CHAPTER – VII

PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS AND THOUGHTS

In the present chapter, Philosophical concepts found in poetry of some poetesses belonging to the medieval and modern period are discussed.

Śaivism as found in Madhuravijayam and Vaidyanātha-prāśāda-praśasti:

The early rulers of Vijaynagar dynasty were Śaivas of the Śaivāgama section. Lord Śiva is invoked in the opening verses of the Mahākāvya Madhuravijayam. As depicted by the poetess, their Kulaguru Kriyasakti was an ardent devotee of Lord Śiva. Besides the existence of the temple of the Virūpākṣa in the suburb of Pampā hints that Lord Śiva was an adorable deity of the Vijaynagar kings:

स्त्रयः स्रीपुरुषनिर्माण मातुकारूपाधारिणौ।
प्रमदे प्रतिभोधाय चित्त्रकाशात्मको शिवो मधुराविजयम् ।–१.२॥

असाधारणरूप्यं विलसस्यर्वमहलम्।
क्रियाशिकितुरुवन्ते त्रिलोचनमिवारम् मधुराविजयम् ।–१.४॥

यथाखानारी प्रभा मने कङ्कनदाबिताम्।
अधिभिषेकविरूपाक्षो म सरस्वतकपुरीं मधुराविजयम् ।–१.६६॥

Dr. Candra Prabha observes, “Śaivism was followed by the royal kings particularly in the Vijaynagar Empire” in her text “Historical Mahākāvyas in Sanskrit”.

Also the same religious practice of Śaivism was followed by Rāpā’s of Mewar as described in the text Vaidyanātha-prāśāda-praśasti written by poetess Devakumārikā (18th century).

In this text we find many references to Lord Ekaliṅga, the family deity of the Mahārāpā of Mewar. These Rulers of Mewar beginning with Bāppā Rāvala (8th century AD) to Saṅgrāmasimha (18th century AD) were the great devotees of God Ekaliṅga.
Ekaliṅga-māhātmya referred and quoted by Chandrashekhar Purohit in his book “Mewar kā Sanskrit Sāhitya” observes, “Ekaliṅga Māhātmya" written by Kanha Vyas is preserved in Rajasthan Oriental Institute, Udaipur. It is believed that at the behest of Rāṇā Kumbhā (1490-1525 AD), the poet Kanha Vyas might have composed The text “Ekaliṅga Māhātmya”:

The text Ekaliṅga Māhātmya composed by Kanha Vyas comprises of glorification of Lord Śiva by Saint Hārita, Guru of the Mewar kings. In the beginning of the Kāvyā the poet offers prayers to deities like goddess Lakṣmī, Pārvatī and Lord Kāmadeva respectively:

Poet has shown his talent by writing the following verse in praise of Rāṇā Kumbhā in all the eight cases (Vibhakti):

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1 Ekaliṅga māhātmya Ekaliṅga māhātmya purāṇa, Ekalinga stotra in original Sanskrit language, these texts are not available so far.
Apart from this temple of Ekalinga, there is a reference to the temple of Vaidyanatha in the text Vaidanātha-prāśada-prāśasti composed by poetess Devakumārikā. In the last Canto it is pointed out that Poetess Devakumārikā repaired the dome of the temple and performed various types of donations in order to please Lord Śiva. She made relentless efforts to renovate the temple of Vaidyanātha and managed the daily worship of the God by appointing well-qualified priest (Purohita). The temple of Vaidyanātha is located about 6 kms. in the western direction in the village named Śrisārama at Udaipur:

She decided to reconstruct it by appointing a Brahmin named Śrīnivāsa and thus consecrated the temple of Lord Śiva named Vaidyanātha in 1772 AD:

During the reconstruction of this temple, these kings of Mewar gave various types of donations in order to please Lord Śiva. Poetess Devakumārikā, mother of Saṅgrāmasimha performed various types of donations and also observed different vows and gave lot of wealth for the construction of the temple Vaidyanātha:
When the ceremony was observed the kings from all the directions i.e. the king of Kota named Bhīmasimha and also the king of Dungarpur named Rāmasimha along with his army came to attend the religious function of the consecration of the temple of Vaidyanātha.

Thus on the whole we can say that big rows of kings were found attending the religious ceremony performed by Queen Devakumārikā:

Prasaad vaivahavirchini vidhnu: kootadhisho bhimnurupabhyyagchhut
Rathayathapitdhipnadvitri-yodhidhipaaamanaanibahuchar: ##vai.pra.5.15 II
Yo bungaraavastu prasvya naahee vidhnya ravalaramasinh: II
Sroptagamatratramayasadnyo deeshantrasvya api chaanvabhu: ##vai.pra.5.16 II
Dewalnayad yoganmohinirega nuvairjane: sambhavti thasaati.
Yatha samucchalitamuntharoopya vilasatam yeuvaraha dharanva: ##vai.pra.5.17 II

At the end of the book Vaidyanātha-prasāda-prasasti there is a prayer offered by Harishchandra (Aṣṭaka) who might have been a court poet (c. 17th century AD) of Mewar kings. According to Harishchandra, God Śiva's dense matted hair is decorated by magnificent lustre emitting from the jewel on the hood of Śeṣanāga (Cobra), worn like a garland. This Śiva alias Vaidyanātha is endowed with the lustre of the crores of the Sun:

Shenagamamacespimabhadunimīsūtītiruddanjakalapak: I
Koitisuvrityasaamsamvibhita vaivagnsthah bhutayeastu n: ##vai.pra. 5.19 II

He, who is the connecting bridge of the three qualities – Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, always gives Siddhi (reward) to His devotees, half of His personality is rendered charming by His consort (Śailajā):

Sethreva gusanaavastu ye: singhidh: svabhajnaahcheetasad
Shailjaraschirvinbhūtyarthaek vachanayamathito namanabhum: ##vai.pra. 5.20 II

Harishchandra, therefore, expresses his ardent desire viz. to have constant devotion towards Vaidyanātha, the Supreme Being who is duly worshipped by the learned priest reciting the Vedic mantras every day:
Conclusion:

On the basis of the study of the two books 'Madhurāvijayam' and 'Vaidyanātha-prāśāda-praṣastī', it can be said that the royal family of Saṅgama and Guhilot dynasties were the worshippers of God Śiva. The Mewar rulers like Bāppā Rāvala, Hammīra, Saṅgrāmasinēha-I, Jagatasiṁha, Kumbhā, Rājasimēha etc. were the devotees of God Śiva in the form of Ekalīṅgajī and Vaidyanātha.

The propagator of the Pāśupata system – Lakulīśa:

Lakulīśa bears a staff (Lakuta, Lagūḍa) in his hand and hence is called Lakulīśa.

Dr. Chandrashekhar Purohit, in his book “Mewar kā Sanskrit Sāhitya” states, “The Guru of Bāppā Rāvala worshipped Lord Ekalīṅga. He was the follower of the Lakulīśa cult (Sampradāya). The temple of Lakulīśa is found to the south of the temple of Ekalīṅga, which is now a days known as the temple of Nāṭha [नाथों का मन्दिर]. The tradition of worshipping the deity Ekalīṅga, is done according to the teachings of Saint Ṣaṁhitā. He passed his life as a Tapasvin in the form of a Brahmaśīrṣa and is honoured as a Kulaguru of the Mahārāṇa of Mewar. The idol of Lakulīśa is found in Rajasthan (Chittor), Kayavarohan in Baroda (Gujarat), Malva, and Bengal. In the left hand there is a staff (Lakuṭa) and hence it is called Lakulīśa and in the other hand there is a fruit resembling a lemon named Bijorā:

न(ल)कुलिशा ऊर्ध्वमेध्य पवारकांसुसंस्थितम् ।
दक्षिणे मातुलिंगे च चामे दग्धं प्रकोपितम् ॥”

Dr. J. P. Thaker in his text Viśvāmitrīmahātmya states, “The name of the Lord of Kayavarohan would naturally be Nakulesa (Nakula+Īśa) and not
Nakulīśa. Lord Nakuleśa is popularly known as Lakulīśa and his sect also is known by the same name.

As stated in the text the holy place of Kayavarohan was formerly known as Kaśyapa-muni-ḳsetra and it became famous as Kayavarohan after Lord Nakula entered the phallus along with his physical body. (lit : his body descended in the phallus : Kāyāyāḥ avarohaṇaṁ kṛtam).

At present also the main phallus at Kayavarohan temple known as Lord Brahmesvara is a big black phallus in the front portion where of is seen God Śiva. This holy place has been known as miniature Kaśī all through the centuries. The holy place of Kayavarohan is thirty-two kilometres from city of Vadodara.”

Siddheśvaraśvaraśāstri Citrāva gives some interesting details about ‘Lakulīśa’. “Lakulin was an incarnation of God Śiva that appeared in the twenty eighth age cycle of the Vaivasvata Manvantara of the Varāha Kalpa. As this incarnation appeared with a staff (lakuta, lakuda or lakula) in hand, it is called Lakulin.”

According to Dr. Bhandarkar, Lakulīśa was a living person who established the Pāśupatā Śaiva sect in the second Century B.C.

Also, the importance of this holy pilgrimage Kayavarohan is found in text like Matsyapurāṇa :

शुक्तिर्गं च विख्यात तीर्थ सोमेश्वर परम ।
सर्वव्याधिहर पुष्प शतकोटिफलाधिकम् ||मत्स्यपुराणः-२२.२६||
श्रद्धे दाने तथा होमे स्वाच्छये जलसंनिधी ।
कायावरोहण नाम तथा चर्मणवती नदी ||मत्स्यपुराणः-२२.३०||
Viṣṇu is the deity of the sacred triad, entrusted with the preservation of the world. Viṣṇu, though a deity of capital importance in the mythology of the Brāhmaṇas, occupies but a subordinate position in the Rgveda. He is celebrated in not more than five whole hymns, while his name occurs only about 100 times altogether in Rgveda.

The essential feature of his character is that he takes three strides, which are referred to about a dozen times. With these three steps Viṣṇu is described as traversing the earth or the terrestrial spaces. Two of these steps or spaces are visible to men, but the third or the highest step is beyond the flight of birds or mortal ken.

Viṣṇu is given prominence from Rgveda:

\[ \text{Verse} \]

Viṣṇu is the personification of the light and of the sun especially in his striding over the heavens. Viṣṇu in Brāhmaṇas is identified with sacrifice and in the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata attains the Supremacy as a deity. Viṣṇu is the Supreme Being described as lying on Śeṣa (serpent) on Ocean. He is usually represented with a particular mark on his chest called Śrivatsa and holding a Śaṅkha called Pāncajanya. He has jewel on his wrist called Syamantaka and another on his chest called Kaustubha and the river Ganges is said to come out from his foot:

\[ \text{Verse} \]

The whole Viṣṇupurāṇa is replete with glorification of this God pervading
the whole world and controlling inanimate and animate beings:

तत्त्वतः परमं ब्रह्म परमात्मा जगन्मयः। ||विष्णुपुराण १.१०.५४||

विष्णोऽस्मात् सङ्कुचायोऽसे जगतं तत्रैव सांस्कृतिकम् ॥

स्थिरितमस्मर्कान्तिः सो जगतोऽस्य जगच सः। ||विष्णुपुराण १.१.३५||

सर्वस्थिरतिविनाशानां जगतोऽस्य जगन्मयः।

मूलभूतोऽनमस्तस्मै विष्णवे परमात्मने ||विष्णुपुराण १.२.४॥

उत्ताति प्रलयं चैव भूतानामागति गतिम्।

वेशि विभाविविद्या च स वाच्यो भगवानन्ति। ||विष्णुपुराण ६.५.७॥

_Viṣṇusahasranāma_ also glorifies the Supreme God. ¹

ईशान: प्राणद: प्राणो ज्ञेष्ठ: श्रेष्ठ: प्रजापति:।
हिरण्यगर्भों भूगर्भों माधवों मधुसुदनः। ||८॥

युगादिकृतहारावर्तों नैकभायो महाशनः।
अद्वैतयौरकमभूत सहस्रजिनन्तजितः। ||३७॥

महाकर्मो महाकर्मा महाते जा महोर:।
महाकर्मो हायण्या महायो महाविव:। ||७६॥

विश्वमूर्तिरिष्क्ष्मामूर्तिरिष्क्ष्मातिसूर्य:।
अनेकमूर्तिरिष्क्ष्मेव: शतरूपिनिश्चतानन:। ||८१॥

Poetess Lakṣmī Rājñī, the author of Khaṇḍkāvyā _Santarāgopāla_ has borrowed the whole theme of her work from _Bhagavatapurāṇa_ (X.89).

Poetess describes Lord Viṣṇu sleeping on a bed in the form of _Śeṣanāgā:_

"णीत्रंपंकते शयनं महेन्द्रनीलोटलत्रैकवंगम्।
करीटहारादिविभूषणप्रकृतनामामणिदीपितांकः। ||सन्तानगोपाल-२.९॥

स्वभक्षवासस्त्रिविशो पशसितश्रीवस्त्रशैलभित्वस्ते।
अनेकपन्तक्षसंध्वाण्डवेशवेशतामातिकुदिशं। ||सन्तानगोपाल-२.१२॥

पीताम्बराचार्यितं पूरे पापाधिकारशायापदधम्।
नवेन्दुविविक्तंसमस्तब्रजसप्तरथाय्महान्यकारम्। ||सन्तानगोपाल-२.१३॥

नवक्षितंबाय सदायेष्व तुण्यो गुरुपुरः प्रकटते। परसिः।
प्रपन्धसर्गस्थितिनाशकं विनाशविष्णुपरराय। ||सन्तानगोपाल-२.१७॥

¹ Mahadevan TMP — Bombay, 1972.
Besides in the third canto of the text Santānagopāla kāvya the Avatāras of Lord Viṣṇu are described (III.17-25).

Avatāra :

Delineation of Avatāra is not only found in Purāṇa's but also in Vedic texts, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣads, Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata. We get the description of Avatāra particularly in Purāṇas in details.

In Bhagavadgītā, also God Kṛṣṇa refers to the concept of Avatāra (form):

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिभूतिः भारत ।
अभुध्यायनमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सुजातांहम् ॥भ.गी. ४.७॥

परिरामणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृतात् ।
धर्मसंशोधनानाध्य संपत्तं युगे युगे ॥भ.गी. ४.८॥

In Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the description of 24 Avatāras of God Viṣṇu is found (Bhāgavatapurāṇa-1.3.6-28).

In Gītagovinda also, Jayadeva (11th century AD) has mentioned 10 incarnations of God Viṣṇu. These incarnations are briefly as follows:

Matsya Avatāra :

दिविबुधवा हयकर्षणं इति प्रथमं गतवतासपहः निगमोत्तर ।
तव तु तत्र धृता सकलापदा समकर्मी सकरीतातु: पुरा ॥सन्तानगोपाल-३.१७॥

Delineation of Matsya avatāra is found in text like Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Mahābhārata, Agnipurāṇa, Bhāgavata Purāṇa and Gītagovinda.

In this Avatāra, Viṣṇu became a fish to save the seventh Manu, the progenitor of the human race from the universal deluge.

This incarnation has the earliest mention in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa:
This legend is also told in *Mahābhārata Vanaparva*, where the fish is represented as an incarnation of *Brahmā*.

To recover the lost *Vedas*, Viṣṇu assumed the form of a fish and saved Manu at the dissolution of the earth. At that time when *Brahmā* awoke Viṣṇu slay *Hayagrīva* and restored the *Vedas* to him:

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अह̄ प्रजापतिः हि मत्यर्र नाधिगम्यते ।
सत्यरूपे युवं च मयायामोहिता भयात् ॥ महाभारत-वनपर्व-३.७५.४८ ॥

शुश्रावः मत्यायामपूर्वं सत्युपन्तत्त्विभिः तम् ।
वन्द्वेदप्रहतारं हयग्रीवं च दानवम् ॥ आग्निपुराण २.१६ ॥

ततो दानवेन्द्रस्य हयग्रीवस्य चैष्टितम् ।
दधार शफरीरस्य भगवान् हरिरिश्चः ॥ भागवतपुराण ८.२४.९ ॥

प्रत्यययोधितले भृत्वानन्दि बेदम्
विहितविहितचरितम्भेदम् ॥
कंशव ! भृत्मनस्तीरी जय जगदीश ! हरे ! ॥ गीतगोविंद १.१ ॥
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**Kūrma Avatāra**:

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प्रमाविते तु पुरा पवसः निधी मिलिध्वरसुरासुरसबिवेयः ।
विपुलक्रमपरं पभोगत महिष्ठर हि गर्भनामासः ॥ सत्यगोपाल-३.८ ॥
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Delineation of Kūrma avatāra is found in text like *Taittirīya Āranyaka*, *Mahābhārata*, *Agnipurāṇa*, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, *Varāhapurāṇa* and *Gītagovinda*:

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अन्तर्स्तः कृष्णभूतः तमक्षीतः मम वै लछ्वासात् समभूतं नेत्रक्षीति गूर्खेवाहिन्धसाम् इति
तत्पुरुषोप पुष्यन्य र्ह सहस्रवीराः पुरुषः सहस्राः सहस्रार्धूलोदतिहितां । तैतिरियः
आरण्यक-अनुवाच-२३ ॥

ऊँचुः कृष्णराजानमचुरां सुरासुराः ।
गीरिगाययमस्य भवान्वितभिः ॥ महाभारत-अदिपर्व-१.१६.१० ॥

कृष्णेण तु वर्त्युक्तवा पृथ्विमस्य समार्थितम् ।
तस्य शैलस्य चांग्रे वे च यत्रेऽन्त्रोथ्यपर्यं ॥ महाभारत-अदिपर्व-१.१६.११ ॥
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Delineation of Varāha Avatāra is found in text like *Taittirīya Samhitā*, *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, *Agnipurāṇa*, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, and *Gītāgovinda*.

S. S. Dange in her book ‘*Bhāgavata Purāṇa* - A Study’ states, “Prior to the *Purāṇa*’s this incarnation has been referred to its *Taittirīya Samhitā* (I.10.8) and (VII.1.5.1). *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (I.1.3.5-6) refers to the form of boar assumed by *Prajāpati*. Assuming the form of boar he dived into the waters and pierced the earth by means of his tusk and took it out. He then spread it on the lotus leaf. [This universe was formerly water. *Prajāpati* as a boar, plunged beneath. He found the earth below. Breaking off a portion of her, he rose to the surface.]”

1 Valmiki-ramayanam — Oriental Institute, Vadodara, 1992, page 255
Nṛśimha Avatāra:

The incarnation named Nṛśimha is half human and half animal. It is referred in Agnipurāṇa, Bhāgavata purāṇa and Gītagovinda.

Vāmana Avatāra:

Vāmana avatāra is referred in Vedic text like Rgveda, Brāhmaṇa texts, Bhāgavatapurāṇa and Gītagovinda. In Rgveda, Viṣṇu strode over the universe, in three places. Hence Viṣṇu is called Trivikrama:
Parāśurāma Avatāra:

ह्रदि करोमयनिव जमदग्रिवं विज्ञकुलपकृती नितना तुष।
सपदि सस्य परशुष्नामकं हुवते तव हे सलभ्यं कृतं।

Parāśurāma avatāra is referred in text like Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavatapurāṇa and Gitagovinda. In this Viṣṇu was born as the son of the Brāhmaṇa Jamadagni and descendant of Bhṛgu in the second age, to restrain the Kṣatriyas:

त्रेतायाघरश: संधी राम: संख्युत्तां वर:।
अस्तकृपार्थिवं श्रवं जयामार्मर्यमचोदित:।
महाभारत-आदिपर्व-२.३॥

सर्वविद्यान्तम श्रेष्ठ धनुवंशे च पारगम्।
रामं क्षत्रियवहनारं प्रदीपमिव पावकम्।
महाभारत-शांति पर्व-४९.२९॥

वहतारे भोजस्वम पर्यन्त ब्रह्माण्डो नृपान्।
ति:सर्वकृतः कुपितो ति:क्षत्रामकरोन्महोम्।
भागवतपुराण-१.३.२०॥

क्षत्रियसिद्धिमये जगदेशगतापायेः
सन्ध्यसि वस्यमि शामितमवतायपम्।
के शाबः! धृत्युपुपतिरूप जय जगदीसा! हरे॥
मीतालविन्द-१.५॥

Rāma Avatāra:

Rāma avatāra is referred in Vedic texts, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavatapurāṇa and Gitagovinda. Rāma, the son of King Daśaratha, of the solar race took this form of God Viṣṇu at the close of the second or Treta age, to destroy several demons including Rāvana, the king of Lanka.

Reference of God Rāma is found in the Mahākāvyya Raghunātha-Abhyudaya. Emperor Raghunātha, the son of king Acyuta and a great devotee of God Rāma. He is appropriately compared with God Rāma by the poetess Rāmabhadrāmbā. God Rāma, the king of Ayodhyā was kind, generous, brave, righteous and the follower of Dharma. During his reign there was perfect happiness and prosperity prevailing all over the earth as stated in the following verses of Rāmāyaṇa composed by sage Vālmīki:
King Raghunātha too was endowed with the virtues like those of God Rāma. Out of his love and devotion for God Rāma, king Raghunātha composed the book ‘Rāma-yāṇa-sāra-saṅgraha’:

King Raghunātha is compared with both God Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa:

He constructed a bridge like God Rāma to help the king of Nepal (Jaffna):

Just as God Rāma gave back the kingdom of Srilanka to Vibhīṣaṇa, the
brother of Rāvaṇa, similarly, king Raghunātha restored the rule of Nepal to its king:

In the *Mahākavya Raghunātha-Abhyudaya* poetess Rāmabhadrāmbā has revealed her genuine affection and reverence for the emperor Raghunātha by rightly comparing him with God Rāma.

Poetess Lakṣmī Rājī also refers to Rāma as *Avatāra*:

(I have discussed about the personality of God Kṛṣṇa as a historical figure in chapter-IV titled ‘Historical Data’). Poetess Lakṣmī Rājī has given here reference of *Balarāma*, the elder brother of God Kṛṣṇa. There is no mention of *Gautama Buddha* in the *khaṇḍakāvyya Santāna-gopāla*.

Kalki:

The incarnation of Kalki is for the first time mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*:

1. कलिकर्णिकायुष्यस्य नाम हि: कालप्रभोदितः ||
2. उपर्यासात महायौः महाबुद्धिप्राप्तः || महाभारत-च-पर्व-१८८८.९ ||
3. अथासो युगसम्यां दस्युप्रायेषु राजसु ||
4. जनिता विष्णुयुक्तसो नामः कलिकर्णिकायुष्यः || भागवतपुराण १.३.२५ ||
5. मन्त्रेचिन्हवहनिधने कलिकर्णिकायुष्याः कर्मालम् ||
6. धृष्टकृत्येऽविविधो विमिषिः कर्मालम् ||
7. केशव ! धृष्टकर्णिकर्मिः जय जगदीश ! हरे || गीतगोविन्द १.१० ||
Sarasvatī, Goddess of speed and light is derived from the root ‘śṛ’ meaning to move at speed. All the knowledge springs from her. She is the Goddess of Vāk i.e. speech. The variations of all sound, wind and even of the atom originate from her Kriyāsaktī only.

We also find the glorification of Śrī (Devī) Goddess in the Rgveda Pariśiṣṭa (Appendix). The whole hymn is called Śrīśūktā¹:

In Markandeyapurāṇa (78-90) also there is a reference of Devī, in Durgāsaptasati:

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¹ Bahadur Kantdev — Śabdakalpadruma, vol.
² Satavalekar S. V. Rgveda Samhitā. Killāpārādi page 772.
Poetess Gangadevi in her *Mahākāvya Madhurāvijayam* has paid her homage to Goddess Sarasvatī:

*Mahākāvya Madhurāvijayam* 1.32

Similarly, poetess Devakumārikā in her text *Vaidyanaṭha-prāsāda-praśasti* glorifies Goddess Sarada:

*Vaidyanaṭha-prāsāda-praśasti* 1.2

The same trend of worshipping Goddess Sarasvatī is continued even in the modern period by poetess Nalini Shukla and Uma Deshpande.

The power or the energy of all pervading Omniscient and Omnipotent *Parabrahman Paramātman* is called Divine Mother (*Devi*). She is called Mātā, Ambicā, Pārvatī, Devī, Mahālakṣmī, Durgā, Cāmunḍā, Reṅkā, Sarasvatī, Saradā etc. Patki Rajni states (in her book *The concept of Upāsanā*). In India the worship of *Devi* is as ancient as the Sanskrit literature itself. In the *Ṛgveda* this *Śakti* is identified by various names as Uṣā, Sarasvatī, Aditi, Rātri etc. and the hymns to them are abundantly found in the Vedic text. The single power of the divinity is described by various names in different situations. When she maintains the world she is called *Bhavānī*, when she is in action she is called *Lakṣmī*. In her angry appearance she is called *Durgā*. In destructive sense she is called
Kāli. These various forms of Devī like Mahālakṣumē, Māhākāli and Mahākāli — represent the three modes of Prakṛti Gunās namely Satvaguna, Rajoguna and Tamoguna respectively.”

In the poem Ambā Vandana poetess Nalini Shukla implores the Goddess to bestow divine love on her:

अधार एक एवंसित नामस्मरणमयः ते।
येन केनापि भावेन स्वालस्येनेनरेण वा॥भावाभिलः॥

त्वक्ष्यसि त्वां यदा माता। कोंवन्य्यसाहाय्यमेष्यति।
कः परः सहात्ते लोके केवलं जन्मं विना॥भावाभिलः॥

आनेनाजयत्वा द्वानात्त यस्तिक्षिप्तचितं मया।
तददरेण श्रोतवं ज्ञत्वं परमेश्वरि इ॥भावाभिलः॥

In the composition Devīdevanam consisting of nine verses, poetess finds herself engrossed in ocean of the mundane world and asks for help:

गतः कितांकाल इहासुदन्त्यः: दिने दिने त्वामनुचित्वतन्त्यः।
कर्ष्य स्वप्नोऽपि प्रति हार्दरूपिणिः। सुदाहणां निष्कृत्वेष्व वर्तसे॥भावाभिलः॥

न संसूतो मत्स्फोचितं पातकी यदाम्बिकाप्रति तदस्थतां गता।
शुरुवर्चः: शाश्वपरम्पराथवा श्रापत्तीलोकविविभितं स्थिरं मति:॥भावाभिलः॥

In the concluding verse she appeals to the Goddess to show compassion and kindness towards her:

किविविचित्रं तव चैतिरं जगन्न: न पार्वतेय शामुहो रहेः।
विशीयतां देवी! दयोदयो मथि त्वमेव माता। शरणं भवे भवे॥भावाभिलः॥

In seven verses poetess depicts the greatness of Goddess Durgā in Durgā Stavaḥ. Goddess Durga is the remover of all the miseries. The poetess afflicted by various mental and physical ailments implores Goddess to protect her and blames her fate, which is slowly drawing her towards death:
In the following verse, the Goddess is glorified by the poetess as the giver of pleasure to eyes, of the essence of (Vidya) erudition, wisdom (viveka) the bestower of (Vatsalya) affection. She is worshipped by all the Gods and is the remover of ignorance:

विद्यावुद्धिविवेकसाकसरसां विवेकभरां भारतीम्।
वातस्यामूलतर्भिर्वर्णेऽद्वियतमेऽवर्तनां पराम्रां भजे॥भावाच्यलितिः॥

In Vānīpañcadaśī poetess prays Goddess to bestow her grace on her. She further says that many people have praised Her glory and many sinners too have crossed the ocean by, Her grace:

त्रिलोकेकिव्यावतस्तव जनन विवेकमहिमा।
न दहिस्मनेहर्षसरसति मधाज्ञेयपि सुधाम्।
कियत्कालो यातो वितर्सि हि नैव सुभोि!
मृतप्रायप्रेमयमूलदससंचारदिम्॥भावाच्यलितिः॥

कदा त्यां वातस्यां ज्ञित्वं न विवेकार्यसुकृतः—
बलात्मक्षति विवेकयं मां पुण्यरहिताम्।
न मे भक्तिशक्तिः च जनन! योगस्तपक्षया
तवाप्रवर्त्तो युक्तियं उपेशं न सहते॥भावाच्यलितिः॥

In the seven verses of Carana Cintanam, the pious feet of Goddess are
glorified. In the first two verses poetess Nāthī Shākla praises the feet of Goddess. Even the Gods are eager to assume the form of bees with a desire to taste the nectar of her Pādāpadma (lotus feet):

यत्पादपमकर्णकदिलिन्दभूता विषु: सिवः कस्मल्लामिदववन्दः।
तम्याधुरीपुप्प्पांविलासलुब्धचित्ती प्रवाति शरणं सुपदेव! प्रसीद।भावाचलि।

She implores the Goddess to bless her:

मातस्त्वदीयनकरसिमसमूह माला, प्रोणिवाहकरानिफलकोऽलित।

Finally, in the last verse she asks mother to bestow grace on her:

dीर्घीकरोऽनुदिनं परित्यागार्थं पुम्बारतो न हि वितम्बविभाप्रस्य।
मातुः कललेकोलुम्य भविष्यतीयं स्नेहेन तत्जननि! पाहि कृपाकाढः।

Three verses of Śāradāyācanaṃ are dedicated by the poetess to Goddess Śāradā:

कदाचित्तमिदातबो वारंबती,
स्वदीप्त्या शारचन्द्रन्योत्सा स्कुरती,
करे: कोरसः कच्छपी लालयती,
विकारं, मुरं, राहि हे रागशीले
जगन्धासुरे! शारदे!स्नेहशीले।भावाचलि।

Similarly, Poetess Uma Deshpande has exhibited her intense love for Girvānabhāratī and thus has highlighted the greatness of Sanskrit Language.

यथा दत्तमुखीं तद्व दर्शिं मन्त्रदर्शनम्।
आिविभूता च तत्समात सा भारती वेदभारती।अर्चनम्।

वाल्मीकिन्द्रा पुरा दत्ता रम्या रामायणी कथा।
व्यसङ्क मुलिना सूत्र भारत जानमोकिकम्।अर्चनम्।

Further, poetess pays her homage to Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya, a philosopher follower of Karma Yoga and a protector of culture:

शाक्यं तत्त्राचार्य तत्स्यं कर्मयोगिनम्।
गोसारं संस्कृतेशिरं वदे वेदान्त्यानंदम्।अर्चनम्।
In the last verse she pays homage to Gīrvāṇabhārtī and appeals Her to reside on the tip of our tongue:

चयं सर्वं नमस्कृतम्: तुम्हं गीतवर्षभरति ।
सस्ति त्वं ननु जिह्याग्नि सर्वविविधापदा भव ॥अर्चनम्॥

Great affection of poetess towards Sanskrit language is reflected in the poems like “रतिर्म संस्कृतभाषायाम्”, “जयतु जयतु दैवी वाक्” and “सच्चिवानं संस्कृतम्”

The poetess considers Sanskrit language to be the mother of all languages, the treasure house of knowledge:

संस्कृतभाषा भाषाजननी संस्कृतेरेंं खलू शानखनी ।
अति सुचिरा सा, बहु मधुरा सा तदर्थ समेचमभिलाष: ॥अर्चनम्॥

संस्कृतशिष्या हि मोदग्रामा संस्कृतशिष्या हि मुक्तिग्रामा
आयणां सा जनवाणी सा असी हि राष्ट्रीया भाषा ॥अर्चनम्॥

Again in ‘Jayatu Jayatu Daivī Vāk’ poetess glorifies the Sanskrit language. That immortal language, which depicts the Supreme Reality, (which is in the form of Satya and Śiva), permeating the whole world and bringing an end to all miseries may that language triumph:

रघुपरकूलदिब्यं बृहतमनांशाना
बुद्धरकूलमा सवः स्वस्य दर्शचन्दनी ।
प्रतिपदमधुरस्वस्ते स्वप्नयते या मनोक्षां
जयतु जयतु दैवी वाक् सदा संस्कृतां सा ॥अर्चनम्॥

अखलजगद्वस्तं सत्यपुणं परेंशं
श्रवणपि सकलार्थिनां निम्नपुरम् ।
ऋषिवान्णशृविनां सुन्दरं ध्यावान्ती
जयतु जयतु दैवी वाक् सदा संस्कृतां सा ॥अर्चनम्॥

सङ्ग्रीतं श्रुतिपेशलं समुदितं यत्सत्सु पुरा भारते
मन्त्रार्ती नवि विजाहारकर्म दिव्या मुनीगां सदा ।
शांभो नैविध्यं समुज्ञितं यत्तेऽस्मि शृवं परं
विशेषं यजु राज्ये द्राक्षिनं समुज्ञीवनं संस्कृतम् ॥अर्चनम्॥
God Gaṇeśa:

Poetess Gaṅgādevī and Devakumārikā of the Medieval period have offered prayers to God Gaṇeśa in their compositions namely Madhurāvijayam and Vaidyanātha-prāśada-prasāsti respectively:

Kalyāṇaaya sataṃ bhūyād devō dantāvālānan: ।
Saranāgataśrūyam kalyāṇakalpa-pādāp ॥ मधुराविजयम् । ।

Poetess Devakumārikā too in her composition Vaidyanātha-prāśada-prasāsti, offers homage to God Gaṇeśa:

Gusṣṭhamadāembrarajaviśeṣa stambhāmananmahā nityānāmāṃ ।
Vatpādākaurapāgāpavatītañārā prastūharaśaḥ yāḥ prasāma prāṇyati ॥ वैधनाथ या या । ।

Among the modern poetesses studied by me poetess Nalini Shukla has glorified God Gaṇeśa in her composition Gaṇapaticintanam. She praises God Gaṇeśa and describes the child Gaṇeśa taking milk and lying on the lap of Mother Pārvatī:

Vatsalayena suṇālaṅgita ghirijaya svākṣeṇu nibhāya nbhale
Vatpārmaṃpāśaḥ harārṇi svātalpa-hastaṃbuḥ: ।
Vatsalayena muṇi-sūtraṃvibhūntaṃ āśaṇyāve
Svātalpa-hastaṃbuḥ syaḥ: sūtra bhavayā ॥ भावावलितः॥

God Gaṇeśa is the giver of pleasure to both Lord Śiva and Goddess Pārvatī. He is described as playing, embracing and loving his mother. His face looked beautifully due to spreading of milk on his face:

Durīkṛtya nīccholāśrūyunāta kāleśaṃkāraṇāne
Mūrdhe śrīrakṣaśrūyātisvāraṃ vālaṅkākotiprāsanm: ।
Śrūyāntaṃ jāntaṃ taḥ ca śīrṣītita mṛtya muṇḍhūnuṃśhitaṃ
calatyaśrūyātityāṅvātityāṅvānabhrāntaṃ nīmim tām ॥ भावावलितः॥

Ganānaḥ tva ganapatir hastaṃ kavi vāvīnāmaṃṣhvaṃstam: ।
Jayaśaraja brāhmaṇaḥ brāhmaṇapśata a nā: śrūṇव्रूतितिः sāvī saṃtām ॥ अग्रवेद । ।

Bhatt B. N. in his book "Gaṇeśavijayam" observes, “It is supposed to be the Śūkta of Lord Gaṇapati. Really speaking this is a Śūkta of
Brahmaṇaspatiḥ. Even though He was a son of Śaṅkara and Pārvatī, He was not born from the womb of his mother as stated in Brahmavaivartapūrṇa 3.4 and Lingapurāṇa 105. Upaniṣads like Gaṇeśatāpini, Gaṇeśa-atharvaśiraś, Gaṇeśa and Heramba pertain to Lord Gaṇeśa.

Another reference of Gaṇapati is found in Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā (23.19).

Here some scholars say that the reference to Gaṇapati should be understood as referring not to Lord Gaṇapati but to leader of the (Gaṇas) in a general sense. Gaṇeśa was included in the five deities (Pañcadevas) during the Gupta period. The Pañcadevas are Viṣṇu, Śiva, Devī, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa. Before Gupta age no clear reference to the worship of Gaṇeśa is found in any work or inscription. Very few idols of Gaṇeśa belonging to the Gupta period are found. The characteristic feature of the idol of Gaṇeśa are found in works like Viṣṇudharmottara, Brhatsaṁhitā etc. He was recognized as a son of Śiva. His worship spread far and wide where He was recognized as a representative of prosperity.\textsuperscript{1}

In India He is invoked at the commencement of all the religious rituals.

Conclusion :

Gaṅgādevī as a devout poetess has offered prayers to different divinities like God Śīva and Pārvatī, God Gaṇeśa, Goddess Sarasvatī, Kulaguru Kriyāśakti as well as to her learned teacher Viśvanātha. Rāmabhadrāmbā being ardently devoted to her husband emperor Raghunātha has shown her reverence to God Rāma by comparing the king with the latter. In the Khaṇḍakāvyya Vaidyanātha-prāśada-praśasti, the poetess Devakumārikā has offered prayer to God Śīva alias Vaidyanātha and Ekaliṅga ardently worshipped by the people of Mewar even today. Since, Santānagopāla Kāvyā is based on a theme found in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, it contains glorification of God Viṣṇu alias Kṛṣṇa and his various incarnations.

\textsuperscript{1} Bhatt B. N. — Introduction, page 20
Thus in the poetry of the poetesses belonging to the medieval period we prominently find the mythological and metaphysical expressions mainly related with the divinities portrayed in Epics and *Purāṇas* and worshiped by the people in different regions of India.

In case of modern poetry this trend of offering prayers to the deities is continued. Since these compositions are brief and concise, we do not find the description of various aspects connected with these divinities. The poetesses offer the prayers to the Gods keeping some purpose in mind like removing the pains of poverty, illness, isolation and dispelling physical, intellectual and spiritual weakness. Secondly, the poetesses like Pandita Kshama Rao, Mithileshkumari Mishra, Uma Deshpande have nicely depicted majestic personalities of some saints and scholars like Jñāneśvara, Tukārāma, Rāmadāsa, Mīrābāī, sage Dvāipāyana Vyāsa, Śrī Aurobindo, Vāşudevānanda Sarasvatī, Nānā Māhārāja etc. These scholarly saints have not only explained practical wisdom but have also shown the path of spiritual enlightenment.

In short, the Philosophical trends and thoughts are skilfully highlighted by the poetesses from 14th to 21st century AD.

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