

I N T R O D U C T I O N

There is an element of elusiveness in the personalities of great men who exercise a profound influence upon their contemporaries and also shape the course of events in their own life time. They release forces which carry people along with them and help them to have a glimpse of their destiny. These are the heroes, the makers of history. When we see them in flesh and blood or read their works we are moved by what they say, we stand amazed at the magnitude of their achievement, and we admire them; but we cannot see the source of the power behind all this. Perhaps this is because we are different from them. In this background one should study Hardekar Manjappa and his political ideas.

Manjappa did for Karnataka what great leaders like Ram Mohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand, Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi did for India. These architects of modern India were all men of high social and academic distinction. But Manjappa's career did not begin with any such advantage. Born in 1886 in a poor family, in a remote corner of Karnataka, Banavasi in the District of Karwar,

he had to give up his studies after his Mulki examination. At the age of seventeen he became a teacher, with a monthly salary of seven rupees with which he hoped to provide some assistance to his elders. But chill penury could not repress his noble rage; nor could it freeze the genial current of his soul (Chapter II).

In the Thick of Public Life :

There flowed in his blood the age-old culture and tradition of India, a culture which we can see, even in these days of materialism and sophistry, in the poor and unlettered Indian peasant who can teach his learned and proud countrymen a lesson or two in dignity and human charity. In him the desire to learn was keen, and he was prepared for any sacrifice in its pursuit. He decided to remain free from the entanglements of family life and to live a life of austerity and renunciation. But his was not the renunciation of a Sanyasi who runs away from the world to live in solitary contemplation, unmindful of the stresses and strains overwhelming his countrymen. The ascetic rigours which he prescribed for himself were prompted by an awareness of the downtrodden condition of his country and an urge for patriotic service.

Karnataka Gandhi :

The intellectual, moral and spiritual strength needed for his work came from his Brahmacharya (celibacy), which means not merely an unmarried state but also a life of austere simplicity and self-restraint. In this he had the blessings of the great Shivasharanas and the inspiration of Swami Ramathirtha and Gandhiji. In most respects his way of living was similar to that of Gandhiji. Rigidly austere in his habits, abstemious in matters of food, and wearing only pure white Khaddar, he was a living example of Gandhiji's conception of an Indian. As with Gandhiji, spinning every day was a sacred duty to him, for he understood the national and moral significance of spinning. That is why Manjappa was affectionately called the 'Karnataka Gandhi' by his friend Shri Deshpande Gangadhara Rao, a freedom fighter himself, while speaking at a function. From that time onwards people of Karnataka respected him as they respected Gandhiji. Though he was one of the ardent followers of Gandhian ideals in Karnataka, he was not a blind follower of Gandhian ideals. He used to criticise Gandhiji's idea of consigning the foreign cloth to bonfire and held a very sensible view that 'such cloth should be given to the poor'; thus upholding

C.F. Andrews' view on the subject. He also opposed addressing untouchables as Harijans. He was of the opinion that the word Harijan would create a communal feeling among the people of the society. Hence it would be more appropriate to describe them as Adijans (aboriginals). He also criticised Gandhiji's idea of four-fold system of caste-hierarchy (Chaturvarnya). In all these matters he exhibited an originality of mind, and a courage of his convictions (Chapter-VI).

The Swadeshi Movement :

Manjappa possessed a remarkably strong memory and a capacity for sustained thinking, as one can see from the variety of his writings. His was a mind that was always alert, ever receptive, and ever critical and discriminating. He read books of leading European thinkers of the nineteenth century in their Marathi translations wherever available (he had no knowledge of English language) and subjected their ideas to a close scrutiny in order to see how far they were helpful to India's advancement. Even before Gandhiji's Wardha Scheme of national and craft-oriented education was introduced, he had thought of a system of education entirely national in character and based on the

fundamental values of Indian culture, and introduced it in his Almatti Ashram founded in 1927 (Chapter III).

He was greatly influenced by the Va'cana's of Veerasaiva saints, particularly of Shri Basaveshvar, with their emphasis on Kāyaka or work and activism to maintain the self-respect and dignity of every individual. At the same time he showed a refreshing catholicism in religious matters and had a profound respect for all other religions. Like Swami Vivekanand and Swami Ramathirtha he hoped that the Indians would build up a cultural edifice incorporating all that was best in other cultures also, on the bedrock of what was valuable in their own Sanathana Dharma (Chapter VII).

The India of his conception would develop on all fronts. It would be a co-ordinated, harmonized and integrated development --- political, social and cultural. If development in one of these fields was given greater prominence (as for example priority to political emancipation over other equally important matters) India would lose its moorings and drift aimlessly like the countries of the West, and ultimately lose its soul. (Chapter V).

When freedom comes, India should be prepared not only to enjoy that freedom, but also to teach other countries how to live in peace and harmony. This is what Gandhiji had meant when he exhorted his countrymen to give as much importance to the struggle for freedom. Manjappa realised the inherent value of this approach and directed all his energies to the work of preparing his people to use political freedom, when it comes, for human advancement. This explains his non-participation in Satyagraha and his concentration on a programme of educating his countrymen and preparing the ground, so to say, for the advent of freedom.

Journalistic Venture :

Journalism today is a tremendous force for disseminating new ideas among people. Manjappa took up journalism because he thought he could reach the masses easily through that media. His Dhanurdhari (a weekly) started in 1906, set its shafts against every aspect of the life and conduct of the people that hindered development and progress. Also, he edited Khadi Vijaya (monthly) in 1928 and later renamed it as Udyoga in 1930 and through it inculcated among the people the value of dignity of labour.

Later, his Sharana Sandesh (a weekly) started in 1931 sought to educate the people in the fundamental moral and spiritual values of Indian life, which alone could wean mankind from the suicidal materialistic path of living. In this connection it is pertinent to note that, in using the word Sharana, he meant all those Great Souls who revealed to the people the right purpose and manner of living, and not just the preceptors of the Veerasaiva faith only. His earnestness, his idealism, and his moral purpose were transparent in his impressive prose, and his writings are, even today, models of effective prose-writing. He was a prolific writer in Kannada. He has more than 50 books in the Kannada language to his credit. His writings can be classified as follows:

- a) Autobiography
- b) Nationalist Literature
- c) Research works
- d) Translation works
- e) Editorial Writings on Social, Economic and Political Problems (National and International).
- f) Children's literature.

If he had written in English he would have no doubt become a world famous writer. However, thanks to the efforts of 'Hardekar Manjappa Smaraka Granthamale', which

has already brought out a few translations of his works in English. It may also be mentioned here that to celebrate his 81st Birth Anniversary in a fitting manner, the Hardekar Manjappa Smaraka Granthamale released a definitive edition of his writings in Kannada (pp. 1350), edited with scholarly comments by late Prof. G.S. Halappa, Professor of Political Science, Karnatak University, Dharwar, at a function held at Bangalore on 2nd February, 1966. It is gratifying to note that almost every lettered person in Karnataka has read Manjappa's works as he wrote pamphlets and small books also to cater to the needs of children, the women, the villager and everybody. He was a popular pamphleteer.

He did more than that. He toured all over Karnataka, especially in the less developed northern areas, and spoke to the people; and was affectionately called by the people as the 'Mamletdar of Discourses'. His speeches, gentle, persuasive and interspersed with delicate humour, were lucid and impressive. People used to listen to him for hours at a stretch, for they could perceive behind the easy flow of his words his earnestness and sincerity. By his speeches he made Kannadigas to realise their duty to the country as no

In all he did and said, he considered himself to be first and foremost a nationalist. The goal of his life was the comprehensive regeneration of India as a nation. His efforts to examine her past were meant to provide a basis for such a regeneration. In a very real sense, each one of his activities, whatever its apparent form, may be related to this central purpose of nationalism (Rāstriya Dharma). Great indeed has been his contribution to the growth of the spirit of nationalism in Karnataka. The spirit of nationalism triumphed, though Manjappa did not live (he died on 3-1-1947) to witness it. Never more than today when we are defending our mother-land and her territorial integrity against wanton aggression, we need to hear his last inspiring words addressed particularly to the youth of the country:

"Be brave
 Be pure
 Be heroes of free India,
 This is my last appeal to you".

Such men are the salt of the earth and the only hope of mankind. Like others they live their allotted span of life and pass away from the scene. But unlike others they leave behind them ideas and ideals, which, if lived up to, would bring about the salvation to mankind, Hence the need for and importance of the study.

✓Hardekar Manjappa has been hailed as a great nationalist of Karnataka, an independent thinker of power and originality, a social reformer, outstanding editor, a pioneer educationist, a master of Kannada prose, a leader known as 'Karnataka Gandhi'. An attempt has, therefore, been made in this thesis to study Hardekar Manjappa's political views in an objective way. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that in view of the value and importance of his political ideas, Hardekar Manjappa is included for study in a course on 'Modern Indian Political Thought' prescribed by Karnatak University for the M.A. Degree students.

For the purpose of study, the thesis has been divided as follows:

In Chapter I an attempt has been made to set the person in the national background and the history of Indian National Movement since 1857 has been examined to determine the extent of its influence on Hardekar Manjappa.

In Chapter II an attempt is made to discuss briefly the political biography of Hardekar Manjappa and his role in the Indian national movement as a freedom fighter from Karnataka.

Chapter III deals with his contribution to the Swadeshi movement as a nationalist and as a journalist. It should be noted here, like Tilak who took advantage of religious festivals like Shivaji Jayanti and Ganesh Pooja to bring about political and social awakening among the masses, Manjappa also started the celebration of 'Basava Jayanti' with the same purpose. Thus from 1913 onwards it became a national festival and he elevated Shri Basaveshvar to national level. Speaking from the point of view of economics, it is Hardekar Manjappa who spread the Khadi cult and Satyagraha Dharma of Gandhiji through his journal Khadi Vijaya, Udyoga, and his book Khadi Shastra (The Science of Khadi) and innumerable speeches which helped to popularise the Khadi cult in Karnataka. Thus he was a pioneer of Khadi movement in Karnataka.

Chapter IV deals with his approach to the concept of 'patriotism'. Mention has also been made here as to the necessary pre-requisites of patriotism according to Manjappa; to what extent these qualities prevailed in India in the past, how Indians gained these after the advent of the British rule in this country; and how Indians are to promote patriotism if they want to call themselves patriots of the land.

In Chapter V an attempt is made to explain his attitude towards a new social order. Here the impact of five thousand years of India's history has been examined and how Hardekar Manjappa visualised that India would get her political independence from the British and in a short span of time it would be politically, economically, socially prosperous.

In Chapter VI an attempt is made to compare Hardekar Manjappa's views with those of Gandhiji to determine the extent of agreement and disagreement among the two personalities.

Chapter VII examines the humanism of Hardekar Manjappa, wherein an attempt is made to study his attitude towards religion, society etc.

In the course of Chapter VIII a final assessment of his main contribution is attempted. In doing so the precise role of Manjappa is sought to be determined in a dispassionate, objective and original manner.

The thesis is based on the original works of Hardekar Manjappa and his journals Sharana Sandesh and Udyoga which are in Kannada language, books on Hardekar Manjappa written by different authors, and lastly, interviews conducted with his close associates.