



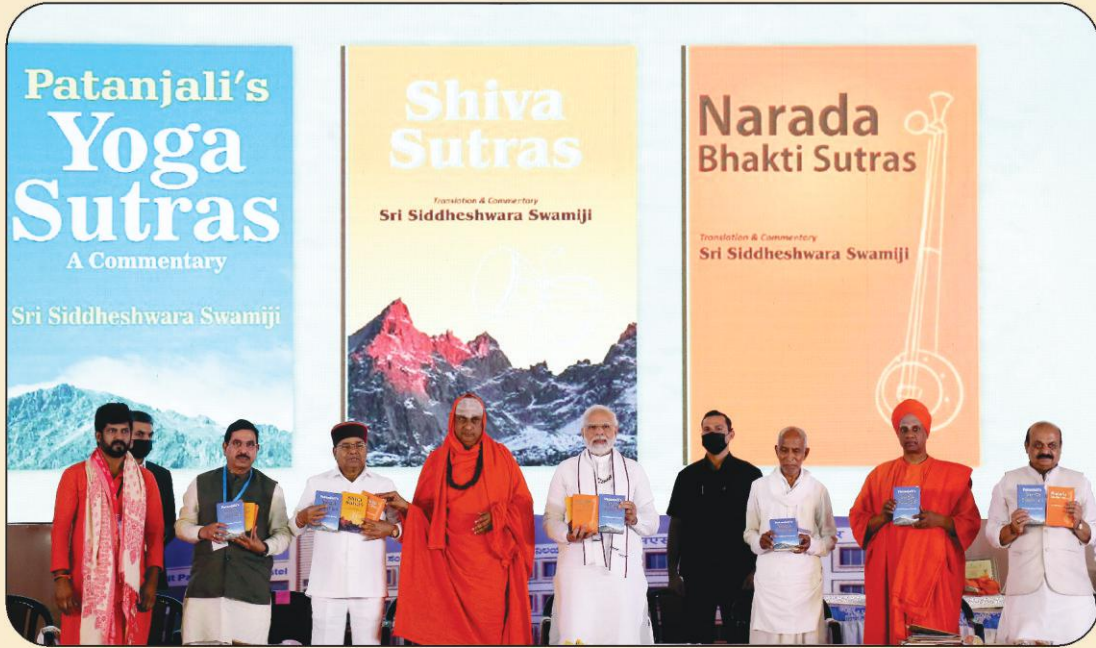
SHARANA PATHA

Vol. 24, No. 2

July-December 2022



**JSS MAHAVIDYAPEETHA
MYSURU**



Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji's commentaries in English on Yoga Sutras, Shiva Sutras and Narada Bhakti Sutras were released by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modiji in the gracious presence of H.H. Jagadguruji, Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji, Sri Siddhaganga Swamiji, Member of Parliament Sri Pratap Simha, Central Minister Sri Prahlad Joshi, Governor Sri Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Chief Minister Sri Basavaraj Bommai were present. (20.6.2022)



Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Hon'ble Justice Sri N.V. Ramana and his wife Smt. Shivamala were felicitated and blessed by HH Jagadguruji when they visited Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru. (29.5.2022)

SHARANA PATHA

Vol. 24 No.2

July-December 2022

A Half-Yearly journal devoted to religion, Sharana Philosophy, history, culture, literature and their comparative studies and practice.



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Jagadguru

Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji

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From the Editor's Desk.....

It seems like in the past that language related issues are taking the center stage of the problems which need to be resolved guided by pragmatism and long range vision. As the boundary disputes between states sometimes turn to ugly acrimony so too are the language related issues, but many a time the two get mixed up complicating easy solution. Apart from the officially recognized languages in India there are hundreds of smaller ones spoken by ethnic groups which however do not claim for bigger roles. In this context only the language Hindi presumes qualified to be recognized as the official language of the Government of India which is opposed by southern states. The northern states however have no issues as to Hindi's elevation to the status of national language under the pretext that this is by and large spoken and understood through out the subcontinent. This contention is far from being a fact that there are crores of people who could not understand either Hindi or English. They mostly rely upon the English knowing people when any order or communication received from the central government unless it appears as news in the local language. And it is true that more people in southern India are conversant in English than their counterparts in the north. And it is also true that in southern states the language being spoken in the respective states by the majority are the official language for all purposes without rancor or ill will.

In the existing scenario as detailed above it is prudent to reasonably state that the existing arrangement is working to the satisfaction of the majority. That the Government of India shall not impose Hindi as the official language of the country and resort to sidelining English which is by and large accepted as the medium of communication officially and socially. It is because of one simple reason that the imposition of Hindi amounts to its hegemony and lowering the status of the other Indian languages which are as great and rich as any in the world. Notwithstanding all this a word of caution that we cannot afford to bypasse English which presently is the language of advanced studies of all hues and colours. Lets us master our own tongue first and then English, the gateway to the world.

Prof. Chandrasekharaiah

Guru-Vāṇi

When some one's life is driven by uncompromising greed and profiteering, can the other in society remain unfleeced and unaffected? This indeed is a simple situation throwing light on how the exploiter and the exploited coexist neither satiating the greed of the former nor reducing the burden of the latter, consequently the happiness of all in society gets dangerously imbalanced on the scale of equity and just dealings. A tilt in favour of the greedy will result in economic imbalance between the haves and have-nots which is not good for any society working towards the welfare of all.

The Shivasharanas of the 12th century have taught us a great lesson in Economics by way of formulating a timeless theory of earning and spending, *Kayaka* and *Dasoha*. Earn as much as you can by honest means but keep as much as you need and the rest should go to serve the needy and deserving! The theory sounds quite agreeable with a riding, of course, that every able bodied person should engage oneself in productive work performed honestly. The aim of this theory if put into practice will bring about an egalitarian society wherein the words such as 'rich' or 'poor' get eventually banished. And the Shivasharanas got established such a society and practically lived it. The following incident taken from the life of a Sharana couple is a standing testimony illustrating how the theory worked.

Aydakki Marayya and his wife Lakkamma, a working class couple from a village near Lingasugur in the present Raichur district, came to Kalyana drawn by the words and deeds of Basaveshwara as many did at that time. Marayya took to gleaning of rice-grains fallen inadvertently in the market place of Kalyana, but was avowed to collect only that measure of rice needed for the duo and also to feed the Jangama guests on a day to day basis. One day Marayya forgot to go on his errand to collect rice-grains because he got himself completely lost in the spiritual discussion held at the Anubhava Mantap in the benign presence of Allama Prabhu. It was only when his wife Lakkamma who found it was getting late dashed to Anubhava Mantap and alerted her husband as to his forgetfulness of the designated duty, *Kayaka*. Seeking Allama's permission Marayya left the place reprimanding himself but got the work done in a jiff! Basaveshwara being present there watchful of the development probably wanted to test Marayya's integrity in doing his job and told Appanna, his confidant, to rush out and scatter some rice on the way that the former would walk. Marayya in his hurry saw the rice, grabbed the whole lot and walked home quickly not realizing how in his forgetfulness faulted and fell a prey to the ploy! On seeing her husband arrive with so much rice Lakkamma asked him as to how he brought that much and why, more than their requirement and that too in such a short time! Only then that realisation dawned on Marayya. A bit shamed and

crestfallen Marayya recounted how he was trapped by none other than Basaveshwara himself, the simple evidence being that he found all the rice put on the way close to his residence. That was enough for Lakkamma to conclude that Basaveshwara was deliberately putting them to test, their integrity and honesty. But then she knew the frailty of forgetfulness is no excuse in the avowed life of the Sharanas. Therefore she decided to set the record straight. Their poverty being selfimposed - they banked on divine intervention that lord Amaleshwara would rescue them from ignominy. So she told her husband to backtrack and put all the rice at the place it belonged, but go to Anubhava Mantap and invite Allama, Basaveshwara and all other Sharanas to lunch. So goes the incident that subsumes a lot about honest work and earning culture which obviously enough answers some questions related to economics and moral sciences.

One of the Vachanas of Lakkamma says,

*Poverty of money affects one who isn't pure in mind.
Where a devotee does his Kayaka with intention pure
He sees Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, everywhere
Till he remains in the service of Marayyapriya Amaleshwaralinga*

Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji

Shatsthala Vachanas of Allama Prabhu*

In English Translation with Commentary

Continued

15

*A new parrot was born in the sky.
Made its home in all jubilation.
One parrot became twenty-five parrots.
Brahma became its cage, Vishnu, its
measly food.
And Rudra, its fetter.
The toddler born even before these three
Was devoured, he forgot his true nature.
What's all this, O Guheshwara!*

PURPORT

Out of the Mahalinga came out a newly born parrot called Jiva. In this vast wide world, it settled down with great elation thinking that all this belonged to it. It identified itself with the twenty-five principles. Brahma provided the parrot with its gross body which served as its cage. Vishnu provided it with subtle body of innate tendencies towards sensual pleasure, which served as its food. Rudra of the causal body of darkness and ignorance caused its imprisonment. The Jiva parrot, which came into existence before these three bodies, was swallowed by maya. Its original nature was forgotten, on account of maya.

COMMENTARY

A new parrot was O Guheshwara.

Sky = The field that precedes the tattva and

vitattva, it is Parashiva. Tattvas are the original tattvas: the five sadakhyas, the five kalas. Vitattvas are the tattvas resulting from the varying combinations of original tattvas. New = It appears as distinct from Mulavastu, it is seen at the very beginning of creation, eternally new. Parrot = the Jiva bird which develops attachment to the twenty-five tattvas. Brahma = Gross body, the body made of five elements. Vishnu = Subtle body, a granary of innate tendencies towards pleasure. Rudra = Causal body of ignorance. Toddler born even before these three = The parrot called Jiva which is seen before these three bodies appear.

16

*Making a doll of clay, painting it with the
colour of water.
Tying the tinkling anklet which jingles in
many ways.
Putting wind and fire into it,
He decorated it with the peepal leaves.
Who is the operator who makes this doll
dance?
The Self which comes into this pillar which is
not solid
Is made to realize its Absolute nature.
Now the Self becomes one with the Absolute,
Isn't it, Guheshwara?*

PURPORT

This body is a doll of clay. It is painted with the colour of water. It has an attractive form. The

* Translation and exposition of the Vachanas of Allama Prabhu is being done by a group of scholars guided by Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji of Jnanayogaashrama, Vijayapura

senses acting in various ways are the jingling anklets. In this body there is the movement of wind and the warmth of fire. There is prarabdha (fate) that determines its life span and life experiences. Jiva enters this body and identifies itself with it. Who created this individual world? He is the Inner Controller, the Lord of maya — Maheshwara. When the Jiva comes to know with certainty the non-eternity of the body made of maya and the eternity of the Supreme Reality, he becomes one with Paravastu. This is the way of transcending maya and its tempting world.

COMMENTARY

Making a doll ofisn't it, Guheshwara!

Doll of clay = The body made of material elements. Colour of water = Fading form and colour. The tinkling anklet which jingles in many ways = The senses which deal with their objects. Peepal leaves = Prarabdha (fate) which determines its life span and life experiences. The operator = Maheshwara who, using his power of maya, created this attractive body. The Self which comes into this pillar which is not solid = Deciding that this body (pillar) is not everlasting (not solid). Is made to realize his Absolute nature = Only Paravastu or Absolute is everlasting, if one realizes this truth.

17

*In the heads twenty-five, breasts seven,
faces eight,
Mouths fourteen, canine teeth one
hundred and twenty.
Fondling the fire taken out from the heart.
Devouring the forms of sound, and
Making the colours of mind disappear.
Mother swallows the son.
The child gives birth to the mother.
The breast on his palm swallows the divine
greatness,
O Guheshwara!*

PURPORT

In this body created by maya, there are

mainly twenty-five principles (tattvas), seven obsessions (vyasanas), eight conceits (mada), fourteen sense organs (indriyas) and one hundred and twenty modifications of mind (vrittis). Giving an expression to the hidden passions, Jiva rejoices in them, thus he experiences the sense objects. As a result, he comes to experience different feelings and emotions which are like the colours of the mind. His mother is maya (she is called mother because she causes the appearance of Jiva). That mother, maya, swallows the son i.e., maya engulfs the Jiva. Jiva gives birth to the mother maya i.e., he expresses this maya in all his activities (maya pervades inside and outside the Jiva. In all his activities, maya is expressed in the form of deep attachment). In fact, Jiva is of the nature of the divine itself. So what? He swallows the breast on the palm i.e., he drinks the milk of pleasure presented to his senses.

COMMENTARY

Heads twenty-five.

Mainly there are twenty-five principles in the body. They are five elements, five sense objects, five cognitive organs, five motor organs and five vital airs or the five antahakaranas (internal instruments). The five elements are space, air, fire, water and earth. The five sense objects are sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The five cognitive organs are auditory, tactile, optical, gustatory and olfactory organs. The five motor organs are speech, hands, feet, reproductive and excretory organs. The five vital airs are the air that moves in every part of the body; the air that controls the respiratory and the circulatory systems; the air that controls the digestive system, the air that moves downward; and prana, the air that moves upward. The five antahakaranas (internal instruments) are mind, intellect; memory, the ego feeling; and the sense of knowing.

Breasts seven.

Seven obsessions are the passions for the

worldly pleasures. They are: The obsession of one's own body, mental pleasure, wealth, political power, all kinds of luxuries, emotional excitement and being served. There is another list of seven obsessions which are the obsession of hunting, of gambling, of excessive sleep, of physical pleasure, of being intoxicated, of dance and of music.

Faces eight.

Whenever one comes in contact with the objective world, there arise in his mind eight kinds of conceit. They are the conceit of wealth, youthfulness, clan, physical appearance, power and position, achievement, circle of relatives and learning.

Mouths fourteen.

The instruments the Jiva uses in experiencing the objects of the world are fourteen. They are five cognitive sense organs, five organs of action and four internal mental organs which are ego, intellect, mind and memory. These are the fourteen mouths.

Canine teeth one hundred and twenty.

There are one hundred and twenty mental modifications. They are —

The thirteen instruments; namely five cognitive organs, five locomotive organs and three internal organs (mind, intellect and memory).

Every organ has three facets. For eg:

Eye is a cognitive organ. Its three facets are the seer, the seen and the function of seeing.

Speech is a locomotive organ. Its three facets are the speaker, the spoken and the function of speaking.

Mind is an internal organ. Its three facets are the one who feels, the feeling and the function of feeling.

Each facet is of three kinds: satvik, rajasik and tamasik. For example, the seer is of three kinds – the satvik seer, the rajasik seer and the

tamasik seer.

Thus, in all we have 117 (13x3x3) mental modifications. The three kinds of ego, namely satvik, rajasik and tamasik are added to arrive at one hundred and twenty mental modifications.

Fondling the fire taken out from the heart.

In this body made of maya where in Jiva resides are hidden fire of desire and passion called thirst for pleasure. Jiva takes out this fire through the senses and fondles it.

Devouring the forms of sound.

'Dhvani' means sound and also the word. Therefore, 'dharma of dhvani' means the meaning of word i.e., the world of objects. Jiva swallows them, meaning, he always thinks of the worldly objects and the pleasure derived from them.

Making the colours of mind disappear.

The phrase 'the colours of the mind' means the three dispositions of the mind namely satvik, rajasik and tamasik. These dispositions merge into one another. Therefore, when Jiva experiences the sensory world, mixed feelings arise in his mind.

Mother swallows the son.

Mother means maya that gives rise to Jiva. She swallows the son Jiva, meaning Jiva is engulfed by maya.

The child gives birth to the mother.

Child = Jiva; Mother = Maya

Jiva gives birth to maya, means Jiva expresses maya in all his activities.

The breast on his palm swallows the divine greatness.

Divine greatness = Divine nature.

The real nature of Jiva is divine. He drinks the milk of the pleasure of the visible world and becomes of the world.

The merchant of Jambudwipa brought
 A variety of merchandise, and
 Spread them all over the world.
 Stricken with unbearable heat and thirst,
 The thirsty man drank the seven seas.
 He was surprised to find his thirst still
 unquenched.
 The child, carrying his mother's corpse,
 was blabbing.
 The true nature of Guheshwara was
 Devoured by the body of mud.

IMAGERY

The merchant of Jambudwipa set up a shop having myriad things on the earth. The heat caused by the thirst increased. To quench the thirst Jivatman drank the seven seas. The thirst increased in intensity instead of being quenched. This surprised him. He carried the lifeless body of his mother. Forgetting his real nature, he began identifying himself with his body made of matter.

PURPORT

Jambudwipa is the place where living beings dwell. The great merchant in this world is Maheshwara, the Lord of maya. He spread his merchandise in the form of sense objects everywhere in this world. Buying these, Jiva enjoyed them with the hope of finding contentment. But that did not happen. However, instead of being quenched, his thirst went on increasing. He went on drinking even all the seven seas of sensory pleasures. Yet his thirst went on doubling. Why did this happen – this thought troubled him very much. Being the child of maya, he forgot his nature and became identified with the body. As a result, he began taking pride in things such as caste, family, clan, and other worldly matters. Thus, he came to be caught in the snare of social relations and worldly possessions. He lived in the darkness of ignorance, forgetting his Shiva nature. All this is due to maya.

COMMENTARY

The merchant of still unquenched.

Jambudwipa = This world of living beings. Merchant = Maheshwara, the Lord of maya, the designer and the creator of the world; he is the trader who sells worldly enjoyments and liberation, the spiritual freedom to Jivas. A variety of merchandise = Transitory objects. Spreads his wares on this earth = On this earth he spreads the merchandise. Thirst = Desire, discontentment, and thirst for pleasure. The seven seas = The sea of salt, of sugarcane juice, of wine, of ghee, of curd, of milk and of water – these seven seas suggest seven kinds of experiences namely sense pleasures of sound, touch, form, taste and smell, and mental delight and distress.

The child, carrying corpse, was blabbing.

Jiva is the child of maya. 'Mother's corpse' means the lifeless body. 'Carrying that body' means having pride and attachment for the body, blabbing various names related to the body such as man, woman, etc. Though by nature he is infinite, Jiva came to be confined to the body because of ignorance and he thought himself to be a small insignificant creature and entertained trivial thoughts and feelings.

The true nature of body of mud.

Jiva's body is made of earth. It is the creation of maya. It made him forget his divine nature and thus he became Jiva – an individual being.

19

*Hardness of the earth and softness of the sky.
 Awareness that knows it stops there only.
 Lo, thirst born in water goes searching for
 water!
 Dying inside, it plays outside.
 Guheshwara, wonderstruck, stands there only.*

PURPORT

Jiva comprehends the endless expanse of the material world. But he fails to go beyond it. He

does not take pain to know the great reality, which is his very nature, which transcends the material expanse. As a result, there arises in his mind insatiable thirst for worldly pleasure. Thus, he dies inside, meaning, he forgets his divine nature. However, he acts as though he knows everything — outside. Wonderstruck at the pitiable predicament of Jiva, who is a part of Him, Paramatman stands there only as a witness.

COMMENTARY

Hardness of earth and softness of the sky.

The great world that contains gross and subtle elements.

Awareness that knows it, stops there only.

Jivatman takes interest in knowing this vast objective world. His interest stops there only.

Lo, thirst born in water.

Craving born in mind.

Goes searching for water.

He runs after the worldly pleasure to find satisfaction. But how is it possible?

Dying inside, it plays outside.

Jivatman is dead inside, meaning he has forgotten his true nature. Outside, he acts like a learned pundit, inside, he is ignorant.

Guheshwara, wonderstruck, there only.

Amazed at this plight of Jivatman, Paramatman stands there as a witness.

20

Earth and sky — the body of the one and the same Being.

What's so great for one who does not call it so?

What's so small for one who does not call it so?

When that Absolute fills the mind,

There is nothing like it, O Guheshwara.

PURPORT

'Earth' means Jiva who identifies himself with the material body. 'Sky' means Shiva whose nature is non-material. These two are the two faces of the same reality. To the one who knows this truth, Shiva is not superior, Jiva is not inferior. This feeling of superiority and inferiority about Shiva and Jiva is caused by maya. As long as maya is there such discriminatory feelings do arise. Jiva enveloped by this maya, keeps thinking that the cosmic world is great and the individual world is small, Shiva is great and Jiva is small. With the disappearance of maya, this illusory distinction disappears. When maya is removed from the mind, the mind is filled with the thought of the Absolute. Then, one attains a great experience of oneness.

COMMENTARY

Earth and sky — one and the same Being.

Earth = It stands for Jivatman who identifies himself with the gross body. Sky = This is a subtle concept; it stands for Shiva of the nature of Bayalu or Nothingness. The body of the one and the same Being = Jiva and Shiva are the two forms of the same reality.

What's so great call it so?

For the one who has realized the oneness of Jiva and Shiva which are the two forms of the Paravastu, Shiva is not great and Jiva is not small.

When the Absolute fills the mind.

Absolute = Paravastu.

Dualistic thoughts of big and small is caused by maya. When that maya fills the mind, Shiva is considered great and Jiva, insignificant; Brahman? a or the great universe is big, Pindan? a or the individual is small — such a thought is bound to exist. When that maya is gone, when the mind is filled with the thought of Paravastu, the idea of difference is stamped out.

There is nothing like it, O Guheshwara.

There is nothing like this great spiritual experience.

Prime Minister's Speech

-Sri Narendra Modi

Yellarigu! Namaskaram!

सुत्तूरु संस्थानवु शिक्षण, सामाजिक सेवे, अन्नदा-सोदुक्के, प्रख्याति पडेदिरुव, विश्व प्रसिद्ध संस्थेया-गिदे, ई क्षेत्रके, आगमि-सिरु-वुदके, ननगे अतीव संतोष-वागिदे।

Revered Shri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswami Ji, Shri Siddheshwara Mahaswami Ji, Shri Siddalinga Mahaswami Ji, Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri Basavaraj Ji, my colleague in the Union Cabinet Pralhad Joshi Ji, Ministers of the Government of Karnataka, MPs, MLAs, all the devotees associated with Suttur Mutt and the revered saints who came here in large numbers to bless us-

I bow to Goddess Mata Chamundeshwari, the presiding deity of Mysuru. It is because of the grace of the Mother that I got the privilege to inaugurate many development works in Mysuru. And now, I feel very blessed to be here in this virtuous program amongst all the saints. I will also go to Maa Chamundeshwari to seek her blessings. On this spiritual occasion I bow to the saints, Acharyas and sages of Sri Suttur Mutt for continuing with the great tradition of this mutt. I especially bow to Adijagadguru Shivarathri Shivayogi Mahaswami Ji, who planted the seed of this spiritual tree. Today the great tradition of knowledge and

spirituality is flourishing under the guidance of Param Pujya Shri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswami Ji, the current abbot of Suttur Mutt. The school started by Shri Mantra Maharishi Ji undertook such a huge project under the guidance of Shri Rajendra Mahaswami Ji. The new building of this school to uphold Indian culture and Sanskrit education has also been inaugurated today. I am sure this institute in this modern time will further expand its branches and resolved to build the future. I also bow my head and congratulate all of you for these innovative efforts. I also extend many best wishes.

Friends,

Today I have also got an opportunity to dedicate the commentaries on Narad Bhakti Sutra, Shiva Sutra and Patanjali Yoga Sutra by Shri Siddheshwara Swami Ji. Pujya Shri Siddheshwara Swami Ji represents the ancient Rishi tradition of India which is called Shruta tradition in the scriptures. The Shruta tradition means imbibing in the mind and heart what we hear. On the occasion of World Yoga Day, this attempt to make Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga easily accessible through the commentary of Patanjali Yoga Sutra, Narada Bhakti Sutra and Shiva Sutra. This will not only benefit India but also the whole world. I am in the midst of all of you today, I would request

Speech by Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi ji and releasing of books *Patanjali Yoga Sutra*, *Narada Bhakti Sutra* and *Shiva Sutra* by Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji, at the inauguration of KSS Sanskrit Pathashala & Hostel Building on June 20,2022 at Mysuru.

the learned people of Karnataka to study whatever has been written on social science in the world in the last four-five centuries and they will find that the Narada Sutra is older than that, and we have a very excellent source of social science. It is necessary for the world to study and understand this once. Those who know the ideas of the West should go through Narada Sutra to see the social system and human values then. This wonderful Narada Sutra has been defined in modern interpretation. You have done a great service to society.

Friends,

It is said in our scriptures that there is nothing as holy as knowledge and there is no substitute for knowledge. Therefore, our sages and mystics created India with that consciousness – inspired by knowledge and embodied by science which grows with understanding and is strengthened by research. Eras changed, times changed and India also faced many storms of time. When the consciousness of India was weakened, our saints, Rishis, sages and Acharyas revived the soul of the country by churning the whole of India. From Kashi in the north to Nanjangud in the south, strong institutions, temples and monasteries kept the knowledge of India illuminated even during the long period of slavery. Sri Suttur Mutt in Mysore, Sri Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru, Sri Sirigere Mutt in Chitradurga, Sri Murugarajendra Mutt, Sri Rambhapuri Mutt in Chikmagalur, Sri Moorusavira Mutt in Hubli, Basavakalyan Mutt in Bidar! South India alone is the center of many such monasteries which have been irrigating infinite disciplines for centuries.

Friends,

The existence of truth does not depend

on resources, but on service and sacrifice. Sri Suttur Mutt and JSS Mahavidya Peeth are great examples of this. When Shri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswami ji opened a free hostel with a pledge of social service, what resources did he have? It was a rented building and there was no money even for arranging ration etc., and I have heard that once the supply of hostel items stopped due to paucity of money, Swami Ji had to sell 'Lingam Kardige' too. That is, he considered service to be above faith. That sacrifice of decades ago is in front of us today in the form of accomplishment. Today, JSS Mahavidya Peeth runs more than 300 institutes and two universities in the country and abroad. These institutions are not only the spiritual and cultural brand ambassadors of India, but are also contributing equally to -science, arts and commerce. The way Suttur Mutt is serving poor children, tribal society and our villages is also an example in itself.

Friends,

When it comes to education, equality and service in Karnataka, South India has lineage. The discourses get expanded further with the blessings of Lord Basaveshwara. The energy that Lord Basaveshwara Ji had given to our society – the ideals of democracy, education and equality that he had set, these continue to be the foundation stones of India. I once had the privilege of dedicating the statue of Lord Basaveshwara Ji in London and at that time I had said that if you compare Magna Carta and the words of Lord Basaveshwara, you will find the kind of attitude towards society in my country many centuries before Magna Carta.

Friends,

Following the same ideals, Sri

Siddaganga Mutt is running more than 150 institutions today, spreading education and spirituality in society and I have been told that at present about 10,000 students are earning knowledge in the schools of Siddaganga Mutt. This inspiration and devotion of selfless service of Lord Basaveshwara is the foundation of our India. The stronger this foundation is, the stronger our country will be.

Friends,

When we are celebrating 75 years of the country's independence, then this period of the 'Amrit Kaal' of independence is the best occasion of 'Sabka Prayas'. Our sages have called this resolution of cooperation and efforts of all as 'Sahana Vavatu Sahanau Bhunaktu' and have given to us 'Saha Viryam Karavaavahai' in the form of Vedas. Now the time make that spiritual experiences of thousands of years come true! Today is the time to realize the dreams we saw during hundreds of years of slavery. For this, we have to give more impetus to our efforts. We have to link our efforts with the resolutions of the nation.

Friends,

The example of 'National Education Policy' is in front of us in the field of education. Education has been a natural feature of our India. With this ease, our new generation should get an opportunity to move forward. Therefore, options are being given to study in local languages. Along with Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, languages like Sanskrit are also being promoted. All our mutts and religious institutions have been engaged in this work for centuries. Mysuru is such a place from where the country's only Sanskrit daily newspaper 'Sudharma' is being published even today. Now the country is also giving its support in these efforts.

Similarly, today Ayurveda and Yoga have got a new identity all over the world due to India's efforts towards health and wellness. It is our endeavor that not a single citizen of the country should remain ignorant and deprived of this heritage. The cooperation of our spiritual institutions is very important to complete this mission. Similarly, we all have to come together for the education of our daughters, for water conservation, for the environment, and also for a clean India. Another important resolution relates to natural farming. The purer our food is, the more pure our life and mind will be. All our religious mutts and institutions have to come forward and make people aware in this regard. Let us liberate our Mother India, the Mother Earth, from chemicals. Whatever we do in this regard, Mothers' blessings are going to be with us for centuries.

Friends,

Spiritual consciousness and divine blessings are also added to the initiatives in which the efforts of the saints are included. I believe that the country will continue to receive the blessings of all the saints. Together we will fulfill the dream of New India. Today is a very fortunate moment for me. The way revered saints have expressed their feelings for me, I know I still have a lot to do to reach there. I am sure with your blessings, our great cultural heritage and under your guidance I will try to reach your expectations. I may be able to complete those tasks with the inspiration of a great legacy. Bless me, there is no shortcoming in my work and your expectations do not remain unfulfilled. I am privileged and blessed to be amongst you.

I thank you once again.

Governor's Speech

-Sri Thaawar Chand Gehlot

Warm Greetings to all of you,

At the outset, I would like to offer my humble and respectful Pranams at the lotus feet of His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, the present Pontiff of Suttur Sri Math, and Sri Siddalinga Mahaswamiji of Sri Kshethra Siddaganga Math, Tumkur, my obeisance as a sign of reverence.

On the auspicious occasion of the 107th Birth Anniversary of His Holiness Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji, the 23rd Pontiff of Sri Math, I would like to adulate the incredible tradition and endeavour of all the Sages, Saints, Mystics, Acharyas and Gurus.

Dignitaries who are present on this auspicious occasion: Sri S.T. Somashekarji, District-in-charge Minister, Sri Prathap Simhaji, Member of Parliament, Smt. Sunandaji, the Mayor of Mysore City, Sri S.A. Ramdasji, M.L.A of Mysore and all the reverent Devotees, I extend my warm welcome to you all on this auspicious occasion.

Today, I feel honoured and fortunate to be with your gracious presence to participate in the momentous 107th Birth Anniversary of His Holiness Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji. Suttur Math is a sacred land and a pilgrim centre, which has a history of more than a thousand years. The Pontiffs of the Math have devotedly dedicated themselves to the

spiritual and educational development of people of all religions and faiths. Besides, the contribution being provided by Sri Math for holistic development of the society is indeed, remarkable.

His Holiness Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji was a firm believer in the good of one and all; he was at the helm of affairs of the Sri Math for more than half a century, a period full of events and activities. He sought nothing but welfare of all. His Holiness was a preserver of religion, culture and spirituality. Besides, he was thoughtful and sensitive to an astonishing level. Every step he took was a step forward in search of new areas of service. His Holiness who succeeded the Sri Math with a great legacy did not limit himself only to religious activities but responded to the problems of people such as inequality, poverty and misery in society, and the services of Sri Math were extended to meet the needs of society.

Initially, His Holiness started a hostel at Niranjanalaya (his rented residence) for the needy students in Mysore. Gradually, this Institution transformed into the present JSS Mahavidyapeetha. Swamiji visualised that ignorance was the cause of several problems faced by the masses. Hence, he started JSS Mahavidyapeetha for providing value based education to all.

Speech by Sri Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka, in the function to celebrate the 107th Birth Anniversary of HH Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji, at Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, on 18.8.2022.

Under the aegis of JSS Mahavidyapeetha, His Holiness began Schools and Colleges for Jnana Dasoha (Education), hostels for Anna Dasoha (boarding and Lodging) and hospitals for Arogya Dasoha (health services) that led to all-round social development. His Holiness was very compassionate to support the poor and the downtrodden and provided opportunities to thousands who needed shelter. His single-minded dedication to a task aimed at the welfare of all prompted him to tread the path of sacrifice. In the year 1953, the Maharaja of Mysore Sri Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar conferred on His Holiness the title of 'Rajagurutilaka' as a token of recognition of his immense contribution to society. Posthumously, His Holiness was awarded the Honorary Doctorate by the University of Mysore in the year 1989. Now, I can take pride to admit that at present Suttur Sri Math has opened its door of knowledge to all in India and abroad through more than 300 various educational and other institutions.

In view of providing value based education, Sri Math has been providing free boarding and lodging facilities to thousands of poor and needy students to impart free education. His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, the present 24th Pontiff of Sri Math has been following the traditional footsteps and the guidance of his illustrious predecessor His Holiness Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji and his best efforts are continued in spreading the repute of the Guruparampara of Sri Math on the universal

platform whose succession is a true example of foresightedness and harmony.

Celebrating the Birth Anniversary of the great Saints, Seers, Sages, Acharyas and teachers has been a traditional and cultural part of our country. The Saints, seers and sages have given an immense contribution to the unification, integration and enrichment of our religion and cultural heritage.

The path of Indian culture is vast. To preserve our Indian culture and tradition is relentless since time immemorial. Our culture has always taught us the values of Universal Brotherhood, Peace, National integrity, and also the values of equity and equality. The Saints, Seers, Sages, teachers or Gurus and educators have hoisted the flag of religion, tradition and heritage of the nation as flag bearers of spirituality on the stage of the world. As a result, many nations have been looking towards India for spiritual guidance to attain peace of mind/mental wellness.

On this auspicious occasion, by seeking the Divine Blessings of His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji and Sri Siddalinga Mahaswamiji, I wish all of us should follow the ideals of the great visionary His Holiness Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji and imbibe our eternal values to reach the step of salvation.

*Sarve Janah Sukhino Bhavanthu
Sarve Santu Niramaya*

Spirituality – Unravelling the Mechanics of Creation

-Sri Sadhguru

Sadhguru: Seeking the divine is not about looking up to some heaven “up there.” If you pay attention to anything, if the quality of your attention is keen enough and intense enough, you see the source of creation in anything that you look at because there is not a single atom without the source of creation throbbing in it. If the source of creation was not functioning within you, you couldn't be kept alive.

Physicists tell us that over 99% of an atom is emptiness, and over 99% of the cosmos is emptiness. In Indian culture, the word “Shiva” means “that which is not.” Emptiness is essentially “that which is not.” That which is, is physical. That which is not, is the source of the physical. So, if you pay enough attention to anything, the source of creation – or what you refer to as the Creator – is right there.

One simple thing that I have always done is, I never decide what deserves my attention and what does not. A lot of people around me think I am wasting my time. “When there is so much to do, you are paying attention to all these things?” Yes, if an ant crawls, I pay attention to it. If there is a fly, I pay attention to it. Flies are the most fantastic flying machines. They can fly any which way all day long, just with a little bit of “fuel”. If you are interested in flying, you must pay attention to these more than any airplane.

There are many absolutely miraculous things like this – a leaf, a blade of grass, a grasshopper, just anything. If you pay attention to the smallest thing in the universe, you will find that whatever is the source of creation paid as much attention in creating an ant as in creating you. If the divine wants to pay attention to an ant to that extent – to create such a wonderful, earth-moving machine – I think it deserves your attention too.

It is not about the ant, fly or anything else. It is about the quality of your attention. If you understand this and raise the quality of your attention, suddenly, everything in the universe transforms itself. What is mundane becomes magical simply because the quality of your attention has changed. Nothing around you changed and nothing needs to change. There is only one thing that needs to change to change the quality of your life – yourself. If you pay attention to at least the fundamental faculties of how you see things – with how much intensity and penetration you look at things, and how your mind and body functions – the quality of your life has to change and will change.

Generally, it is understood that if you dress badly, eat badly and live badly, you must be spiritual. This is the reason why no one in their right senses wants to go anywhere near anything that is called spiri-

tual. But a spiritual process is not some fanciful thing about looking for something up there. We can look at the spiritual process as a mechanism – and it is. The entire cosmos is a mechanism if you are willing to pay attention. If you pay enough attention to what you call “myself”, you will know this is a mechanism. On one level, it is just physiological, on another level, it is psychological, on another level, there is emotion, and on another level, there is energy. Beyond that, there is still another dimension of mechanism. If you know how to work this entire mechanism in its full depth and dimension, then you are spiritual for sure.

This is what the science of yoga is about. Yoga is not an exercise form as is commonly misunderstood. Becoming healthy, peaceful and loving are the side-effects of yoga, not the goal. The focus of yoga is to set a dimension which is beyond the physical, alive within you. Once that is alive, the existence slowly opens up to you in a million different ways. Things you never thought existed become a living reality for you simply because a dimension beyond the physical has become alive.

Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the "Padma Vibhushan", India's highest annual civilian award, by the Government of India in 2017, for exceptional and distinguished service.

As soon as one decides to do something good, it should be carried out immediately. Who knows if postponed to tomorrow your good work may not be required.

**- Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra
Mahaswamiji**



In Indian mythology, Shiva represents the ever lasting energy of the cosmos. He is shown as the four handed Lord of the Dance of Creation, surrounded by an aureole of fire emanating from the lotus, emblem of enlightenment. The prostrate form on which he is dancing represents ignorance. The drum in his upper left hand symbolizes the music of Creation, while the tongue of flame in his upper right hand portends the future destruction of the universe. According to Indian myth, the universe goes through cycles of birth and death spanning billions of years- a concept that brings to mind certain aspects of modern cosmology. Everyone knows that the universe is expanding, but its future course is anything but certain. If the average density of matter in the universe is sufficiently high, gravity will eventually overcome expansion and the universe will one day collapse on itself and in an infinitely hot and dense 'Big Crunch'. The positions of Shiva's two front hands symbolize the eternal balance of life and death.

- From the book :
The Changing Universe

A Unique Painting of Basavanna and His Wife from Andhra

-Prof. Srinivas Sistla

In Indian art, a human figure that shows the overall likeness and peculiar facial features of a specific person must have been created from very ancient times. For example, the so-called Priest-King statue (c. 2000-1900 BCE), which was discovered in the Indus Valley site of Mohenjo-daro (now in Pakistan), in my opinion, could be considered as a portrait of a specific person for a multitude of reasons that are inherent in the work.

All such figures of individual persons could be categorized into many types, as for instance the contemporary portraits; i.e., those ones that were produced when a person was alive, and executed by an artist who had seen the person in person earlier or even done while looking at the same individual face-to-face. The other type could be called, so to say, the non-contemporary portraits, which had been done by an artist of later period than the timeframe in which the portrayed person had lived. The second type of works, which are more common in Indian art, could also be called as the imaginary portraits; for, such works are based on the imagination of an artist who had not seen the person, and yet visualized and created a portrait based on certain 'facts' about the person that have been presented in the oral tradition or

written extual sources.

Valmiki Maharishi, the composer of the *Ramayana*, for example, is widely known as the *Adi-kavi* (first poet) of Sanskrit literature. But, no contemporary portrait of him is known to have been made by any artist of his time; and thus, all works of art that portray Valmiki as the renowned *Maharishi* are imaginary ones of much later period. Same is the case with regard to the portraits of many other authors of ancient India, including the well-known playwright, Kalidasa, just to mention one poet here. Same is also the case with many well reputed kings of ancient India, like say for instance, Asoka (r. c. 268-232 BCE) of the Maurya Empire (c. 322-184 BCE). In Mauryan art, to the best of my knowledge, no contemporary portrait of Asoka had been produced. However, in the Buddhist Kanaganahalli (Sannati) Stupa in Kalaburagi district, Karnataka, a sculptural panel has been unearthed in c. 1986 that shows the figure of Asoka in the company of his consort and others. But, the stupa itself dates back only to the 1st century BCE, and remained active till the 3rd century CE. Thus, the figure of Asoka in the relief panel was not contemporary to the king, and hence, it is an imaginary portrait of later period. The panel bears a nametag that

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reads “*raayo-asoko*” in the Brahmi script, which had aided in identifying the portrait as that of King Asoka. The nametag however only mentions the king by name, but not anyone else in the panel; and for the same reason, the proper identification of other figures in the panel could only be speculated endlessly, but cannot be determined decisively. In the case of both the contemporary and non-contemporary portraits, a nametag affixed to the work would only aid in identifying the portrait; without the same it would be nearly impossible to identify the portrayed person by name.

In the 19th century, a few ancient stone statues from Patna (Bihar) and Mathura (Uttar Pradesh), which bear nametags, had been discussed intensely by two groups of scholars, from Calcutta to London, one arguing that the works represent individual portraits, and the other that they show the *Yakshas* (demigods). The former group had identified the portraits as that of Udayin and Kunika of the Haryanka line (c. 544-413 BCE) and Nandivardhana of the Shaishunaga dynasty (c. 413-345 BCE).

The Nanaghat cave (Pune district, Maharashtra) contains eight figures with nametags and also an important Satavahana inscription (1st century BCE). Though the life-size bas-reliefs were obliterated except for the feet, the labels identify seven portraits viz. Raya Simuka, the founder of the dynasty, Siri Satakarni, the next king in the line, his widow named Naganika, who was the patron of the monument and the edict, her father Tranakaya, and three princes, Kumara-Bhaya..., Haksiri and Satavahana.

In the Buddhist Stupa at Amaravati, the capital of the newly formed Andhra Pradesh, a tall sculpture of a noble devotee

with his hands joined in salutation at his chest had been discovered. The work bears a damaged inscription, which mentions “*goutami*”. In ‘*Portrait Sculptures in South India*’ (1931), TG Aravamuthan had proposed that the sculpture represents the portrait of Gautami-putra Sri Satakarni I (r. 60-85 CE), and that it was donated to the stupa by his mother, Gautami.

Many edifices of the Vijayanagara period (1336-1565), in and around Hampi and elsewhere, contain several reliefs, which show individual kings and other nobles; but, as many bear no nametags, it is not possible to identify them by name. One of the typical features of the Vijayanagara portrait figures is that both male and female stand as devotees with his/her hands joined in salutation (*amjali-mudra*), somewhat like the Amaravati portrait sculpture, which I have mentioned earlier. Though the dress varies depending on the gender and rank, kings and other officials are shown wearing a long and conical cap (known in Telugu as the *kullai*). But, after the downfall of Vijayanagara in 1565, wearing such a cap seems to have become out-of-fashion, so to say, though holding hands together in adoration had continued later on also.

In such an art historical backdrop of portraits of ancient Indian kings, poets and others, I would like to discuss henceforth about a painting that shows Basavanna and his wife. In 1757-58, two painters by name Nandigam Nagesam and Kamaroutu Venkatesam had produced in Rajamahendravaram of Andhra Pradesh two sets of paintings, which are now in the collection of a museum in Hamburg, Germany. One set with 33 paintings covers various images of Hindu divinities, a few ancient holy places along with the sacred

images of the prominent shrines therein, and also a few portraits and so on; and, the other set of 53 paintings cover the *Ramayana*. One by name Kolapelli Buchenna had written on the obverse of each painting a commentary in simple Telugu prose, which describes the content of the painting. The same Telugu text had also been translated into Persian by an anonymous writer. One painting of the first set (folio no. 16) shows Basavanna and his wife standing on either side of the seated image of Ardhanariswara.

The legend of Basavanna (1134-1196) has been well researched and documented by many scholars in Kannada, Telugu and English; and so, I only mention a few aspects. Basavanna was born in Bagevadi (Vijayapura district, Karnataka) and became an ardent devotee of Sangameswara of Kudala (Bagalkote district). He became the treasurer/minister of King Bijjala II (r. 1130-1167) of the Kalachuri dynasty of Kalyana (Basava Kalyan, Bidar district). Basavanna had played a leading role in religious reform and brought forth drastic social changes through his *Vachanas* and deeds. But, there were revolts against the new system introduced by him, and eventually Bijjala was killed. Later, Basavanna had shifted to Kudala, where he passed away.

Earliest known hagiographical account on Basavanna in Kannada was written by poet Harihara (late 12th century) in the *Basava-raja-deva Ragale*, which has only survived partly. Palkuriki Somanatha (13th century or earlier) had written an extensive poem in the *Dwipada* (couplets) metre in Telugu entitled *Basava Puranam*, which narrates the legendary life of Basavanna and many others devotees of Siva. The same poem was translated into Kannada

by Bhima Kavi (fl. 1369), and Pidaparti Somanatha (15th century) had rendered the original *Dwipada* of Palkuriki into a *Chempu Kaavya* (a mixture of prose and verse) in Telugu. Palkuriki had also composed many short poems on Basavanna in Telugu, Kannada and Sanskrit.

Palkuriki had also written another encyclopedic poem in Telugu, *Paditaradhya Charitra*, which narrates the legendary life of Mallikarjuna Panditaradhya (c. 1140-1197) of Draksharamam (about 50 kilometres from Rajamahendravaram), who wrote several poems in Telugu, though the *Siva Tatva Saaramu* alone has survived. According to Palkuriki, Paditaradhya had come to know about the greatness of Basavanna, and decided to meet him in person. But enroute to Kalyana, Panditaradhya came to know about the demise of Basavanna, and terminated his journey. This episode clearly suggests that Basavanna came to be known in Andhra, especially in the Rajamahendravaram region, during his own life time.

Further, portrait sculptures and paintings of Basavanna are very common in Karnataka and also in parts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. One kind of work shows him riding a horse, like a royal person, and wearing a prominent crown, suitable attire, and his right hand in the *Abhaya Mudra* (assurance), which relate to his role as the treasurer or minister and as the protector of his followers. Another type of work portrays him as a poet/saint and shows him seated on a dais, wearing simple garments, holding a palm-leaf manuscript in his left hand, and the right in the *Abhaya Muddra*. These two types of works, however, are of very recent origin and hence come under the category of the non-contemporary/imaginary portraits. I have

seen a few 19th century Mysore paintings, which show many Veerasaiva poet-saints including Basavanna, which to the best of my knowledge have not been studied from art historical point of view so far.

Bagevadi, Kalyanaand Kudala, which are associated with the life of Basavanna, are located not too far from Bijapur (Vijayapura), Gulbarga (Kalaburagi), Shorapur (Surapura), Bidar, Golkonda/ Hyderabad etc., where miniature painting had been patronized from the mid- 16th century onwards. But to the best of my knowledge, no painting of Basavanna from any of these centres has been brought to light by art historians so far.

In this context, the above mentioned painting done by Nandigam Nagesam and Kamaroutu Venkatesam in 1757-58 at Rajamahendravaram that shows a man and a woman adoring Ardhanariswara is note worthy. Part of the relevant commentary in Telugu by Kolapalli Buchenna in my translation goes as follows: "Standing on either side of Ardhanariswara are Basavanna and his wife. Basavanna is holding a plate of flowers in one hand and a garland of flowers in the other. On the other side, his wife is holding a plate of fruits in one hand and occulting a palm-leaf fan in the other. "Though the commentator had not described further, the painting shows Basavanna wearing the *Rudraksha* chains around his neck and both the wrists, and also the sacred marks on his forehead, chest and arms that are revered high in Veerasaivism.

Harihara mentions Gangadevi and Mayidevi as the wives of Basavanna; whereas, Palkuriki only named Gangamba. The two Andhra painters had also shown one wife only, though the commentator had not mentioned her name. Incidentally, all

textual sources in Kannada and Telugu say that Basavanna was an ardent devotee of Sangameswara, and his *Vachanas* contain "*Kudala Sangama-deva*" as the *Makuta* (refrain). At Kudala, River Malaprabha joins River Krishna, and hence Siva of the palace is known as the Sangama-deva (Lord of confluence). Interestingly, Nandigam Nagesam and Kamarouthu Venkatesam had shown the couple worshipping Ardhanariswara, a form that symbolizes the union (*sangama*) of the divine Siva and Parvati. The painters seem to have taken the form of Ardhanariswara to suggest Sangameswara. Therefore, in my opinion, the male figure in the painting, Basavanna, surely represent none other than the one who had written *Vachanas* in Kannada, and his wife is no one else but Gangamba, who alone is known to the Telugus as the wife of Basavanna through the poems of Palkuriki and others in Telugu.

Though the painting done by Nandigam Nagesam and Kamaroutu Venkatesam only shows the non-contemporary/ imaginary portraits of Basavanna and his wife, it remains unique; for, to the best of my knowledge, this is the earliest known portrait of the couple, at least in Andhra, if not elsewhere as well.

When oil and wick touch light
Lo, there is light! So, with the touch
Of Linga, through devotion and true love,
The devotee's body, mind and senses all
Are turned to Linga! I call him Maheshwara
Who free from doting, touches Linga
And touches nothing else, look you,
Mahalingaguru Shivasiddheshwara Lord!

- Sri Siddhalinga Yathi
(Tr. Prof. Armando Menezes)

Spirituality Through Symbolism: the Vaks of Laleshwari

-Dr. Varada M. Nikalje

Introduction

All human societies use language; to express emotions, to communicate orally and/or in written form, and to pass on knowledge to contemporaries and future generations. Further, all human societies also have a concept of the Supreme: in a myriad ways of ritual, worship, customs and traditions. In most cultures, the traditional concept of God is that He is infinite, omnipresent and incorporeal. This being the case, any spiritual experience, or interaction with the Supreme, is difficult to explain or elaborate.

If one accepts the above two propositions, it follows that, "Because God is generally conceived as incorporeal, infinite, and timeless, ordinary language cannot always apply to that entity" (Weed, 2007). Hence, spiritual experiences employ an entirely different kind of language, one that relies heavily on symbolism.

Symbolism

Langdon Brown Gilkey, the well-known theologian, has identified two characteristic features of religious symbolism which distinguish it from other language use. Firstly, religious symbolism has a double focus, referring both to something empirical and to something transcendent; Gilkey argued that the empirical manifestation points towards the transcendent being.

Secondly, he believed that religious symbolism concerns fundamental questions of life, involving issues important to an individual or community.

Such religious symbolism is best exemplified in the devotional utterances of Laleshwari, (1320–1392), a woman mystic-poet. She developed a style of mystic poetry called *Vaks*, (meaning "speech", derived from the Sanskrit *vaak*). Referred to as Laleshwari by Hindus, and Lal Ded or Lalla Arifa by Muslims, her two hundred *vaks* are some of the oldest examples of Kashmiri literature.

Laleshwari: woman mystic-poet

Laleshwari was born in Pandrethan (ancient Puranadhisthana) near Srinagar in a Kashmiri Pandit family. Laleshwari was married at the tender age of twelve, but her marriage was unhappy. Tragically, she was constantly ill-treated by her husband and her mother-in-law, and made to do back-breaking work. Every evening she was found seated outside the house to be fed. Her mother-in-law would place a clay pot, which apparently had rice brimming over, and order her to eat. Passers-by would assume that Laleshwari was getting enough food. Little did they know that the mother-in-law had placed stones and pebbles in the pot, with only a thin layer of rice above. After years of such harassment, Laleshwari left home at twenty-four to take

sanyas (renunciation) and become a disciple of the Shaivite guru Siddha Srikantha (SedBayu).

Her sayings have permeated the life of Kashmiris and are often quoted even in daily conversation, as for example:

“Ayes wate ta gayest wate

This is the first line of one of her famous poems. Translated, the poem reads as follows.

*‘I came by a way (I was born) *
I also went by a way (I died)
I looked in my pocket,
But not a cowry came to hand.
What shall I give for crossing the ferry?’

This has reference to the Kashmiri Hindu belief that, after death, the spirit has to cross the river Voitara to reach the other world. However the waters are stormy due to the powers called preta, yamadut etc. One of the death ceremonies is that a coin is placed in the mouth of the corpse, to pay the ferry. Some families gift a tiny boat made of silver or copper, with ghee and rice in it to appease the opposing powers and permit the spirit to reach the other side.

Themes

The constantly recurring theme of Lalleshwai’s *vaks* is longing for God, and the ultimate bliss she finds in the deity who resides in the soul.

I have worn out my palate and tongue
reading the holy books,
But I have not learnt the practices that
would please my Lord.
I have worn thin my finger and thumb
telling the rosary beads,
But I have not been able to dispel duality
from my mind.

In contrast with the inner deity lie all

external forms of organised religion, which she terms them ‘parasitic’. She expresses her disdain for the ‘arid scholarship’ that has choked the spiritual quest, as for example:

‘Temple and image,
The two you have fashioned,
Are no better than stone.’

At the same time, Lalla asserts the primacy of the guru – regarded as an embodiment of the Divine – as a guide navigating the aspirant through the maze of worldly life towards the central and transfiguring experience of enlightenment. She sings:

Who trusts his Master’s word
and controls the mind-horse
with the reins of wisdom,
he shall not die, he shall not be killed.

In another *vak*, she uses seemingly simple numerals, which scholars have later interpreted and analysed:

Ah me! the Five (Bhuta-s) , the ten (Indriya-s) ,

And the Eleventh, (their lord the mind),
scraped this pot and went away.

Had all together pulled on the rope,
why should the Eleventh have lost the cow?
(Why should the soul have gone astray?)

Everyday examples

The presence and power of figurative language contributes to the effectiveness of her *vaks* to bring listeners into the sacred mindscape of spirituality, even in the midst of routine activities. Her symbols are taken from her surroundings. Apparently simple, they can be cryptic; yet the candour of her poems enables a deep impact.

*I trapped my breath in the bellows of my throat;
a lamp blazed up inside, showed me who I really was.
I crossed the darkness holding fast to that lamp,
scattering its light-seeds around me as I went.*

In her *vaks*, Laleshwari delves into her own experience to transmit the teachings. Her poems aim to renew the immediacy of everyday life by placing it in the context of eternity, to redeem the self from the cocoon of the ego to release it towards the Divine.

*The Lord has spread the subtle net of Himself across the world.
See how He gets under your skin, inside your bones.
If you can't see Him while you're alive, don't expect a special vision once you're dead.*

Lal Ded's *vaks* are drawn from influences and languages that co-existed in the Indian sub-continent in her time, reflecting Sanskritic, Islamic, Sufi, and Sikh cultures.

“Lalla’s poems shimmer with their author’s experience of being a yogini, trained in the demanding spiritual disciplines and devotional practices of Kashmir Saivite mysticism. Since this school is itself the confluential outcome of an engagement with several philosophical traditions, she was receptive to the images and ideas of those other traditions.” (Hoskote, 2011)

*Whatever work I did became worship of the Lord;
Whatever word I uttered became a prayer;
Whatever this body of mine experienced became the sadhana of SaivaTantra
illumining my path to Parmasiva.*

This concept is in tandem with Hindu philosophy, in which religion is significant

because it offers a particular way of life, rather than confirming the existence of God.

Clarity of Language

Laleshwari’s *vaks* found resonance among the common people because she preferred to use Kashmiri, which had begun to emerge as a distinct language from Apabhramsa-prakrit, spoken in North India. Furthermore, the language is simple, the thoughts are direct. The sentences are clear and unambiguous, as in the following *vak*.

*Akuiomkar yes nabi dare,
Kumbaibrahmandas sum gare.
Akhsuimanthartsyataskare,
Tassasmantharkyahkare.*

“He who meditates on the single syllable Om and connects the lower most aspect of his self with the upper most aspect, remembering all the time this one sacred syllable, for him all other syllables are meaningless.”

Laleshwari reiterates that the ultimate bliss is when one realizes that that the world is the playful expression of the Divine. The Divine and the self are one. This leads her to rejoice in the collapse of such restrictive identities as ‘I’ and ‘You’ when confronted with the presence of the Divine, as in:

*Wrapped up in Yourself, You hid from me.
All day I looked for You and when I found
You hiding inside me,
I ran wild, playing now me, now You.*

Symbolism straddles across two exclusive, almost conflicting ideas.

Although this has potential for mental confusion, or error, the language used by Laleshwari is so clear that it enables readers and listeners not only to construct connections between them but also blend them to create emergent meaning.

Intellectual Dimensions of Veerashaiva Movement: Reading Two Vachanas

-Prof. N S Gundur

I would like to present some of my reflections on the intellectual depth of the 12th century Veerashaiva Movement. Several scholarly studies have explored its intellectual dimensions, but the contemporary popular imaginaries perceive it primarily as a social revolution. We are all quite familiar with the social history of the stirring, and how it critiqued the Vaidik tradition and brought into being an alternative way of life. But the point I would like to make is that the social rebellion of the Veerashaiva Movement would not have been possible without the intellectual depth. However, I am not going to explore here the connection between social rebellion and its intellectual dimension. On the other hand, I would like to show how the Veerashaiva movement was not just a missionary practice, but a dialogic tradition that produced its own structure of argumentation. In this connection, I would like to read two vachanas, one by Basavanna and another by Allamaprabhu.

As part of the dialogic tradition of the Veerashaiva movement, vachanas can be read as texts of dialogism. They address certain practices, beliefs and intellectual traditions, and take issue with them. For example, in the following vachana, Basavanna is responding to the temple cul-

ture and puts forth an alternative temple of the body:

*The rich
will make temples for Siva.
What shall I,
a poor man,
do?
My legs are pillars,
the body the shrine,
the head a cupola
of gold.
Listen, O Lord of the meeting rivers,
things standing shall fall,
but the moving ever shall stay.*

Though this vachana critiques the static temple (stavara), it doesn't entirely give up the idea of the temple. At one level, it celebrates the body, the living body, and at another level, it takes the body as a metaphor. Either way, the human body is at the centre. In the Bhakti tradition also the body plays an important role. Thus, this vachana is in conversation with the practice of institutionalization (sthavara), and more importantly, it draws our attention to the body while addressing the practice of the temple. Then, the following vachana of Allama can be read as a response to Basavanna's take on the body. Here, I am undertaking a practical criticism of these two vachanas, but I

do not have historical sources to establish my argument (that Allama is responding to Basavanna) outside these two vachanas. Therefore, my reflections may be read as tentative and hypothetical. Let us look at Allama's vachana:

*Look here.
the legs are two wheels;
the body is a wagon
full of things.
Five men drive
the wagon and one man is not
like another.
Unless you ride it
in full knowledge of its ways
the axle
will break.
O Lord of Caves.*

If Basavanna critiques the static temple culture, drawing our attention to the body, Allama sheds light on the fragility of our body. According to Allama, it seems, we cannot take the body for granted. In a way, it is an extension of Basavanna's adoration on the body. 'If we don't understand the ways of the body, its axle will break,' says Allama. In Basavanna, the body not only acts as a metaphor but also as a contrasting unit in relation to the temple. In Allama, it is an object of attention and the cart is a metaphor. But the cart and the body are not contrasted. As D R Nagaraj emphasises in his *Allama Prabhu Mattu Shaiva Pratibha* (2006), Allama not only had conversations within

the Veerashaiva tradition but also with the pan-Indian Kashmiri Shaiva philosophy, especially the *rasa* theory of Abhinavagupta. Further, Allama's argument with Gorakhanath is part of folklore. If the legends portray how Allama challenged Gorakanath's vajra-kaya (diamond body), several of his vachanas critique the body and Sringara rasa. Likewise, Allama challenges the human language. When other vachanakaras repose complete faith in the effectiveness of language, Allama reveals the limits of language.

Further, O.L. Nagabhushana Swamy's practical criticism of vachanas demonstrates how several vachanas enter into a dialogue with each other. For example, In his *Vachana Vichara*, he reads one of Jedara Dasimaiah's vachanas as a response to Basavanna's vachanas (n.d. 45). Also in his *Indina Hejje* (1997), Nagabhushana Swamy demonstrates a series of dialogues that take place between Allama and Basavanna. These two books of Swamy reveal the intellectual dimension of vachana discourse.

Finally, the point is not about the correctness of these vachanakaras. What we need to remember is that vachana tradition was a dialogic tradition, and there were intellectual exchanges across different traditions and also within the Veerashaiva tradition. It is this enduring intellectual depth we moderns need to dare.

If you are in the luckiest 1% of humanity you owe it to the rest of humanity to think about the other 99%.

- Warren Buffet

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or for some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

- Barack Obama

Basavanna and Ramalingam

-Smt. V. Lakshmi Sudarshan

Literatures of various forms in various languages have been the medium that has continuously changed the human societies in all parts of the world in terms of either religious thinking resulting in spiritual awakening or of social values or of political form. The scientific temper, humanistic spirit and secular views of life is uprooting the world over the customs of long centuries. "The void created by abandoned superstitions and uprooted beliefs have always called for a spiritual filling"¹ Thinkers in different religions with their religious experience came out with new avenues of spiritual awakening. Spiritual achievements are found rooted in religious experience of various thinkers from time to time.

Thoughts and principles of shaivism found in different forms of literature in different languages are continuously transforming the masses in India for the past two thousand years.

Kannada speaking people and Tamil speaking people are neighbours geographically. Hence they have influenced each other in various fields, one of which is literature. Literatures on different forms of Shaivism have had notable influence on each other between 12th to 18th century.

Shaivism religion in Tamil speaking region has produced a number of great

people who pronounced their theory all over India through various forms of literature. "Tirumandiram" written by Tirumular is considered as authority on Shaivism. Tirumular is one of the sixty-three Nayanmars supposed to have lived between the period 4th century to 11th century. Devotional songs composed by Nayanmars found wide publicity due to the patronage of kings and saints.

The Shaivism found to be predominant in Kannada speaking regions during 12th century is known as Veerashaivism. Veerashaivism is found to have drawn quite some essence from the poems of Nayanmars of Tamil literature. A literary form in Kannada which came to be known as Vachana played a key role in taking Veerashaivism to the masses in Kannada speaking region. The Social values advocated in these vachanas made a great social impact, and resulted in a revolution during the 12th century. Pilot of this social revolution was Sharana Basavanna who has contributed more than 2000 vachanas.

In 18th century Saint Ramalingam of Tamilnadu composed poems which were centered on a set of principles that he advocated for realization of God. His compositions came to be known as Thiruvarutpa consisting of nearly 5000 poems in six parts that are called a

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Thirumurai. The set of principles and thoughts expressed in these poems are found to have certain resemblances with the principles and thoughts expressed in the vachana literature. Thiruvarutpa made a great Social impact during 18th century on Tamil speaking people, which is well evident even today.

The Vachanas of Basavanna during 12th century, in Karnataka region and Thiruvarutpa of Ramalingam during 18th century in Tamilnadu region have made a great social impact. In this context the similarities that exist in the sayings of Basavanna and Ramalingam compel us to believe that the latter was influenced by the former, a hypothesis that needs to be researched.

The three core dimensions of preachings of a saint are, "*the Creed of philosophy*", "*the code of conduct*" and "*the cult of worship*" These three dimensions are found to a complete extent in the Vachanas of Basavanna and also Thiruvarutpa of Ramalingam, and have influenced "common mass" to a great extent. Hence Vachanas and Thiruvarutpa can be considered as *the torches of spiritual life*.

The above mentioned dimensions of spiritual life are found implicit in the Vachanas of Basavanna and Tiruvarutpa of Ramalingam.

(i) The Creed Of Philosophy

The "God", the "Soul" and the "World" are the three truths of philosophy of ones religious life. Basavanna's entire philosophy may be summed up in three propositions viz, God is real, the World is a challenge and the goal of life is to attune oneself (soul) to living in communion with the divine being(God) and making life harmonious (Linganga samarasya).

Basavanna's philosophy is a synthesis of the life of contemplation and the life of

action. His is not a philosophy of complete withdrawal from the world of men and thus seeking one's own salvation. His is not a philosophy of mere hectic activity in life. His philosophy strikes a balance between "Pravrutti" (the participation in the worldly work) and "Nivrutti" (withdrawal from ones worldly work).

Ramalingam's philosophy is a synthesis of life of compassion and life of devotion. Ramalingam also doesn't advocate withdrawal from the world of men to seek one's own salvation.

The Philosophy of Basavanna and of Ramalingam are in perfect consonance with the fundamental ethical teachings of all the great prophets of the world.

(ii) The Code Of Conduct

The code of conduct of an individuals religious life constitutes a set of "values" that they uphold in life. In general both Basavanna and Ramalingam have advocated many values and have lived upto the same in their lifetime. Few among those values are, Compassion, Caste equality and Disbelief in superstition etc. Basavanna says,

By his preaching as well as actions, he showed that the good of the society and the salvation of man lay in the practice of compassion. The following Vachana of Basavanna considered compassion as the root of all religious faith.

*"What sort of religion can it be
without compassion?
Compassion must be
Towards all living things;
Compassion is the root
Of all religious faith:
Lord Kudala Sangama does not care
For what is not like this".3.*

Ramalingam also expresses a similar thought in the following poem wherein he prays God to make him love all the living

beings in this world.

*Compassion is the good path
remaining all other paths are bad
people with compassion
belong to "sanmargam" (Good path)*

Basava mounted the rostrum of the abolition of caste and ceremonies and preached that all men and women by birth are equal, that one sect was as important as another.

Basavanna sketched and boldly tried to work out a large and comprehensive programme of social reform with the elevation and independence of womanhood as its guiding point. He says,

*Was not Vyasa, a fisherwoman's son?
And Markandeya of an outcaste?
And Mandodari, begotten of a frog?
Oh! vain then to caste cling
As no one can tell
How your origins spring!
Your own Agastya was a fowler,
Durvasa, a cobbler
And Kasyapa, a blacksmith!*

In the same way Ramalingam favoured to abolish the castes and casteism in the society. In his "sanmarga sabhe" (A meeting for good path) all people participated irrespective of caste religion and gender. He says,

*Caste and religion are false,
made me realize at last
the enlightened flame!*
*also he said,
I avoided caste and religion.
removed the garbage of shastaras,
attained the stage of justice, truth, eternal
life and happiness.*

According to Basava the truly well born are those who wish well of all beings. Sarvodaya is the key note of his life. So he tries to emphasize

*do not kill,
do not steal,
do not tell a lie*

In the same way Ramalingam has also said,

*do not kill,
that is the way of guru,
many times Shiva told me this
also he said,
whenever cruel people started killing other life
I struck myself with fear....*

It is interesting to note that both Basavanna and Ramalingam have denied the cult of worship advocated by Vedas and Agamas.

Basavanna was not accepting the principles of Vedas and Agamas he preached that we could not see God in them so he tells,

*"Is shastra great? It tells only about Karma
Is Vedas great? It tells about the sacrifices of
animals
you are not in any of these, you will be seen
in three Dasohas only
Kudalasangama deva".
Ramalingam says as follows,
ways of Vedas, ways of Agamas, Puranas,
and epics;
wordings all betraying people that is true.*

*Is the master of the house gone out,
Or is he in?
Upon the threshold grasses sprout;
The house is just a bowl of dust;
Is the master of the house gone out,
Or is he in?
When falsehood does infect your flesh
And your heart is a sensuous mesh
The master of the house cannot be in
Kudala Sangama Lord!*

**- Sri Basaveshwara
(Tr. Prof. Armando Menezes)**

The Guru

-Sri R.M. Prabhulinga Shastry

*To continue to be existing
Forevermore as Zero
There in the Zero
which none could know and learn,
But then Guru, the preceptor,
has mastered, drawn and bestowed
it on the palm.*

- Akka Mahadevi

The land, which is from time immemorial, being recognised, addressed and honoured as Bharatakhanda or Bharatavarsha would be land of Sanatana the literal meaning of which is Beginningless to Endlessness in terms of Time which is illusioned as elapsing and of Space which is illusioned as pervaded in all ten sides.

That, which would be existing from beginningless to endless in terms of Time and Space, would only be the Linga which would be defined as the Linga wherein the entire creation would be annihilated and again created.

*" Leeyate gamyate yatreyena sarvam
characharam
Tadetallinga mityuktam Linga tattwa
parayanai"*

Hence, indubitably it is clear that the Linga is nither created nor annihilated, so, Linga is neither created nor annihilated, it is *Sanatana*.

While the Creation would be under op-

eration, it could be perceptible that there are Time, Matter and Energy in Existence; It could be understood that the Time can be reckoned but couldn't be counted or measured with any units so that Time is an illusion beyond doubt.

It could be understood that the Matter is but Atoms which can not be destructed but could be disintegrated and ultimately transformed into Energy so that the Matter is transitory.

It could be understood that the Energy is neither Time nor Matter even neither illusory nor transitory nor even permanent though it is indestructible. In the end i.e. on the occurrence of the annihilation it would have lost its instinctiveness i.e. to be used, exerted or done by itself or others so that Energy would have lost its own separate identity .

All these i.e. 1) not to be illusioned, 2) to be transformed into Energy and 3) lost of separate identity would be called as Annihilation. This Annihilation would be done there in Linga by which which the entire creation would be redone again.

Hence, it could be understood that there would be Linga only which Linga wouldn't be the Thing or the Being therein only Linga would be there. It must be clearly understood that other than Linga no Thing or no

Being would be there but Linga alone exists. Therefore Linga could not even be supposed as Number it means it is absolutely wrong to suppose or endorse that One Linga would be there or Linga would be one. Hence, Linga can be assumed as "Zero". What would be 'Zero'?

*"I" would forever be 'Zero'
Which could be honoured as Nothing
Which could never be treated as Thing
Which can be understood as Matter
Which could be accepted for the Subject
Which would be studied as Topic
Which could be discussed as Theme
Which could be brought together as Question
Which could arise as Problem
Which could be treated as Solution
Which could be illustrated as Salvation
Which could be marked as 'Zero'*

In the above Vachana, Akka Mahadevi preaches and endorses that the Zero would only exist forever-more. According to her it could be understood that one who would master the Zero (i.e.Linga) would only be the Guru who draws it (the Linga) and bestows it (in the form of Ishtalinga) on the palm of aspirant (devotee) who intends to know and learn what it is (i.e. the Linga). This aspirant or devotee who can be male or female or any human being pertaining to any clan, caste, creed,colour, religion etc, would have to achieve the stage to be continued to be existing forevermore as Zero wherein the entire Creation comes into Existence, to be under operation and gets Annihilated.

In other words Linga is that in which the entire movable and immovable Cosmos gets into annihilation and comes into existence, would be the Linga.

So, it could be envisioned that Linga would be the Zero which is Sanatana.

In this context the words "Param Pavitr

Amalam Lingam Brahman Sanatanam '(Siddhanta Shikhamani) is to be recollected meaning that Lingam i.e. the Linga would be 1. Pavitra, 2. Amalam, 3. Brahman and 4. Sanatanam. These concepts could be indubitably defined as

1) Pavitra i.e. Linga would never be affected by all the senses.

2) Amalam i.e. Linga would never be envired by all three Malas, those are Anava, Karmika and Maya.

3) Brahman i.e Linga would be addressed as Brahman which isn't born and which never dies and which have neither parents nor necessities of hunger, thirst etc.

4) Sanatanam means that is in existence from beginningless to endlessness in terms of Time and Pervasion.

This Linga, which is Param, Pavitra, Amalam, Brahman and Sanatanam the Zero regarded as "I" i.e. Parabrahman in Sanskrit.

So, Akka Mahadevi correctly and accurately defines that one, who could master Linga i.e. Zero could only be the Guru. In this regard it must be recollected that

*"Sachchidaananda nijaakaaram Lingam
yad Brahmasanjnitam
Tadasi twamupaaswaatastadevaahamiti
dhruvam
vedhaakhyaayaa deekhayaiavam
shishyamaadishya deshikaha"*

(Siddhanta Shikhamani 1-108)

Means "Ishtalinga is nothing but self-form of the Atman (i.e. The thing which really exists forever) which lasts as Satt(the Truth), Chit (the Consious) and Anand (the Bliss) forever. It is called Brahman, this is you (who is going to be initiated with Linga Deeksha by the Guru only. Do continue adoring like this. Here, "I" means Brahman

i.e. the Linga

Thus the term Guru would be honoured, adored, worshipped and venerated only by the Sanatanas, who are literally speaking Lingadhari.

The Tradition, Custom and Practice which would be practised by the Ishtalingadhari, that Tradition, Culture, Custom and Practice are only of Sanatana because except Linga no other Thing or no other Being is there in existence from beginninglessness to endlessness. The Guru, who would himself be lingadhari, who alone would initiate Linga Deeksha i.e. bestowing Ishtalinga upon Bhakta.

Unless faith in the Supreme Reality takes root in the youth their learning and riches will taste insipid.

**- Dr. Sri Shivarathri
Rajendra Mahaswamiji**

The Guru is the channel or the representative or manifestation of the Divine, according to the measure of his personality or his attainment; but whatever he is, it is to the Divine that one opens in opening to him; and if something is determined by the power of the channel more is determined by the inherent and intrinsic attitude of the receiving consciousness, an element that comes out in the surface mind as simple trust or direct unconditional self-giving, and once that is there, the essential things can be gained even from one who seems to others than the disciple an inferior spiritual source, and the rest will grow up in the sadhak of itself by the Grace of the Divine, even if the human being in the Guru cannot give it.

Sri Aurobindo



The PROLOGUE.

1. I worship Siva, the abode of eternal knowledge, the storehouse of supreme felicity; by whom the earth and the rest were produced, in *him* only has this all a maker.
2. Daily I follow my Guru Sarvajna-Vishnu, who knows all the Agamas, the son of Sarangapani, who has gone to the further shore of the seas of all the systems, and has contented the hearts of all mankind by the proper meaning of the term Soul.
3. The synopsis of all the systems is made by the venerable Madhava, mighty in power, the Kaustubha-jewel of the milk-ocean of the fortunate Sayana.
4. Having thoroughly searched the Sastras of former teachers, very hard to be crossed, the fortunate Sayana-Madhava the lord has expounded them for the delight of the good. Let the virtuous listen with a mind from which all envy has been far banished; who finds not delight in a garland strung of various flowers?

From the book:
The Sarvadarshana Sangraha

Bertrand Russell: the Mathematician turned Philosopher

- Prof. K.B. Prabhu Prasad

Who could that be?!

It is none other than Bertrand Russell whose major subject in the University was Mathematics. He published his work, *Principles of Mathematics* in 1903. Mathematics is called Queen of Sciences as Logic is of Philosophy. The word Philosophy is a combination of Philo and Sophia, which means Love of Knowledge which includes all the branches of Sciences and Humanities.

Philosophy breaks no bread, so goes a saying. It only means study of Philosophy or even a Master's degree in it does not fetch a highly paid job. It is true if education is for livelihood. Philosophy is for Life. Thinking, that too, logical thinking, is essential for both Sciences and Humanities. Russell wrote "Let the people Think", which goes well with a Greek statement "I think so I am", Man is a rational animal, and it means despite all his animal qualities, man is rational. The history of mankind is development on this rationality.

Philosophy and sciences, both search for Truth. Science finds facts and laws of nature that govern flora and fauna. Philosophy is internal or spiritual in search and discovers the goal of life, and the meaning of the human soul.

Bertrand Russell was born in Trilek of England in 1872 and lived upto 1970. His

early education was at home by private teachers. He learnt French and German apart from English his mother tongue.

In 1890 he joined Trinity College, Cambridge and got his Master's Degree. He Was appointed a fellow. Later he served Oxford, and Harvard Universities as philosophy Professor.

When the First World War broke out, he wrote a series of articles against war and bloodshed. Hence was imprisoned and stayed in the prison for 4 months. After he was released he went to China and served as Professor of Philosophy in Peking (Beijing). He was awarded Nobel Prize for Literature.

During the Second World War he led a movement against the use of Nuclear bomb and again he was put in prison. He was a widely read Scholar and one of the greatest Scholars of 20th Century. He boldly expressed his views in a broad perspective of logic in his works such as *Analysis of Mind*, *the ABC of Atoms*, *The ABC of Relativity*, *Marriage and Morals*, *The Conquest of Happiness*, *Education and the Social Order* *Authority and the Individual*, *New Hopes for a changing world*, *the Impact of Science on Society* were his major works.

Writing about the value of Philosophy and the purpose of its study, Russell says

that such a question arises because man is often is utilitarian, which is the result of modern technology which led to Industrial Revolution. The making of machines has led to large scale production of many amenities which have made even a common man to enjoy the fruits of it. Electricity for example as energy saves a lot of human and animal labour resulting in speedy transport, running of fans for cool air, sewing machines, and bicycles, and a host of other articles of daily use.

The scope of Philosophy is now narrowed down. As soon as definite knowledge concerning any subject becomes a reality this subject ceases to be called Philosophy and becomes a separate science, for eg: the study of stars and planets which now ' belongs to astronomy was once included in philosophy.

Similarly the study of mind, a part of philosophy has now been an independent

subject called Psychology. The good or bad behavior of an individual resulting in happiness or suffering of the members of a society in the context of their social welfare subsumes moral values which philosophy has termed as ethics.

Are 'good' and 'evil' of importance to the universe or only to man? The question remains a question. Such questions are asked philosophy and variously answered by various philosophers.

The value of philosophy is to be sought largely in its very uncertainty. All acquisition of knowledge is an enlargement of the Self. The enlargement of the Self is not obtained, when the Self is taken as it is and thus making the world of less account. The boundaries of Self are enlarged only when studied in the light of the infinity of the Universe. The mind which contemplates on the infinity will surely have some share of the infinity.

Once body is divinized, is passion left?
Once mind is divinized, is Maya left?
Once will is divinized, is error left?
Once flesh is divinized, where is
The fever and the fret?
When life is divinized, there is no more
Attachment left. When soul is divinized,
There is no death, look you,
Mahalingaguru Shivasiddheshwara Lord!

- Sri Siddhalinga Yathi
(Tr. Prof. Armando Menezes)

ĪŚĀVĀSYOPANIṢAT

-Dr. H.V. Nagaraja Ro

In Upanisadic literature, Īśāvāsyopaniṣat is a very interesting and beautiful piece. It is a short upaniṣat containing only eighteen mantras or Verses. Usually the upaniṣads occur at the end of the Vedas, but the Īśāvāsyā occurs in the Saṁhitā portion of the śuklayajurveda and hence sometimes called saṁhītopaniṣat.

Teachings

- 1) The first teaching of this upaniṣat is that every being in the universe is an abode of God. God is residing in every living and non-living entity. The word 'īśāvāsyā' could also mean that God covers or pervades everything in the universe. In other words, God is omni-present and therefore it is the duty of every human being to respect every thing in the world as God's abode. Man has no right to pollute the oceans, rivers, mountains or forests. Not only man but all living beings including beasts, insects and worms have a right to live in the creation.
- 2) The second teaching of this upaniṣat is that one should utilize or consume the things in the world with a sense of leaving enough for others. To put it in another way, one should share every resource like air, water and food with others. The concept of monopoly is against the teachings of the upaniṣat.
- 3) The third teaching or instruction of the upaniṣat is that one should not be greedy. Man's greed is so big, it is said, that even if

the whole earth is given to him it looks like an atom in a vast pit. In the world, there is enough to fulfil the needs of all, but not enough to quench the greed of even a single person. Greed is the worst sin because it deprives the needy from getting their due. So the upaniṣat prohibits greediness in all its forms.

- 4) The fourth instruction of this upaniṣat is that none should think that the wealth belongs to him or her. Everyone has to leave this world inevitably and therefore abandoning every item of wealth is certain. The dead person's sons or daughters or relatives may enjoy that property. Or it may be taken away by the Government. So one should understand that one is only a trustee of the wealth. None is the owner. Even the Kingdoms and empires collapse and someone else will rule. So that this upaniṣat avers that money or wealth belongs to none.
- 5) The fifth teaching is that every person should aspire to live for a hundred years doing his or her duty properly. This shows that the upaniṣat is not a votary of pessimism, but actually a supporter of optimism. A human being should hope to live a full, active life. One should never think of leading a lazy life. Lethargy should never be given a space in life. This teaching is akin to the doctrine of Kāyaka propagated by the Sharanas. The upaniṣat further says that if a person does his duties honestly

leaving the fruit of the actions to God, those actions will not become fetters. Those actions will never stick or cling to one's soul.

- 6) The sixth teaching of this upaniṣat is that none should kill themselves by denying their own existence. Such people will go to the worlds which are immersed in darkness. Everyone should be optimistic and should hope for the best. Feeling pessimistic one should not harm oneself physically or mentally or intellectually or spiritually.
- 7) The Seventh teaching of this upaniṣat is that the soul is faster than the mind because it is omnipresent. None of the sense organs can be faster than the soul because they depend on it for their efficiency. The soul or atman is inside everything but also appears to be far away when it is not cognized.
- 8) The eighth teaching is that the cause of all suffering is the ignorance about the nature of Atman, one's own self. When one understands that the same consciousness is present in everything and everything is present in the same consciousness, one has no aversion towards anything.
- 9) The ninth teaching we learn from this upaniṣat is that following only knowledge or only action may lead a person to the world of gloom. There is a purpose served by knowledge and another purpose achieved by action (which is here called avidyā, i.e., non-vidyā). Therefore an aspirant should know both knowledge and action. The path of action helps in leading a proper life in this world of mortals and knowledge of reality brings the eternal life called amṛta (immortality)
- 10) The tenth teaching is that one who is aspiring for spiritual accomplishment should adore both the manifest and the unmanifest forms of Reality. The manifest,

however great, is phenomenal, subject to change and destructible. The unmanifest is the cause of the manifest. Both should be understood if one wants to attain a higher state of existence.

- 11) The upaniṣat teaches that the face of truth is covered by a golden vessel and an aspirant can see the truth only when that cover is removed by a higher power. Hence, the seeker of truth should be humble and request that higher power with devotion.
- 12) The upaniṣat tells that the body of every living being is finally reduced to ashes being consumed by fire. Before that, one should walk on the right path so that the goal is not missed. The higher power that can take an aspirant to the goal which is called Reality or Amṛta knows all the paths. With the grace of that Power, realization is possible.

References

1. Īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ (mantra 1)
2. tena tyaktena bhujjīthāḥ (mantra 1)
3. mā ḡrdhaḥ (mantra 1)
4. kasyasvid dhanam (mantra 1)
5. kurvanneveha karmāṇi
jijīviṣet śataṁ samāḥ (mantra 2)
6. asuryā nāma te lokāḥ (mantra 3)
andhena tamasā vṛtāḥ
tān te pretyābhi gacchanti
ye ke cālmahano janāḥ
7. anejad ekaṁ manaso javiyo (mantra 4)
8. yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtāni (mantra 7)
ātmaivābhud vijāntaḥ
tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śokaḥ
ckatvam anupaśyataḥ
9. andhaṁ tamaḥ Praviśanti (mantra 9)
ye avidyām upāsate
tato bhūya iva to tamo
ya u vidyāyāṁ ratāḥ
anyd evāhur vidyayā (mantra 10)

<p>anyad āhur avidyayā iti suśrūma dhīrāṇām ye nas tad vicacakṣire</p> <p>vidyām ca avidyām ca (mantra 11) yastad vedobhayaṁ tīrtvā avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtyuṁ aśnute</p> <p>10. sambhūtiṁ ca vināśaṁ ca (mantra 14) yastad vedobhayam saha vināśena mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā sambhutyāmṛtam aśnute</p>	<p>11. hiraṇmayena pātreṇa (mantra 15) satyasyāpihitam mukham tat tvam pūṣannapāvṛnu satya dharmāya dṛṣṭaye</p> <p>12. vāyur anilam amṛtam (mantra 17) athedaṁ bhasmāntaṁ śarīram</p> <p>18) agne naya supathā rāye asmān (mantra viśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān.</p>
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Let my conduct and gait scream about
That here lies a monk who is God's property.
Let my plain-clothes spell out
That the path of God is equally open for all and sundry.
Let my lack of external signage
Show that I'm the child of all gods and sects
Let my association with the holy
Help me stick to my path cautiously
Let my state of relative independence
Signify that it is all between me and Him only
Let the longing for Him replace my breathing
For if used when my longing ceases, so should my breathing

- Sri Shivananda

There'll be want and vanity for the desiring one,
Will vanity and want affect the undesiring?
Why envy for one who is self-realized?
He who's spurned the encircling maya of the world
Why move about and hang on to women?
Why the obligation of the eight-fold worship and sixteen-fold dulia
For one who has realized Amugeshwaralinga.

- Amuge Rayamma
(Tr. Prof. Chandrasekharaiah)

Sharanas' Perspective on Astrology – Part I

- Smt. Rupaka Mahalingaiah

Astrology plays an important role in the lives of people, especially those who are believers. In India, astrology often dictates social and religious activities. People rely on astrological alignments for practically all ceremonies and religious rites. Believers even look for auspicious time to embark on new tasks. Some go to the extent of avoiding embarking on journeys during the period designated as inauspicious.

This reliance on astrology appears to affect all segments of society, including scientists and technologists. Even those who are logical, do not question the validity of astrology. For instance, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is known to schedule their important events such as launching rockets or satellites, avoiding inauspicious periods.

When we look at the history of their missions, we see that many of their projects succeed and some do not. Their counterparts in the US, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and European Space Agency (ESA) of Europe, do not rely on astrology for their activities. Yet, their missions are generally successful, while some fail. Despite ISRO using astrology and others not, the success rates, considering all factors, are similar. Missions succeed or fail based on the merits and not on the auspicious timing.

Despite this record, some scientists and technologists seem to shy away from ques-

tioning the validity of religious beliefs. They often justify it by arguing that there is no harm in taking astrology into account. They consider ignoring it as an unnecessary risk.

While such attitude is common among public, it is not conducive for the spiritual evolution of an individual. The path of Guru Basavanna encourages aspirants to examine the validity and limitations of many practices and beliefs, including astrology. Taking a logical and scientific approach, the Vachanas encourage their followers to consider the merits of their beliefs. Rather than blindly following prevalent beliefs, Vachanas assist aspirants to evaluate the truth and scope of them.

A Vachana of Sharana Chennabasavanna chronicles the annals of astrology helping aspirants to evaluate its validity. It motivates aspirants to logically assess the rationality of their beliefs. It sheds light on the authority of Supreme God and encourages aspirants to develop unwavering faith and trust in Supreme God.

*Not recognizing that happiness and misery
arise from God's design,
people, when facing illness, poverty,
and failures of human aspirations,
bow to brahmins, offer gifts, communicate
their name,
and enquire about the influence of
the Sun, Moon, and planets.
Do such persons have devotion to God?*

Smt. Rupaka Mahalingaiah, Basava Divine Center, Austin, TX

If Sun was wise, would he have been in
 fatuated with
 Ahalya, the wife of sage Goutama,
 and become a victim of leprosy?
 Also, would he have lost his teeth in the
 Yaaga of Daksha?
 If Moon was wise,
 would he have fallen for the wife of his Guru,
 abducted her, and suffered the debility of
 waning?
 If Bruhaspathi was wise,
 where was his wisdom
 when Moon abducted his wife Rohinidevi,
 the wife he had married after comprehen-
 sively examining
 the stellar associations before his wedding?
 If Saturn was wise, why is he lame
 and fallen into the trap?
 And so, how can those who are unable
 to discern
 the happiness and misery that befall them,
 predict the joy and sorrows of others?

Following the system of Bruhaspathi,
 Daksha held a Yaaga,
 and came to sport the head of a sheep.
 Following the system of Bruhaspathi,
 Dwaravathi was submerged in the water
 and Krishna's sixteen thousand women were
 abducted by ruthless hunters.
 Rama's wife Sita became a prisoner.
 Yet, people who cannot foresee
 the failures that will befall them in the future,
 listen to the doubtful words of
 the astrologers from the tradition of
 Bruhaspathi,
 and declare that they fast on
 full-moon day, new-moon day, and
 auspicious times under certain influences
 of the planets.
 They pour water and tie thread to a peepal
 tree,
 give money and gold to brahmin astrologers,
 hoping to avert their calamities.

Should not listen to the words of such mis-
 creants!

"After the wedding officiated by Vashishta,
 even Rama had to live in the jungle.
 When Karma is the dominant influence,
 what can auspicious planet alignments do?"
 This being said,
 deeming that looming perils may be
 averted by
 gold, women, and auspicious time,
 is certainly not credible.
 It is like saying:
 "I will give the remedy for hunger in re-
 turn for food."
 Or, "I will give the remedy of flight in return
 for help in crossing the river."
 Or, "like a blind holding the hand of a blind
 to lead the way."
 Without shame and dignity,
 should not ask brahmins for auspicious time.

O Lord Kudalachenasangamadeva,
 to venerable devotees,
 your authority is indeed the authority!

In this Vachana, Sharana Chennabasava-
 vanna offers several premises for aspirants
 to consider. The first and foremost is un-
 derstanding the authority of Supreme God.

God, the Governing Force

Fundamentally, the path of Basavanna
 promotes universal values decreed by
 Parashiva (Parabrahma or Supreme God).
 The Supreme God is the creator of this uni-
 verse. Being omniscient, omnipotent, and
 omnipresent, He is the Supreme Power
 who creates and annihilates countless heav-
 ens and universes at His will. He is the con-
 trolling force that regulates the creation. All
 happenings in the world occur in accord-
 ance with the design of God. The happi-
 ness that individuals experience in their
 lives and the sorrows they encounter, are

all ultimately the making of God. The illustrious path of Basavanna shed light on how to realize, adore, and achieve union with such Supreme divinity.

Aspirants who desire to follow the path of Basavanna, need to realize the magnificence of Divinity and learn to move beyond prevalent practices that rely on the powers of deities.

People do not realize the supreme power that is controlling the creation. Instead, they tend to rely on deities to help them with their lives. While this is normal for the most, those who aspire to follow the path of Basavanna, should realize that influences of deities are limited.

Those who follow astrology, count on the powers of planetary deities. They believe that the planetary alignments cause the miseries in their lives. They look for astrological forces to explain their fortunes or misfortunes. They seek remedies from astrological influences and approach priests and astrologers. In Indian astrology, stars are used to identify the birth characteristics of individuals. People even name babies based on their birth star. This enables astrologers to gain insights into a person's horoscope by his or her name. The Sun and eight other *grahas* are deemed to have considerable influence on the occurrences of life. Even to this day, worshipping these nine astrological deities is prevalent in India.

People seek the advice of astrologers when they embark on important undertakings or when they face hardships in life. According to Sharanas, such actions indicate they do not understand the authority of God. Sharanas advise to have faith in God and understand that God, and only God, can truly affect the happenings. In this context Sharana Chennabasavanna prodded the aspirants to develop trust in God and not

worry about astrological influences. He strongly reminds that God supersedes all other forces in this creation.

Limitations of Astrological Deities

To illustrate the limitations of the astrological influencers, Sharana Chennabasavanna recites various incidences from Indian mythology. In Indian astrology, heavenly bodies are associated with deities. It is considered that these deities influence the life of people. Starting with anecdotes associated with these deities, Chennabasavanna logically questions the astrological belief system.

*... If Sun was wise, would he have been
infatuated with
Ahalya, the wife of sage Goutama,
and become a victim of leprosy?
Also, would he have lost his teeth in the
Yaaga of Daksha?
If Moon was wise,
would he have fallen for the wife of his
Guru,
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If Bruhaspathi was wise,
where was his wisdom
when Moon abducted his wife Rohinidevi,
the wife he had married after comprehen-
sively examining
the stellar associations before his wedding?
If Saturn was wise, why is he lame
and fallen into the trap?
And so, how can those who are unable to
discern
the happiness and misery that befall them,
predict the joy and sorrows of others? ...*

He starts with the Sun, the dominant heavenly body. If the deity Sun is truly a powerful astrological influencer, his own life must be immaculate! However, according to mythology, Sun once desired the wife of a sage and was cursed by the sage. The

mythology says that it is because of this curse that the Sun bears sunspots. Chennabasavanna questions the wisdom and power of the Sun, for he himself was subjected to such tribulation.

Moon is another deity that is important in astrology. The deity Moon is said to be a disciple of Bruhaspathi, the Guru of gods. Bruhaspathi is also acknowledged as the father of Indian Astrology. Moon is said to have served Bruhaspathi and studied from him. Chennabasavanna quotes the mythology about Moon falling in love with Rohinidevi, the wife of Bruhaspathi and abducting her. For his sinful act of seducing and abducting the wife of the guru, Moon is said to have been cursed to suffer waning. However, when he begs for forgiveness, it is said that gods restored him to the state of perpetual cycles of waxing and waning.

Bruhaspathi, the guru of gods, is considered as the wisest among devas. He is also the chief architect of Indian astrology and himself a deity associated with the planet Guru (Jupiter). Such a wise patriarch of astrology would have considered astrological alignments and set an auspicious time for his own wedding with Rohinidevi. However, that wedding ended in a disaster! The bride was seduced and abducted by the Moon. Chennabasavanna questions the wisdom and power of Bruhaspathi who could neither predict nor remedy the disasters in his own life.

Chennabasavanna then considers Shani, the deity associated with planet Saturn. Shani is considered as the most influential astrological body. He is said to wield the power of injecting disaster into the lives of people. For this reason, many worship Shani dutifully, even to this day. People are afraid to refuse offerings to those who carry

pictures of Shani. Chennabasavanna questions the ability of Shani by pointing out that Shani himself is lame.

There is a story behind how Shani lost his leg. Beaming with pride from his power, he became convinced that he was superior to gods. He tried to prove his supremacy by challenging Shiva. Once, when Shiva was bathing in the Ganges, Shani took the shape of a crocodile and tried to swallow Shiva. Ganga noticed this, and created waves that slapped the crocodile hard on its leg, breaking it. Chennabasavanna is referring to this story to question the power of Shani. Apparently, his power does not include the capability to influence his own health and wellbeing.

In this Vachana, Chennabasavanna cites these incidences to show that astrological deities also experience hardships and, they are controlled by an authority that is superior to them. They failed to predict and prevent their own adversities! Chennabasavanna urges the aspirants to consider the limitation of their power to help others.

... to be continued.

My pain may be the reason for somebody's laugh. But the laugh must never be the reason for somebody's pain.

- **Charlie Chaplin**

Carry out a random act of kindness with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you.

- **Princess Diana**

Basaveshwara as understood by Kuvempu

- Dr. C. Naganna

Kuvempu visualised Basavanna as an originator of many movements. He has used the plural “movements” advisedly; because he says Basavanna was both a visionary as well as a revolutionary. Basavanna, according to him, dreamt of many movements and he realized them too and they are social, economic, literary and so on. Just as the birth of Vivekananda and Gandhiji was a historical necessity so also the birth of Basavanna a historical necessity. Such great people’s birth becomes a necessity when there is a loss of balance in society because of corruption and unrighteousness in the political, economic, social and religious realms. The birth of such savants becomes a necessity when the society becomes a victim of such soul-killing activities. The spiritual power of certain individuals runs through the nerves and sinews of a society and thus it causes the removal of the dirt and muck which had accumulated since ages.

Kuvempu sees Basaveswara first and foremost as a social reformer and an inaugurator of a new economic system and then as the vachana writer. Vachana writing was not his life’s mission: for him what was of utmost importance was to express through the vachanas the spiritual truth and life’s experiences. In his vachanas

the literary elements get manifested again and again as his inner perception and outer perception were very intense. As they came out of his heart directly, we can locate in them emotional as well as aesthetic aspects. When the matters of worldly and other-worldly nature pass through one’s inner channels of feeling, naturally, the language becomes figurative. This vachana literature, which took its birth eight hundred years ago, is still fresh in its influence and hence we can say that vachana literature is a resplendent jewel in the crown of “Kannada Sahitya Saraswathi”.

Kuvempu keeps the image of Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda as reference points in the twentieth century. Hence he says by the time Swami Vivekananda took his birth the era of the Mughal emperors had ended and the British rule had commenced. Then, Calcutta was their centre of administration. Railways had increased the people’s contact; different caste people had the opportunity to gather at one place voluntarily. Even the conservatives had to work under the Britishers. The European officers had started studying Sanskrit and thus they had mounted an attack on the puritanical attitude. The English people had provided opportunities of education

even to the lowly and the lost. Those who had been exposed to English Literature were indifferent to the question of castes and religions. The government was also trying to rectify the lapses in the social sphere through rules and regulations. The 'Arya Samaj' and 'Brahmo Samaj' had taken their birth in order to erase the errors in the religious and social domains. Christianity, in a way, was also responsible for the birth of these organisations. Because of the presence of such an illuminated Acharya like Paramahansa the castes and sects appeared to be meaningless. Wherever he went Swami Vivekananda condemned in strongest terms the ill-effects of caste system and thereby created a new awareness which infused vitality to the society. The contact with western culture and the self-confidence resulted in the wake of freedom struggle gave a new impetus to the lowly and the lost an energy to earn their rights. As a result of these developments the deadwood rituals of the past were moving in the direction of the graveyard. In such a scenario social reform movement was not an uphill task for Gandhi ji. Moreover, his primary aim was achieving Independence. The rest of the social reconstruction activities were secondary to freedom struggle and hence they were not a first priority.

The problems of Basavanna's time were different; not only were they different they were also terrible. Due to friction between different castes and the quarrels between the kings and vassals, the entire land was pulverised and so also the minds of the people. The worship of innumerable Gods and the discrimination of the high and the low had caused tremendous instability in

the society; there was an utter lack of unity. The social and religious upheavals had caused political dislocation. It was Basavanna's stance that if religions and social dirt were taken care of the political disturbance could be addressed with relative ease. Therefore, he came out with new ideological propositions and implemented them as well.

To a question posed by DeJaGow (Dr. D. Javaregowda) whether Basavanna did not resemble Martin Luther King of the sixteenth century in cleansing the religion that was caught in the quagmire of traditional religion, Kuvempu answers that those were the times which had a firm belief that mixing of castes was a terrible sin. The people of that time thought that it was their bounden duty to safeguard the varna system with great assiduity. They had to establish Manudharma as sacrosanct and implement it. It was not an ordinary thing to rebel against the traditional religion while serving a king in his court. When speaking against priests and sacred texts was an anathema Basavanna wrote "That I will treat Veda, Shastra and Agama with utter contempt as I am the beloved son of Madara Chennayya". He said Vyasa is the son of a stone-cutter and Markandeya was the son of a low-born woman. Basavanna was a weapon against the varna system.

Basavanna reassured the entire society that "make no discrimination saying this moment is more auspicious than the other one; tell people that everything is alright with the horoscope and all the planets are beneficially oriented and this day is immensely better than tomorrow". This is how Basavanna advised people not to get

carried away by their superstitious belief in the almanac and such things.

To a question that even those who have received modern education have not been able to think in an unfettered manner, Kuvempu answers even the science professors look up the almanac before going out of their home and to go to the hair-cutting shops. That is the reason why our country has not overcome ignorance and poverty. Basavanna never used to consult the almanac as he was a great spiritualist, an extraordinary devotee who had undislodgable faith in the all-pervading power of the Almighty. A person who follows these superstitious things must be either a fool or a cheat who is hell-bent to exploit others. A person who has tremendous faith in God will be utterly free from such nonsense.

Regarding the secular philosophy Basaveshwara followed Kuvempu is of the opinion that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda and Gandhi ji were absolutely secular. They declared that caste should be annihilated; they practised what they preached. Vivekananda had so much contempt against caste discrimination that the upper-caste people had started resenting him. But Kuvempu can't think of another person who suffered so much pain, anguish, privation and shed tears as did Basavanna. "Madara Chennayya is my father; Dohara Kakkayya is my father's father, and I belong to them", he says. We have religious leaders who go to untouchable quarters and preach to them hours on end against untouchability; there are those who quote from the Vedas and Upanishads shlokas

and declare that there is no room for untouchability in the so called sacred texts; after their speech in untouchable quarters they go to mutt and take a bath; we have such preachers dime a dozen. Such individuals cheat themselves and they are against God and they are enemies of the country. Basavanna gave Linga-initiation to the untouchables and embraced them as his own. He accorded them equality; he received the humble gruel given by them as sacred meal; not being satisfied by partaking food without discrimination he even solemnised marriage between a Brahmin bride and an untouchable groom.

When DeJaGow asks him, in that respect, even Gandhi ji had not reached that level, Kuvempu replies: "No need to compare. As I said earlier, he was in favor of Varnashrama system; probably due to his family environment or political compulsion. Basavanna was exactly opposite to this stance. There was no support of the law; the power was within the hands of his opponents. The weaker section was voiceless. Such was the dangerous situation he was in that the matters he undertook could easily have been interpreted as treason; in that sense, we can say that he worked a miracle."

What are the changes he brought about in the religious realm? Is the next question. Kuvempu answers: "Basavanna knew that worshipping inconsequential gods and multiplicity of divinities would cause disunity and at the same time would take away the luminosity in the spiritual sense. More than anything else, he banned the worship of 'Sthavaralinga' and dismembered the priestly prerogative. This

is the revolutionary path he showed not only to India but to the whole world. Wherever the priestly class is exploiting the people taking advantage of their ignorance, there Basavanna's idealism will be a lamp that lights the paths of the reformers.

Basavanna accorded equal position to women which is almost unparalleled in the history of social reformers in the world. Kuvempu opines that all over the world people worship women in the form of idols. Leave alone politics, in the fields of religious and social spheres Basavanna occupies the top position as he showed to the world that a woman could also transact on equal terms with a man. Take any work he did, one invariably finds the humanitarian touch in it. Regarding the equality between a man and a woman, he made women wear the lingam and declared that they too are eligible to attain liberation like men. In Anubhava Mantapa, they sat with men on equal terms, and solved many problems very effectively. When he said that women should not be exploited as objects of pleasure keeping them in ignorance and darkness the conservative people must have shunned his position.

Likewise, many pioneers of different religions and sects make a distinction of heaven and hell and preach about renunciation. They say this world is an illusion. But the path showed by Basavanna is different. He is a practical philosopher. That's why he said that it is possible to achieve 'LingangaSamarasya' while living the life of a householder. He never forsook the family; he didn't become a sanyasin. He married two women. But both of them were

steeped in spiritual pursuit. They showed to the world that marriage did not come in the way of spiritual progress. Basaveswara never called this life an illusion. When we say that Eswara is everywhere then how can the world be an illusion? The essence of his message was that when we work within the framework of righteousness without desiring to possess the wealth or a woman belonging to others and following the path guided by spiritual strictness, then there is no need to be concerned about the hell or heaven.

*The heaven and the world are not
somewhere else.
Uttering truth is heaven;
Uttering lies is the mortal world;
Righteous action is heaven, its opposite is hell.
The mortal world is almighty's workshop;
Those who belong here belong there too;
Those who do not belong here find no place there;
Kudalasangamadeva.*

Thus, Basavanna's thoughts are easy to grasp and equally easy to put into practice. His philosophy is accessible to the common people. His philosophy contains eternal values. For many ills confronting our society his preachings happen to be a panacea. If his messages had percolated to our society earlier, there would have been no need for the foreigners to spread their religion here. There would have been no Muslims and Christians; the myriad social problems that have eaten into the vitals of our society would not have been there at all. The problems faced by Nagaland and would not have arisen; the caste system which has erected walls would not have been there; and the 'Vishwamanava

philosophy' I advocate would have been in practice from the beginning.

Basaveswara was different from other Acharyas who have taken birth in this land. He had a definite purpose in life and he implemented it forthwith. He was not a mere theorist, an interpreter and an ideologue. He was a seeker after truth, the one who wished the good for all, lifting up the women and the lowly and the lost was his aim; he rejected the meaningless rituals, aspired to make the religion accessible to the common people; he did everything possible to eradicate caste and untouchability. If one remembers what all he achieved we become speechless. He was the most ancient and at the sometime most modern as well. We feel as if Vivekananda and Gandhi ji are preaching appearing before us in flesh and blood. He grew up amidst the common people and he became a martyr working unceasingly in bringing succour to them. He never intended to address a handful of privileged people in a language understood by them; on the contrary, he addressed the common people in their language and preached a philosophy understood by them like what the Buddha did.

He never travelled far and wide, but he had an immense desire to guide those who were in his vicinity so that they would get the light, the food and this amazes even the most modern man—such were the revolutionary reforms he undertook. He was a great tree which touched the clouds bearing ample flowers and fruits. The tree will not go in search of bees; people came to the tree in droves seeking shelter in its shade. We remember Gandhi ji who said

“I will not go to America or other countries of the world till my country's life is put in an order.” Basaveswara did something so extraordinary to the Kannada language that even the most modern linguists cannot dream of. This life brought about coordination of different segments in a most artistic way. In every act of his we not only find Indianness but the universal element is pulsating so energetically.

People may also be interested in the so called miracles he achieved; but what I advocate is go to his vachanas and they are enough to understand his greatness. If miracles reflect his greatness then we can accept them. But, sometimes, the mentioning of the miracles itself may act as a snag to his splendid life. Not many people have strived like him to bring about a revolution of that kind. Such a revolution had not taken place either in India or elsewhere, by anyone till he appeared on the horizon. He is the first revolutionary in the land of India who attempted to establish equality and brotherhood. The society closed its eyes not able to look at his extraordinary vision. His martyrdom is a defeat of Hindu dharma. Again it is its defeat that it lost a golden opportunity which came knocking at its door. We, who belong to the age of Gandhi ji, understand what a towering philosopher Basavanna was. That's why we ought not to pose a way of life advocated by him as a parallel spire to ritualistic Hinduism. He struck a new path that was free from ritualistic indulgence. He was a rare person indeed!

News Round-up

Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi inaugurates KSS Sanskrit Pathashala & Hostel Building

It was a great event in the modern history of Sri Suttur Math that Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi inaugurated the new grand edifice constructed for KSS Sanskrit Pathashala and Hostel built by JSS Mahavidyapeetha and then released three works of Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji published by JSS Granthamale in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji on 20.6.2022 at Mysuru. Offering his salutations to Jagadguruji, saints and the general public present in the function the PM paid rich tributes to the services rendered by Sri Suttur Math ever since it was established by Adi Jagadguruji about ten centuries ago. Recalling the services of Manthramaharshi Pattada Sri Shivarathreeshwara Swamiji and Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji in the field of education and social service, he said the present pontiff Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji speeded-up the developmental activities of the Math attracting international attention. Saying that he felt immensely happy to inaugurate the new building for the Sanskrit Pathashala and Hostel which started by Manthramaharshi and evolved during Rajendra Swamiji's period is now symbolizing the nation's great past and the present, he observed. Wishing a bright future for this institution the PM said that he felt immensely grateful for being amidst so many saints, devotees of the math and a large gathering. Releasing Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji's, '*Pathanjali's Yoga Sutras*', '*Shiva*

Sutras' and '*Narada Bhaktisutras*' the Prime Minister invoked the love of Shruti Tradition promoted by our Rishis of the past and said that Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji represented that tradition. In the context of International Yoga Day the publication of these works will assume significance by way of simplifying the concepts of Bhaktiyoga and Jnanayoga to modern readers, he said. Those who have studied similar western works need to study these works for a better understanding of the world from socio-humanistic perspective, so that they realise that India has unparalleled repository of knowledge which is as ancient as it is modern. Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji's services are truly great, the PM said. The function was attended by Sri Siddaganga Swamiji, Governor of Karnataka, Chief Minister Sri Basavaraj S. Bommai, Central Minister Sri Prahlad Joshi, legislators, leaders of political parties among a host of others leaders.

Basava Jayanthi Celebration

Basava Jayanthi celebration in Mysuru was held at Kalamandira on 3.5.2022 in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji organized by Veerashaiva-Lingayatha Mahasabha, Basava Balagas and the district administration. It was a time when the lower sections of the populace was looked down upon when Basaveshwara and his fellow sharanas took revolutionary steps to bring about equality of all including women who till then were treated as sub-human in nature. Apart from this Basaveshwara was probably the first free thinker of India who envisioned a religion wherein all could find solace and fulfill-

ment. Speaking on the occasion Sri V. Srinivasaprasad, M.P. said, that it is time to establish a university in Basaveshwara's name whose socio-religious, economic and spiritual teachings are timeless. His vachanas epitomize the very best in human values. Veerashaiva-Lingayatha is not a religion but a pathway to all humanity, he declared. Prof. D.S. Sadashivamurthy and Sri G.T. Devegowda spoke on the occasion. 'Bannada Badukina Chinnada Dinagalu' by Sri Ganesh Aminghad and an album 'Kranthi Yogi' produced by Vidwath Innovatives Solutions were released in the function presided by Sri SA. Ramadas and attended by the Swamijis of Vatalu, Hosamath, Devanuru, MLA Sri L. Nagendra, Mayor Smt. Sunanda Palanethra and host of others.

Research is key to Progress

Speaking in the 4th Convocation of JSS Science and Technology University graced by H.H. Jagadguruji, Prof. D. Sahasrabuddhe, president of All India Technical Education Parishath, observed that it is not enough by India being in the forefront of service area, it is necessary to leap-frog in production area as well. The Government's initiatives like 'Make in India' have encouraged production and distribution systems. For all this research in newer areas is the means for progress and development. In his benediction Jagadguruji called upon the new graduates to rededicate themselves to work and contribute for the nation's progress. Totally 1519 students received degrees in graduation, post-graduation and Ph.D., studies. Dr. C.G. Betsurmah, Prof. M.H. Dhananjaya, Vice-chancellor Prof A.N. Santhoshkumar, Dr. B. Suresh, Dr. S.A. Dhanraj and others were present.

Need to accept life positively

Positive approach to life and accepting things as they come is key to happy and sus-

tainable life, observed HH Jagadguruji while speaking in the camp 'Jeevanotsaha' organized at JSS Public School, Teetakal, Ooty, on 20.5.2022 in the context of 'Azadi Ka Amrith Mahothsav-22' in which Nrutyaseva Niketan of Kunoor presented 'Shivoham' a dance-drama. We need to expose ourselves to all that life offers while remaining detached that way will help one to enjoy the fruits of life. Man must understand that he cannot carry even a blade of grass when he leaves this world. He must live and lead life like one who owns nothing here including the love of the near and dear ones. Basaveshwara says do your duty as though you are not doing it and doing it don't get enmeshed. Such is the way that leads to happiness and a peaceful life, HH Jagadguruji said. President of Karnataka Boarder Development Authority Dr. C. Somashekar who spoke on the occasion said that HH Jagadguruji is himself a symbol of Jeevanotsaha, peace and contentment despite his unbelievably busy life. Sri. P.G.R. Sindhya, Sri N.K. Krishnamurthy, organizer of dance-drama Sri HRM. Bhojarajan, Dr. S.P. Dhanpal, Sri H.K. Basavanna and others were present.

Patronage for Neelagara Culture

The Culture of Neelagara bards and singers needs to be given its due position and patronage, said HH Jagadguruji, while gracing the function organized to inaugurate developmental works related to Sri Manteswamy, Rachappaji, Siddappaji study centre at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Post-graduate Centre, University of Mysore, Chamarajanagar and releasing of 'Navu Kooguva Koogu', biographies of the Neelagaras of the Manteswamy tradition on 16.6.2022. India is a great cultural hub and Chamarajanagar district is known for natural beauty and rich folk culture that the Neelagara artists have with great love and dedication kept their tradition alive and throbbing without expecting much in re-

turn, HH Jagadguruji observed. The function was presided by Vice-Chancellor Prof. G. Hemanth Kumar. Registrar Dr. R. Shivappa, Dr. Sangeetha Gajanana Bhat, Sri Pradeep Kumar Dikshit and Prof. Vijayakumari S. Karikal and Prof. Krishnamurthy Hanur spoke on the occasion.

Need of using local products

HH Jagadguruji gave a call to people to use goods and products manufactured by our own people in our own country while gracing the function organized by Swadesh Jagaran Manch for the Inauguration of Swadeshi Mela at Chandragupta Maurya Sports Ground, Bengaluru on 6.4.2022. Only when people buy, carry home and use the products turned out by our people such movements as this one will become successful, he observed. In this context the dream of Gandhiji of Gram Swaraj will become a reality only when people patronize the products of the country. Former Chief Minister Sri B.S. Yediyurappa who presided the function said that the prosperity and progress of the country depends chiefly on nation centric economic activities promoted by one and all. Such melas as this one will enlighten people to become self-reliant and self dependent. Dr. Harish Hande, Solar Scientist was honoured in the function. Prof. B.M. Kumaraswamy and Smt. Sowmya Reddy, MLA, spoke on the occasion.

Jagadguruji visits Mysuru Zoo

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Desikendra Mahaswamiji paid a visit to Sri Chamarajendra Zoo, Mysuru, on 3.7.2022 and complemented the staff for transforming it to be admired and called a model of its kind. This zoo not only has animals and birds of various countries of the world in addition to our own species but also taken care of lovingly and maintained. Apart from this the Zoo is now a breeding ground

for birds and animals also which offers pleasant surprise for visitors and tourists who flock it through out the year. Jagadguruji planted a sapling as token of his visit and distributed bags and uniforms to the children of Govt. Primary School, Ittigegud. Chairman of Karnataka Zoo Authority received the Swamiji in the presence of members of Zoo Authority, Sri B.P. Ravi, Smt. Jothi Rechanna, Sri Gokul Govardhan, Executive Director Sri Ajit Kulkarni, DDPI Sri Ramachandra Raje Urs and others.

Education Received when Young shapes personality

Education, learning lessons in behaviour and cultural norms received when young are sure to mould the character of a person, said Smt. Sudha Murthy, President, Infosys Foundation when she visited Suttur Srikeshetra on 26.7.2022 and took part in prayer meeting of thousands of students of Suttur School in the gracious presence of H.H. Jagadguruji. She said while it is rather an arduous to ask to look after a couple of children at home, it is a wonder to see thousands of them being taken care of and educated by JSS Mahavidyapeetha of which Jagadguruji is the president. She said she knew that most of them were from rural areas and many of them were deprived ones. Feeding and imparting education and learning to thousands of them is indeed a miraculous thing. Speaking on the occasion the Swamiji observed that Smt. Sudha Murthy is truly an outstanding woman of the country who founded Infosys where its employees are treated as though they are members of her family which is something rare to find elsewhere. Added to this is her philanthropy combined with her love and humanism. She has draw the attention of all in society by her simple but noble way of living, the Swamiji said. Smt Sunanda Kulkarni, Sudha Murthy's sister, Smt. Jayarajendra Swamiji and others were present.



Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modiji inaugurated the new building of KSS Samskrit Pathashale and Hostel and released books in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji, Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji and Swamiji of Sri Siddhaganga Math in Mysuru. (20.6.2022)



The foundation laying function of JSS Speech & Hearing College and Hostel buildings at Kelageri, Dharwad was held in gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji. Sri Nitish Patil, Deputy Commissioner, Jagadguruji of Sri Murusavira Math, Hubli, Jagadguruji of Sri Tontadarya Math, Gadag, Jagadguruji of Sri Shivananda Math, Sri G.S.Gaddedevaramath, Ex-MLA and others were present (5.4.2022)



Chief Minister Sri Basavaraj S Bommai being felicitated and blessed by HH Jagadguruji when he visited Sri Suttur Math at Mysuru. (7.4.2022)



HH Jagadguruji and Sri Tridandi Chinna Srimannarayana Ramanuja Jeeyar Swamiji of Vijayawada were seen together during Jagadguruji's visit to Hyderabad. (25.4.2022)



H.H. Jagadguruji is seen distributing applications symbolically to students or parents of wards seeking admission to free school at Suttur for the current year. Head Masters of Schools, Sri G.L.Tripuranthaka, Sri S.P. Udayashankar and others were present.



107th Jayanthi Celebrations of Dr. Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji and Shivadeekshe-Lingadeekshe and Prathibha Puraskara programme was organized by the Association of the Heads of Math of Mysuru-Chamarajanagara districts at Sri Gurulingajangamadevara Math, Gavadagere and inaugurated by Minister Sri Murugesha R. Nirani in the presence of H.H. Jagadguruji. Dr. M.N. Nandish Hanche, Swamijis of Harave, Bettadapura, Gavadagere, Madahalli, Nilakanthaswami Math, Dandikere, Kundurmata, Mudigunda Math were present (19.3.2022)



Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh Smt. Anandiben Patel and Jagadguruji are seen in discussion when the former visited Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru. (30.5.2022)



Jagadguruji is seen with Sri Sanghananda Bhanteji when His Holiness visited Buddha Vihara of Kalaburagi. Sri Jayaraj Kamble was present. (7.1.2022)



Sri Jaggi Vasudev, founder of Isha Foundation, is seen with Jagadguruji when he visited Sri Suttur Math, Mysuru, in the context of 'Save the Soil' movement. (21.5.2022)



Dr. Harish Hande is seen delivering the 11th endowment lecture on the subject 'Poverty and Sustainability' of the Golden Jubilee of JSS Mahavidyapeetha at Sri Rajendra Centenary Hall, JSS Hospital, Mysuru. Dr. Bagadhi Gowatham, H.H. Jagadguruji and Sri B.R. Pai were present. (26.5.2022)



The inauguration programme of the 'Shilashasana Mantap' of Sri Viraktamath, Ingaleshwara, Basavanabagevadi taluk was held in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji. Sri Hasimpera Valikara, Swamijis of Basavanabagevadi, Hosarithi, Senior Swamiji of Ingaleshwara, Sri Siddheshwara Swamiji, the Swamijis of Lingayanayakanahalli, Yaranala, junior Swamiji of Ingaleshwara, Swamiji of Muragoda Math and MLA Sri Shivananda Patil were present. (7.6.2022)



On the auspicious occasion of Mahamastakabhisheka to the idol of Bahubaliswamy at Kanakagiri, Chamarajanagar taluk, Jagadguruji is seen along with the Swamijis of Hombuja, Arahantagiri and Swastisri Bhuvanakirthi Bhattaraka Swamiji of Kanakagiri and others. (1.5.2022)



Inauguration of Basavajayanthi Programme organized by Veerashaiva-Lingayata Mahasabha, Federation of Basava Balagas, Associations with district administration, at Kalamandira, Mysuru, was held in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji. Sri N.V.Phanish, Dr. Bagadi Gautham, Dr. D. Thimmaiah, Sri C.N.Manjegowda, Smt. Sunanda Palanethra, Sri V.Srinivasaprasad, Sri G.T.Devegowda and others were present. (3.5.2022)



Apurva Superspeciality Hospital at Krishnarajapet, Mandya district, was inaugurated in the gracious presence of HH Jagadguruji and Jagadguruji of Adichunchanagiri Math. Sri K.B.Chandrashekar, Sri Jnanaprakasha Swamiji, Sri Basavamurthy Madara Channaiah Swamiji and the Swamijis of Chandravana, Kaginele Branch Math and Thendekere Math were present. (22.6.2022)



Hon'ble Sri Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Governor of Karnataka, inaugurated the 107th Jayanthi Celebration of Dr. Sri Shivarathree Rajendra Mahaswamiji at Suttur Math, Mysuru, in the gracious presence of H.H. Jagadguruji and Sri Siddhalinga Mahaswamiji of Sri Siddhaganga Math. Mayor Smt. Sunanda Palanethra and Minister Sri S.T. Somashekar were present. (18.8.2022)



JSS Academy of Higher education and Research, Mysuru, stood first among the Young Universities in India



Sri Amith Shah, Home and Cooperation Minister, Govt. of India is seen inaugurating the 115th Jayanthi of Dr. Sri Shivakumara Swamiji of Sri Siddhaganga Math, in the gracious presence of H.H Jagadguruji. Central Minister Sri Bhagvanth Khuba Sri B.Y. Vijayendra, Sri B.S.Yediyurappa, Sri Siddhalinga Swamiji, Chief Minister Sri Basavaraj S Bommai and Central Minister Sri Prahlad Joshi were present. (1.4.2022)



H.H. Jagadguruji is speaking in the function arranged to screen 'The Heritage of Suttur Math' an animation film selected for the Bangalore International Film Festival. Dr. Gorucha, Sri Swamiji of Siddhaganga, Sri Sunil Puranik and Sri Abdul Karim were present. (8.3.2022)

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A painting showing Sri Basaveshwara and his wife offering puja to Ardhanaareeshwara done (1757-58) by Nandigam Nagesam and Kamaroutu Venkatesam at Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh. Courtesy : Prof. Srinivas Sistla

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