CHAPTER- VI

CONCEPT OF BHAKTI (DEVOTION)

Listen to the description of the wedding:

\[ Jalad \text{ mantapad mele uriya chapparavanikki } \]
\[ Alikalla \text{ hasey hasi basigava katte } \]
\[ Kalillad \text{ hendatige taleyillad gand bandu } \]
\[ Maduweyadanu \]
\[ Endendu bidad baluvege kottarenna. \]
\[ Cennamallikarjunanemb gandangenna \]
\[ Maduweya madidarele awwa}. \]

"Setting a canopy of fire
a marquee made of water,
And making up a hailstone seat,
wearing a tasselled chaplet-crown
He cane and wed
A headless bridegroom to a legless bride.
They gave me to a life
Never to be shaken off!
They married me to a groom
Named Cennamallikarjuna." \[1\]

The Vacana is crammed with spiritual meaning. They lay a ceiling of knowledge on the altar of the mind which is as fickle as water. The Guru's look of grace is spread as a carpet. For the bride, the sarana, who is free from all worldly ways of living, the Linga who transcends all earthly bonds, was
the groom. It is thus a wedding between God and his devotee; hence it is an eternal alliance, says Mahadevi.

When we carefully reflect on these words, we can understand the height of her conception of marriage. Not even a ray of worldly pleasure or its desire is found in her sati-pati bhakti. When the spirit of wife and lord soars higher than the limits of worldly relationship, it is esteemed as true devotion. We notice the supreme height of such bhakti in her words.

When such a sarana wife, reaches the ultimate height of divine experience, she herself becomes the husband. Bride and bridegroom are not different but one. The bride meditating upon the bridegroom, has attained to a stage which transcends the medition itself.

*Tanu nimma rupad balik arige maduwe?*

*Mane nimma rupad balik are neneve?*

*Pran nimma rupad balik ara naradhisuwe?*

*Ariu nimmalli swayavad balik aranariwe?*

*Cemmamallikarjunaya*

*Nimmind niweyadiragi*

*Nimmane aruwwtirdenu.*

"After my body became Thy self, whom could I serve?"

"After my mind became Thyself, whom could I invoke?"

"After my breath became"
Thyself, whom could I worship, pray?
After my consciousness was lost in Thee,
Whom could I know?
Being Thyself in Thee,
O Cennamallikarjuna Lord,
Through Thee have I forgotten Thee!  

When, rising from Thy bed of rest,
Thou com’st, O sivalinga, to my palm,
In the resplendent luster of Thy light
My mind and body faint

My eyes on Linga riveted
I revel in the essence of delight
That flows from Siva’s love.
Uniting with the righteous ones
True piety,
I shamelessly embrace Thee: mark,
O Cennamallikarjuna!

Here Akkamahadevi has found Lord Cennamallikarjuna in the form of Linga. In her Vacana, she doesn’t differentiate Linga from lord. The Linga has been metaphorised as well as personified. Through the Linga on her palm she looks at the spirit of Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

Akkamahadevi forgets the sense of her own body. The physical beauty has become a temporary asset to her. According to Akkamahadevi, the real
beauty is the beauty of soul which mingles with the great soul. She delights in the love that flows from Shiva, and unites both the souls. When she embraces Him, she forgets herself.

Elladevardev wallabhane
Guru cennamallikarjunane
Manadolage Iru kanda
Ballante nimma stutisuwenu

O Guru, cennamallikarjuna lord
God of all gods dwell within my heart
And I will sing thy praise the best I can

Maha ghanalingav vedist kottu
Shiva tane guru vagi bandu
Maha ghana lingava vedisi kotta

Pari entendade:
Atnaguudi panch bhutangalane
Shhadvida Angavendenasi
A angakke a kalegalane
Shhadvidha shaktigalendenisi
A Shaktigalige
Shhadvidha bhaktiyanalavadisi.

Now to explain how siva,
lodging there
Cast out the corporal state and
Pierced it.
As Guru himself.

With the great linga absolute:
The five elements, with the soul
Became the six corporal parts:
The forms became Linga's
Six energies:
To these a sixfold piety
Was matched:

The Bhakta Sthala

Devotion founded on faith is then the characteristic of this way of spiritual life. All the activities of the Bhakta are vivified by love of the Supreme. Hence, all his enjoyments are for Him. Because of his purity of intention and his life of constant self-offering, his whole self, including his body, gets transformed into a spiritual reality. In brief, his active life, permeated with true devotion, becomes divine, or Lingamaya.8

We also know that Shri Aurobindo believes that the ultimate destiny of the process of evolution will be a divine life in which all beings will be liberated.

Every activity leads one towards the realization of unity, which in an expression of the infinite within us. The aim of Shri Aurobindo's yoga is to do it in a conscious way.

"Thus yoga implies not only the realization of god but an entire consecration and change of the inner and outer life till it is fit to manifest a divine consciousness and become part of a divine work."9

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Knowledge and devotion, for example, are not opposed to each other, and yet jnana marga and Bhakti yoga assert and lay emphasis on their won ways. Shri. Aurobindo feels that what is needed is an allround and total development.

What is needed is a total transformation of all the aspects of being the mental, the vital and the physical.

Therefore, only that process can be purna yoga which will aim at the complete transformation of every aspect of a being. This is the aim of Shri. Aurobindo’s yoga, and therefore, it is called integral (Purnayoga).

Devotion was a panacea for all ills. It disburdened their minds of unwholesome accretions. It showed them the true path of god.\(^{10}\)

On the contrary, he paid highest respect to a true devotee (Bhakta), who was full of faith though low born and out cast. He insisted on the code of behaviour that a faithful devotee should avoid the company of the faithless.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{If I would touch Thee with my body,} \\
\text{Thou art the great intangible one;} \\
\text{How can I hold Thee in my palm, O Lord?} \\
\text{Nothing I do can reach thee: how, then,} \\
\text{Can I adore Thee, Lord?} \\
\text{Nor nada can, nor bindu, touch Thee:} \\
\text{Then,} \\
\text{How can I sing Thee, Lord?} \\
\text{Gazing upon Thee ceaselessly} \\
\text{I am enrapt in Thee and lost,} \\
\text{O Cennamallikarjuna!}^{11}
\end{align*}
\]
Akkamahadevi, in this Vacana, has been too lean to withstand the weight of the Almighty Cennamallikarjuna. So she beseeched the Lord how could she do that if nothing could touch Him and if one did not have powerful will to adorn His power, as Akka says here.

Akkamahadevi questions, if neither Nada, nor bindu can touch and reach Him how could she and her song follow Him. Here we find that according to Akka, only a soul imbued with complete bhakti can mingle into the great soul. Industrious effort, regular bhajana of him can fill one with delight and make one get lost in the Lord. So love is added to bhakti. Bhakti is that love which overflows in a confluence. Her vacanas are like a mighty river that bears the tide of her love and bhakti into the divine ocean. Such a divine madness as is hers, finds its aptest expression through metaphor and symbol. Muse over her following Vacana:

*Lord and guru, I trust Thee*

*Thou, the husband of Ambika (Parvati),*

*My ferryman!*

*See how swift the gleaming current flows!*

*How turbulent are the waters!*

*Fallen am I into the whirl pool!*

*Thou alone must pull me out of the vortex.*

*The sixfold wave is bearing down.*

*See Thou my ferryman*

*It speeds like the wave of the deluge.*

*Kick it aside and row me safely ashore.*

*Put me not away. Thou my ferryman.*
Thou lodestar that art bhakti,
Carry me to Cennamallikarjuna's haven of bliss. \(^{12}\)

The river of universal life bears upon its bosom the ark of the individual life. Siva himself must be the boatman of the ark. Today, even bhakti has become a commodity.

\begin{verbatim}
If you, while carrying of a stone,
Sink in the sea, is there, my dear,
A limit to calamity?
In saying I am hungry when I've had my fill,
I contradict myself;
If my heart passions anywhere at all,
How can my husband Cennamallikarjuna
Love me at all, my dear? \(^{13}\)
\end{verbatim}

Akkamahadevi in this psalm professes about the truth and reality. The inner voice of this Vacana is that one should do only one thing and pursue it until one achieves it. It is understood that if one falls in to the ocean of love of the Lord one should swim in that with unique faith in Him only. Another faith shouldn't be allowed to intervene. If this happens, there will be no limit danger.

Here Akka emphasizes the truth that it is the sole mantra to know the great power who deserves purity and truth. According to her, one's mind and heart should count the same beads of Him. Otherwise, he couldn't love Him at all.
Pentagram

"The glorious divine person had scarcely placed his hand upon my head when the worldly bondage of mine disappeared. He made me like himself. Behold! He mainifested himself by annihilating isolation between myself and himself."

The great divine image, mahalinga, that was in the palm of his hand, he established in the palm of my hand.

The great divine image of the palm of my hand, he established in the inner chamber of my mind.

The great divine image of the inner chamber of my mind, He established in the inner-most recess of my heart.

The great divine image of the inner-most recess of my heart, He established in the super-mind or in the illuminating reflex of my inner mind.

The great divine image of the super-mind, He established in the super conscient so that the divine consciousness permeated my body both within and without, such is the working of my glorious lord Cennamallikarjuna."

- Akkamahadevi

With dedicated body and mind,
With heart made fast I live, my dear
Steadfast affection, unwavering, love,
And wills inseparably made one,
Cennamallikarjuna has found, my dear
A secure harbour in my heart.
Body and mind have been reserved for the pleasure of Cennamallikarjuna. Her heart is beating for the sake of the Lord's love affection are unshattered. They eternal poles, passions of the two are made unseparable. Their choices have been united in to one.

In the Vacana Akkamahadevi has said that she has committed her will to the will of the God, for that the Lord Cennamallikarjuna has secured a permanent place in her. In this way we can find the unbroken relation between her and Cennamallikarjuna.

**Bhakti as the designation of the religious attitude:**

If asked to propose one term so comprehensive as to include all that has been discussed so far by us in connection with the nature and content of religion, we could find perhaps no term more suitable for the purpose than "bhakti."

Bhakti is oriented to god, but god is the name we give to that principle conceived a personal.

Bhakti lays emphasis on the rational or intellectual demonstration of the necessity of the supreme mind and insists on the existential relationship between man and god.

Thus, from the point of view of the subject-object relationship, bhakti excludes the possibility of the application of the term 'religion' to any faith that is restricted only to the ethical.

Bhakti suggests this personal encounter between god and man both of whom are personal in nature. This is so far as both the ontological and epistemological problems of religion are concerned.
The connotation of bhakti is so comprehensive and wide that it emphasizes the collaboration and harmony of all the three elements of consciousness, so that religion cannot be defined or understood abstractly in terms of any one of the three components.

Bhakti is at the same time cognitive, conative and volitional, reminding us that, as involving the entire human personality, it includes knowledge, feeling and action as the essentially inseparable components in religious consciousness.16

If one is asked by what single term the religion of the visistadvaita could be adequately understood in the light of the facts and arguments we have marshalled above, there would perhaps be no better term than bhakti.

Intuition is not an appeal to the subjective whims of the individual, or a dogmatic faculty of conscience or the uncritical morbid view of the psychopath. It is the most complete experience we can possibly have. It is the experience which devout souls have in moments of spiritual exaltation or religious devotion.”17

*If one experiences the light
Of one’s own heart’s desire,
There is increase in love itself
Until it overflows all bounds, my dear.
Mother, you are a witless one:
Loving my lord Chenna Mallikarjuna,
I’ve given my self to Him entire
I do not want your mothering: avaut !18*
Akkamahadevi consumed the love of Cennamallikarjuna. It has overcome the love of her mother. So she says that if one loves his dear one by cornering the bounds of hurdles and not caring the words of outsiders, one's love can increase and reach at a saturation point. One shouldn’t go on arguing about meaningless matters. We cannot get any benefit and cannot satisfy any one. If love all and share love with all. A particular aim and goal is essential to embrace any achievement.

Akkamahadevi tells her mother that she needs no more love and affection from her mother, because she has devoted and dedicated everything to her Cennamallikarjuna. Therefore she doesn’t want to divert her anything to anybody else. Her mother was asked to follow her, Akka wanted her mother to go back by leaving her alone in the haven of her love of Cennamallikarjuna. Here we can find that Akkamahadevi has renounced worldly things and a mortal man. Instead she is trying to embrace immortality.

Tagore and Vaisnava Philosophy:

In the fruit gathering, the devotee says: Alas, I cannot stay in the house, and home has become no home for me, for.

Bhaktiyog, two parts preparatory bhakti (Devotion)

a. Purity in food (viveka in food)
b. Freedom from desires (vimoha)
c. Performance of religious practices (abhyasa)
d. Doing good to others (kriya)
e. Truthfulness in thought, speech and behaviour (kalyana)
f. Cheerfulness (Anavasada)
Supreme devotion (para - bhakti)

1. Renunciation
2. Universal love
3. Self-surrender
4. Human representations of love with god
5. Union with the absolute

We may Summarise Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy of evolution under the following points:

Sri Aurobindo conceives of divine evolutionism as follows:

Evolution is a double process of ascent and descent.

Seeing the one of god - like face
Who shines and glows upon my eyes,
I lost all consciousness of myself;
Seeing the loveliness adorned
With jeweled crown and wristlet made of snake
With face all smiles and radiant teeth,
My heart was lost. Therefore,
Hear me, O mother, my Chenna Mallikarjuna
Is now my bridegroom, I his bride.20

With the grace of the Lord, Linga has come to her palm, and it has started to shine. Having seen this, Akka has lost her consciousness. She visualized the Lord on her palm and enjoyed the beauty of the lord and decided that He was her bridegroom. When Akkamahadevi saw the lord, she found him with a jewelled crown, wristlet made of snake, face full of smiles, and bright teeth. These attracted Akkamahadevi who lost her heart to Him.

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Akkamahadevi tells her mother that she wanted to be a bride of Lord Chenna Mallikarjuna. Not only in this vacana but in many other vacana. Akkamahadevi accepted Lord Chenna Mallikarjuna as her husband. By this we can find that Akka has not found Cennamallikarjuna in a short span of time. She has taken a lot of pains to see Him in this present state. According to Akka, one should struggle hard to get wealth of something worthy as she got.

Bhakti-yoga also thus consists in meditation like Jnana-yoga; but it is meditation that is suffused with feelings of love and dependence. This is in accordance with ancient ideal of finding release in a life hereafter, and no jivan-mukti as such (p-19) is recognized here as in Samkara’s advaita.

**Bhakti** - This is loving devotion and is the disciplinary means, specially appropriate to theism, with belief in a single personal god. Speaking generally, it represents a social attitude while yoga does not the reverse. The bhaktas meet together and they find spiritual exaltation in the company of others that are similarly devoted. The yogins, on the other hand, are apt to seek god or the absolute singly. Their aim is to be alone with the alone. Bhakti again is predominantly emotional while yoga is predominantly intellectual for it adds an element of love to devotion.21

There has been in modern times a good deal of discussion on the origin of the bhakti cult in India. Some have traced it to Christian sources; but, as in the case of the Bhagavata religion, the hypothesis of a foreign origin has not commanded the assent of scholars in general. The word bhakti is derived.
A stream behind a brook in front;
How can I be with thee, tell me!
Behind, a tank; in front, a net:
Where is my happiness, tell me!
This maya which Thou hast set
Is overwhelming me,
Save me, save me,
O Cennamallikarjuna! 

The web of troubles has been penned by Akkamahadevi, even though a stream, a brook and a tank, are life giving sources. They are taken as the hurdles. The idea of excellencetry along with troubles is revealed on this vachan. Akkamahadevi has assumed that the net of difficulties has been knitted by Cennamallikarjuna in order to test her. Therefore, Akkamahadevi bids Cennamallikarjuna to save her from dangers along the path leading to him. She exclaimed where she could find happiness without her Lord!

Maya, which has been set by the Lord, is an a mazing one to Akka. She is so humble to overcome all the pains given by maya. 'Maya', an invisible force, controls her from reaching the lord. Here we would come to know that visualising the god is not an easy task. It needs a lot of determined efforts pain, and struggle. Body should wither away, and the soul should grow stronger. With the stronger power of the soul one can at least feel the existence of the Lord.

The Svetasvatara Upanishad uses the very word and speaks of the necessity of the highest devotion not only to God but also to the guru, who is the channel through which the knowledge of god comes to us.

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Of the three gods, whose supremacy belongs to this period, Visnu-krisna is most prominently connected with this idea of bhakti, but it is found mentioned in respect of the others also, as for instance, Siva, who is described as being kind to the devotee’ (bhaktanukampin).

The doctrine of knowledge through tanmaya, of becoming filled in by god as in knowledge soaked in devotion or knowledge of the form bhakti (bhakti-rupapanna jnana) lets one into the expanse of god’s infinite, illimitable indivisible (anantatva and akhandatva) nature.\(^\text{23}\)

Vishnu even in the Rigvedic times- also features prominently in the Narayaniya. It is stated that through the grace of the Deity king Vasu ascended to heaven, a spot that is even higher than the region of brahma himself, and by his grace the king was rescued when thrown down from the heaven by a curse of the Rishis.\(^\text{24}\) Besides knowledge and love, the deity is said to be righteousness incarnate. The deity is made to declare, I have never uttered anything base or anything that is obscence”. The divine Sarasvati who is truth’s self, and is otherwise known as Rta, represents my speech, and always dwells on my tongue. Even the very names of the deity have a sanctifying and cleansing power.

Forms of the deity:

Deity with a thousand rays. The beauty of the deity is said to be indescribable and its nature is indicated only by means of inadequate analogies.

J. Hypocrisy: (NIFAQ)

Hypocrisy is merely verbal assent of the creed and its denial at heart. This “religion” or “obedience” about which moulana rumy has aptly remarked:
"Shouldst thou love liberty and care to
Develop a loving heart,
Bind thyself to him in devotion now and forever,
Life is meant for devotion alone,
Life without devotion is a matter of shame!
Save, humility, devotion and restless yearning,
Nothing is of value, in the sight of God
He who lives in love

To him, all, save devotion, is infidelity. Devotion to be fruitful must rest on the inward urge. The seed to grow into a plant needs a kernel within, says God Almighty, "O, prophet say thou," "This is my way"

Hearken unto my prayer; hear me;
Grant me my prayer;
Wherefore dost thou not listen to my cry
O father mine? Wherefore dost thou not look
Upon my grief? Apart from Thee
There's nothing, nothing at all!
Thou only art my ground and goal,
Cennamallikarjuna lord

In this vacana Akkamahadevi bids Lord Cennamallikarjuna to listen to her prayer and grant her humble demands. She asks, if the Lord doesn't listen to her cry and if He does not look into her grief who will look into it? He is the sole protector and listener of all grievances and pains of her in particular, and of all in general. Strongly she proposes to Him that apart from Him nothing remains. Therefore, she urges on her Lord to understand her and her plight.

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If it is analytic that god has only one recourse remains. Since the divine possession of p cannot be explained by reference to the divine nature, it can only be explained by reference to the divine existence.\(^{27}\)

More to the identity of the divine essence and existence, with some kind of priority being accorded to the divine existence. The connection between the existential and qualitative arguments is closer than Kant recognized.

Her Lord Cennamallikarjuna appeared to her vision with a divine radiance and beauty, as the only bridegroom. The grace received at the hands of her spiritual teacher completed this process. In vacana No. 14, she says:

\[
\begin{align*}
Guru & \text{ was kinsman to officiate:} \\
\text{Linga the bridegroom, I the bride;} \\
\text{May all the worlds know it} \\
\text{My father and my mother were} \\
\text{The innumerable saints:} \\
\text{They found for me a fitting groom and gave me away.} \\
\text{Hence Chenna Mallikarjuna is my Lord} \\
\text{No other husbands in the world} \\
\text{Are aught to me, Prabhu !}^{28}
\end{align*}
\]

When she was burning with this divine aspiration, king Kau sika's proposal came to her as a blessing in disguise and precipitated her renunciation, she renounced the world and left Udutadi to seek the bride groom at Kalyana.

\[
\text{Mahadeviyaka makes this point more clear:} \\
\text{While still in body's company}
\]
I have become Linga’s companion;  
And while in Linga’s company, I am  
Body’s companion,  
Transcending the company of both,  
I have attained to peace.  
After forgetting this cluster of words  
What if one lives  
An integral life?  
Once I am joined  
To lord Cennamallikarjuna,  
I do not recognize myself  
As anything!  

This vacana gives, perhaps, the essence of a sarana’s life. Only through the body does he establish association with Linga. The Linga he wears is symbolic of the sarana’s all round activities being conducted in conformity with the divine will. He cannot go astray, because he is firmly and inseparably tied to the divine Linga. And thus the earthly life is transformed into the divine.

When I am good I pour the bath  
And worship only when I’m calm;  
And if I sing of Thee, it is .  
In the last ecstasy of love.  
O Cennamallikarjuna Lord  
The worship that forever joins  
Myself to Thee, is my delight!  

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Characters of a devotee have been spelt out by the godly person Akkamahadevi. She said that an aspirant of the Almighty ought to be good, calm, and have the highest ecstasy of love. Mercy, love kindness and humbleness will take him/her to the right path of the omnipotent.

While worshipping the Linga a man should possess all the above qualities. A devotee has to have the qualities of him for his communion. Here Akka has become such a person who delights to worship Him forever.

Akkamahadevi, the great woman saint of Basavanna's time, is said to have been set on to the spiritual path at a very tender age by Marula siddha, the founder of our mutt (Monastery). She is remembered even today not because of her physical, but her spiritual beauty. She opened the lustful eyes of king Kausika when he tried to molest her.

\[ \text{Get back, I hate you!} \]
\[ \text{Don't hold my sari, you fool!} \]
\[ \text{A she-buffalo is concerned for its life,} \]
\[ \text{And the butcher, concerned with killings!} \]
\[ \text{The pious, concerned with virtues.} \]
\[ \text{And the wicked, with vices;} \]
\[ \text{I am concerned for my self,} \]
\[ \text{And you, with lust! listen,} \]
\[ \text{The only worry that haunts me is;} \]
\[ \text{Whether my lord Chenna Mallikarjuna} \]
\[ \text{Loves me or not!} \]
\[ \text{Fie on this body.} \]
\[ \text{Why do you damn yourself} \]
For love of it, this pot of excrement,
The vessel of urine, the frame of bones,
This stench of purulence!
Think of Lord Cennamallikarjuna,
You fool! 31

Sexual abstinence is not considered an absolute virtue, nor is indulgence considered as detrimental to spirituality as overindulgence or abstinence by force. If anyone has an exceptional personality and can control his / her passions with a natural ease, like Akkamahadevi, who could otherwise have led a well-settled life as her majesty the queen, they are, no doubt, welcome.

The peacock strutting on the mountain-tops
Does it do so on grassy knolls instead?
The swan that frolicks on the lake
Does it do so in the wee brook instead?
A cuckoo, does it sing unless the fronds
Break forth upon the mongo tree?
Is a bumble-bee drawn to a flower
That blows without perfume?
Is my heart drawn to any one else
Than Cennamallikarjuna?
Tell me, O cronies mine! 32

In this vacana, Akkamahadevi asks her friends how she could live and love some one else than her own Lord Cennamallikarjuna. She doesn’t even think of others instead of Him. He is the only one to her. He is the only goal to her. Therefore she gives some examples of peacock, cuckoo and bee that are drawn towards the things of their heart’s desire.
Peacock doesn’t dance on the grassy knolls instead of the mountain-tops. A swan never frolicks on the small brook instead of the lake. A cuckoo doesn’t sing without eating the fronds of mango-tree. Again Akkamahadevi asks that a bee never flies towards a flower which doesn’t give fragrance and perfume. If these natural beings are not being attracted by others rather than their own things how is possible for Akkamahadevi to love some one else than Cennamallikarjuna.

Akka spends all the time in memory of him. She worships Linga alone which gives her much delight. To find Him is the only source of delight and peace to her.

Akkamahadevi affirms in unmistakable terms that she loves Lord Cennamallikarjuna and none else. He is her natural and unmistakable choice. No lesser being would suit her.

When you become It and do not see It, because the dichotomy of subject and object vanishes on attaining It. How can you see the mountain when you are standing on it? asks Akkamahadevi.

In her own words:

I cannot say,

It is god or the union with god.

I cannot say

It is meeting or separation

I cannot say

It has happened or not happened.

I cannot say
It is me or you.
On getting merged
In the supreme being of
Cennamallikarjuna,
There’s nothing I can say (V.A. 278) 33

Sati-Pati Brides of the Lord:

The distinction between the two categories, however, lies in the fact that walking out of a marriage on the part of some women, such as Akkamahadevi (or Lal Ded of Kashmir) was a second order rebellion since they had initially accepted the yoke of marriage.

In the case of married women this involved firstly the rejection of their worldly husband and secondly the identification of Siva as their groom or pati.

The oral tradition regarding Akkamahadevi’s renunciation of marital ties comes down to us from Harihara who was almost contemporaneous with Basava. It is believed that she scorned king Kausika’s sexual advances towards her by walking out of the king’s palace naked with her long hair as her only covering. Before the Lingayat spiritual council the Anubhava Mantapa, she declared her mystical union with Siva.

The guru became the giver
The lord Linga became the bridegroom;
And I became the bride.
All this the world knows.34
Look at the way that love has been
So fast! Whenever you shoot your shaft
You must take care the feather does not
Show : whenever you hug, the bones
Must crack to little bits;
Wherever you join, the solder must not give.
O mother, Cennamallikarjuna's love
Is very sweet!35

Here Akkamahadevi conveys the relation between a human being and god. If one wants to find communion with him, one should be so pure and steadfast to the love of the Lord. Ardent love, dedication, devotion are the basic qualities of a man. Therefore, she writes that there shouldn't be any gap. Even a feather mustn't pass through it. Whenever we embrace each other, we have to embrace closely. One has to wel in the love and affection of the Lord Akkamahadevi said that one should cradle as tight as breaking bones. So, here we can imagine how fast Akka hugged her Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

In this vacana, Akkamahadevi told her mother how much Lord Cennamallikarjuna love, and how sweet his company was. He is the sole person to her to find the other world. Akka's love is inseparable and indispensable, as if she has been fastened as one shaft with another one.

O swarms of bees, O mango - tree,
O cuckoo and the light of moon,
One thing I beg of all of you:
If you catch sight
Of my lord Cennamallikarjuna,
Call out to me and let me see!36
Akkamahadevi, a great vacana composer, has gone to the nature and asks to different associates of it if any of swarms of bees, mangotree, cuckoo see lord Cennamallikarjuna they should inform her. Than she wants to go and embrace him.

If bees, trees, birds, have the limits to search her beloved, she presents her demand before the light of the moon which is boundless to search her lord. Therefore, in this way by hook or crook she wants her husband and lord. By this we could come to know that Akkamahadevi has left no stone unturned on this earth to see and meet Lord Cennamallikarjuna, the Linga lord.

In spite of the fact that there is a multiplicity of scriptures in Hinduism which vary from the very sophisticated to the very elementary ones, one towering concept that emerges from every one of them is Divinity is everywhere. It is ever-present and everywhere present. Whatever one sees, hears, smells, tastes or touches is nothing but a spark of the divinity, though camouflaged by our ignorance. That one divinity is the common substratum for everything that exists. To realize the omnipresent divinity by an intuitive internal illumination is the major purpose of life's journey.

The divinity inherent in each one of us has a Dharma of its own.

The lives of the sages of the Upanishads were buoyant with the joy of recognition of this divine consciousness underlying everything in the universe. Delve deep beyond the names and forms. Every physical expression in the form of a sensory or mental experience is nothing but an expression of the divine. In other words, when you see something physically, the Upanishadic
seers say, Thus divinity is everywhere, all around you, above you, below you, before you, behind you, outside of you and inside of you. Since everything is divinity and it is everywhere no delimitation of it in terms of a name and form is possible.

*Quickly, O quickly show Thyself*

*That I unite myself with Thee;*

*Do not dismiss me, Lord!*

*I am a maid attached to thee:*

*Do not dismiss me, Lord!*

*O Cennamallikarjuna Lord,*

*Trusting in Thee, I followed Thee:*

*Quickly, O quickly, take me, Lord,*

*Into Thine arms!*\(^{38}\)

It has been shown that Akkamahadevi’s eagerness increased doubly to unite with Lord Cennamallikarjuna. She urged him to show himself so that she can enter into the arms of Cennamallikarjuna. Again and again she begs of Him not to deny her proposal, because she finally belongs to Him and to him only, and is a young maid attached to Him so deeply.

Her trust her faith, love, wealth and pleasure many more things have been dedicated to Him only. Even her comforts are renounced for the sake of Lord Mallikarjuna. Akka remained only a servant at his feet, and day and night fall short to serve him. This lady sacrificed her queenly status because of Him. Now a queen turned beggar of Lord. Cennamallikarjuna pines away in search of omnipotent and omnipresent Lord Cennamallikarjuna.
Akkamahadevi struggled her whole life for at least an inch of place in his arms. An inch of place in his arms can give her satisfaction and peace of ages.

*What is wrong if my first love be For a good man?*

*What is wrong with a love wherefrom The others are shut out?*

*What is wrong with a love that never ends For Cennamallikarjuna, God of gods?*

In this world, we are having attachment and love towards many persons and things. We think that they are correct without knowing that such attachments can cause us pain. Instead of loving ordinary persons what is wrong, if I have great love towards an exceedingly good person? When that person is good, even if my love towards other persons and things get shut closed on account of the dazzling love of mine towards that noble soul, there is no harm, because I am experiencing happiness in my love of that noble person.

The noblest person whom I can love very passionately is Lord Cennamallikarjuna. He is so noble and great that when I start loving him, my mind becomes incapable of loving any other thing or person in the whole world. There is no harm in it, because my unfaultering love towards lord is full and complete and the bliss that comes to me from that is indescribably fine and absorbing.

**Nine types of devotion:**

Tulasidas has alluded to the nine types of devotion (Navadha bhakti), R III, 20, 4. But when he expounds the nine forms of.
It to sabari through lips of his lord, he deviates from the list as given in the Bhagavata VIII 5, 23.

In this matter, he follows the Adhyatma Ramayana 3 X, 22-27, Rama says, “I explain the nine kinds of devotion. The first step in faith is communion with the saints. The second is love for the legends relating to me. The third is selfless devotion to the lotus-feet of the guru. The fourth is the song of my praises with a guileless purpose. The fifth is prayer and repetition of mystic spells with an assured confidence. The sixth is self-governance and detachment from the world.

The seventh consists in seeing the whole world full of me, and in holding the saints in yet greater account than myself. The eighth is contentment with what one has, without ever dreaming of fault in others. The ninth consists in a guileless simplicity towards all, and a hearty confidence in me without either exultation or dejection.” R III 43, 4; 44, 1-3.

Donning the hero’s bracelet on my wrist,
Around the ankle I tied the badge;
I took the challenge of the armour
I wore,
O Chenna Mallikarjuna,
If I bring shame upon my vow,
I’m not the daughter of your drudge !

Oh! Lord of lords, Cennamallikarjuna, I do not mind wearing a hero’s bracelet. I do not mind wearing a type of anklet that is worn by males. I also do not care to wear a type of dress that is usually worn by males, and with all these I would like to walk with dignity and style. By seeing such a form
of mine which is akin to a male, and on that score, if people make fun of me and derile me, I am the last person to care for such things, because, oh! Lord, my love towards You is so great that it makes me be above derisions and flat theries of the people, whatever may be such things. Oh! Lord you are much more to me than my own life. I swear upon You. I will never do or talk anything that you might disapprove of:

*If there be love, make me to love;*
*If there be love, snip me a curl;*
*If there be love, cut of my finger,*
*O Cennamallikarjuna lord,*
*If I complain that I am hurt,*
*Condemn me to grief!*

Oh! God, I am in deep love with You, if ever you would like to look upon me with your divine kindness, kindly do something which will make my Lord shower His grace upon me. Oh! Lord, if you want to favour me, kindly cut off all my attachments to this world.

If you kindly do so, I promise you that I will always be acting in such way that will ever win your approbation. If I do not conduct myself in such a way, you have every right to punish me in whatever way you think fit. I will reverentially receive those punishments.

(This is regarding divine love)

*Should you not be ashamed of what you are?*
*Why act and talk what others condemn?*
*Look you, Cennamallikarjuna,*
Better to die at once than have it said,
'This is not so'.

Always be observing carefully the way in which you talk and the way in which you conduct yourself when you are in the society. Your total behaviour and being should be fit to be approved and appreciated by noble men.

If you talk or act in a way which the decent persons do not approve of, then you should feel ashamed of yourself. Your good conduct should always be such that Cennamallikarjuna approves of.

Can the milk swallow ghee, and yet
Depart from it?
Who has the power to separate
The fire that dwells within the sun?
O Cennamallikarjuna, glory without end.
On realizing how Thou hast
Integrally lodged within me,
I opened my eyes.

Everybody knows that there is ghee in milk. But can it (ghee) be easily obtained? No, you have to boil the milk, prepare curds from it and then churn it properly. Only then, the butter will come out. This butter will have to be carefully and properly heated. After doing all these things, the ghee which was in fact in the milk comes out.

Similarly, can you easily identify the fire that is existing in "Suryakanka" stone? No, if you want to know the fire in it. You will have to
hold it facing the sun for a good amount of time and only then the fire which was hidden inside the stone comes out blazingly. Though the above mentioned processes are a bit troublesome, even ordinary persons can accomplish them.

In the same way Lord Cennamallikarjuna is within all of us. But we do not know it. If one contemplates upon God with love and devotion and undergoes the various connected sadhanas as prescribed and told by the enlightened souls, the lord within each of us shows Himself to us very clearly. This is what is known as realization of the absolute truth or attainment of enlightenment.

Such a person merges himself in the ultimate consciousness and comes out free from the cycle of birth and death.

_O hunger, thirst and sleep,
Stay, stay!
_O anger, lust and greed,
Stay, stay!
_Infatuation, pride and jealousy,
Stay, stay!
_O moveable and immoveable forms,
Stay, stay!
_Stay where you are, because
I’m carrying Lord Cennamallikarjuna
_Urgent message; farewell !_45

Akkamahadevi is on an urgent mission of seeing and meeting Lord Cennamallikarjuna. When she is so urgently going, she personifies the various obstacles that she might encounter on her way and addresses them to stop
where they are and requests them not to trouble her. Oh! hunger and thirst, stop wherever you are. Do not come to me and trouble me.

I do not care for you. Oh! The obstacles of desire, anger, infatuation and carnality. Please stop wherever you are. I have no time to entertain you. Oh! Pride, jealousy and envy, stop wherever you are, do not come near me and trouble me. Oh! all tempting things on this earth, please do not try to hold me by your tentacles. I am the last person to be attracted by all such meaningless things. The only thing which has reverely attracted me and maddened me and about which I am rushing in great speed is my Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

Here the main intention of Akkamahadevi is that a sadhaka or a person who has determined to see and seek god should not care for any type of distraction as mentioned above. The sadhaka can realize his goal only if he proceeds with single minded devotion towards Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

What use to learn what science soe'er ?
Foreknowledge of your death is
Doggin you !
What use your fasts and penances -
Holding your breath, curbing your
Appetite ?
O Cennamallikarjuna Lord, if earth herself
Should take to watching, where can
The poor thief run ?

You may have learnt many different things through your education. But you can never escape from death. You do not have proper knowledge of death

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also. You might have left off meals and you might have also been away from wicked and bad addictions. You might be doing a number of yogasanas, pranayamas etc., On account of yogic practices you may even withhold your breath for a long time. You may practice celibacy. None of these things will help you in escaping death. How can a thief escape, if the whole earth becomes a policeman? In the same way, we cannot escape death unless and until, by the grace of lord, you attain enlightenment. Only the path of devotion can help you in your getting rid of the cycle of births and deaths.

*What use is it-
Plenty of boasting without acts?
A show of bravery without deeds,
Adornments on a pictured wife?
What use is it-
A leafless tree, a dried-up stream,
And fellowship of vicious men?
What use is it-
Religion without love,
Devotion without the sense of twain,
Or uncouth speech,
O Cennamallikarjuna Lord?  

A noble person should always act according to his words. What is the use of talking in a grand and noble way, but never acting according to his own words? It is nothing but hypocrisy! What is the use, if you go on embellishing a photo or statue of a beautiful lady by various costly ornaments? It is a thing having no life? Is it going to be a real lady in life? If there is
a tree without any leaf, of what use it is? It cannot give any shade, and therefore there is no use from it. If there is a river without water, it cannot be of any use to anybody.

There is only pain in our association with persons without virtue and character. “Dharma” without piety or humaneness is never a desirable thing. There is no use in words which do not have politeness and humbleness. If there is no devotion towards Lord Cennamallikarjuna, your whole life becomes a waste.

The ground Thy saranas have trod  
Is holy, Lord!

The city where Thy saranas live  
Is city of Kailasa itself!

The spot whereon Thy saranas stand  
is Thy abode!

O Chenna Mallikarjuna Lord,  
There where Thy sarana Basavanna is  
Is holy land: therefore I say,  
And say again,  
Hail, O hail  
Unto his holy feet!48

O Lord, the place upon which the ‘Sharanas’, who are your great divotees have travelled is a highly sacred place to me. The place where they have stayed is sacred to me. The place where they have stayed is as sacred to me as your own abode, Kailasa. The place where they have stood even for a few minutes is the place which gives me ‘moksha’ (i.e., total liberation).
I would like to live in the place where your ‘Sharanas’ have lived. The place where the great ‘Sharana’ Basavanna had lived is to me a great centre of pilgrimage. So, I would hereby like to prostrate before that great ‘Sharana’ Basavanna.
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