a professor of mathematics at the Fergusson College, Pune. One of the earliest Indian documentary film makers, H. S. Bhatavdekar, made silent documentary film, Return of Wrangler Paranjpye (1902) and Delhi Durbar of Lord Curzon (1903), featuring R. P. Paranjpye.

In 1907, R. P. became the first librarian of the Indian Mathematical Society at Fergusson College. He became the college's principal, and stayed in that position for two decades, until 1926. Subsequently, he became the Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University (1916-20) and of the Indian Women's University during 1916-20 and Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. He also became the Vice-Chancellor of the Lucknow University (1932-38). In 1921, the University of

Calcutta awarded him an honorary Doctor of Science degree. He was Minister of Education of Bombay Presidency during 1921-23; Fellow, Bombay University during 1905-27 and was awarded Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal in 1916. He was also the Minister of Excise and Forests, 1927. He was a Delegate of the Government of India to International Labour Conferences at Geneva, 1928-29; A Member of Indian Taxation Committee, 1924 and a Member of the India Council, London, during 1927-32.

R. P. Paranjpye received a British knighthood in 1942. In the three years (1944–1947) preceding India's independence from the British Raj, the British government appointed him India's High Commissioner to Australia. He was the founder of the Indian Rationalist Association in Chennai (then Madras) in 1949, and remained its President for many years. His autobiography, *84 Not Out*, appeared in 1961 (National Book Trust, New Delhi).

Acharya Atre has devoted one full chapter in his autobiography for Wrangler R. P. Paranjape and has written about his fame all over the country and how because of him students from outside Maharashtra came to study at Ferguson College.

His younger brother, Hari Purushottam Paranjape was a well known agriculturist of his time. R. P.'s daughter Shakuntala Paranjpye was awarded Padma Bhushan title in recognition of her work in the field of family planning in 1991. His granddaughter Sai Paranjpye was awarded Padma Bhushan in 2006 for recognition of her artistic talents.

#### References

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2. R.P. Paranjpye, *84 Not Out*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1961. Autobiography
3. Wrangler Raghunath Purushottam Paranjpye by Dr Anant Deshmukh, 2011. Biography.
4. "Rationalist International Bulletin 21". 21 October 1999. Retrieved 5 September 2013.