CHAPTER-VIII

CONCLUSION

Thoughtless people, it is quite likely, were unable to realize that Akkamahadevi was an uncommon soul so far unknown to the world; must have censured and slandered her. That was why Allama Prabhu deliberately subjected her to searching tests in the Anubhava Mantapa to exhibit to the world her fortitude, her inner strength, and to prove to the world that her uncommon venture to swim against the ways of the world were spontaneous with her. That event in the Anubhava Mantapa is perhaps unparalleled.

Akkamahadevi was thrilled by the very thought of meeting Basavanna and other saranas. She was looking forward to it since long. Her long-standing desire had now been fulfilled and her joy knew no bounds. In the mood of such a soaring joy, she enters the Anubhava Mantapa, the religiomystic Academy, and exclaiming “I am saved having found the holy feet of Sangana Basavanna”, pays homage to all the saranas assembled there. Basavanna was perhaps most impatient to receive her in their midst. But Allama Prabhu, the renunciation incarnate, the President of the institution, decides for himself to test her and exhibit her eminence to the world. Hence he does not give a chance to Basavanna to welcome her at once:

"Why come you hither, pray,
O woman in the budding bloom of youth?
At the word woman our saranas
Seed red! If you can tell
your husband's identity, come sit;
Else, pray, be gone!
If you desire the joy
of our sarana's fellowship;
Tell who your husband be,
O mother!"

He so curtly questions her. All the saranas are agog to hear her reply so their bodies became all eyes and all ears.

But she is not daunted by these words of Prabhu. She boldly opens her heart, as it were, and reveals the identity of her Lord:

Harane ninenage gandanagabekendu
Anantakal tapasside noda
Hasey melan mat besagolalattidade
Shashidharan hattirakke
Kaluhidaremawaru
Bhasmawane hoosi, kankanawane
Kattidaru cennamallikarjuna
Tanage nanagabekendu!

"Hara for endless time have I
Made penance, so you might
Become my wedded lord!"

When He sent one to learn
About the matter for the bridal seat,
Mine own sent me to Him,
Who holds the Moon:
Thus I have eschewed altogether my corporal consciousness and absolutely surrendered myself to Him. What if the body becomes black? what if the body shines bright? I am not fond of the body” - asserts Akkamahadevi. It is already noted that Akkamahadevi on her arrival at Kalyana, she was introduced by Basavanna to the congregation of saranas at Anubhava Mantapa.

Prabhudeva, who presided over the Anubhava Mantapa was not, however, ready to admit her without putting her to acid test, his intention being to show her greatness. Her full stature as a devotee and mystic. to all those who had gathered there. There follows a dialogue - an intellectual combat. So to say, unique in the philosophical history. It starts in a very informal note and later takes a serious intellectual turn when she claims:

Kaya karrane kandidadenaya?
Kaya mirrane minchidadenaya?
Antarang shuddhawad balik
Cennamallikarjunayya
Ninolid kayau
Hegiddadenay?  

What if the body darkens black as black?
What if the body flashes light as light?
What once your heart is purified

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What does it signify what body it is
That Cenna Mallikarjunalinga loves? 4

The central image here is that of an ABHISARIKA stealing out of a houseful of relatives to meet her lover. Allegorically, she equates various members of the household with various abstraction maya or prina primal illusion is the mother-in-law, the world is the father-in-law; The three brother-in-law are the three Gunas, the three ultimate components which make all the particulars of nature what they are: these three are inescapable as long as one is part of nature.

They keep a tiger-vigil. The husband is Karma, the past of the ego’s many lives. The sister-in-law who also keeps the ABHISARIKA imprisoned is apparently the VASANA, the binding memory or ‘smell’ that the karma-past carries with it. The kind confidante or maid is the mind, who alone helps her meet her Lord and keep the tryst. The whole poem written in a colloquial vigorous speaking style reaches its climax in the bold use of the vulgar Kannada word ‘Hadara’ which means fornication or adulterous love.

Akkamahadevi was a lady luminary shining in the medieval darkness. She was a light of enlightenment in the dark middle ages. She was a beacon light to womanhood and the backbone of the woman community in that she championed the cause of women and upheld the fundamental rights of a woman in society. The interesting dialogue between Akka and Allama establishes beyond doubt the equality and nobility of womanhood with that of manhood. In fact, Akka explains further that ultimately there is no difference between man and woman since the two are forms of the same spirit. This is the identity of manhood and womanhood in essence. 5

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As one sole gem became itself twice six
Its luster all undimmed that gem was turned
To fifty kinds and came into my mind
"Listen, My friend;
Maya is my mother-in-law;
A worlding is my father-in-law;
I have four husband's younger brothers,
Three whore tiger-like; four sisters-in-law;
My husband's elder brothers, five -
No god could carry them away!
Mother, I can't get past these six
My brother's wives; and housemaids seven
Keep guard ... I tell you,
Hitting my husband across the mouth
His name is Karma - I made adulterous love
With Hara: by favour of a friend called mind, I got experience
With Siva: and I wed
A gentle groom
In beautiful Cenna Mallikarjuna of Srisailam.7

In this Vacana, Akkamahdevi has mentioned the enemies of life and she has compared them to the members of a family consisting generally of mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, and brothers-in-law, who are not in favour
of a daughter-in-law god or any super power. If he is so, Akka has considered all of them as enemies, she has told that maya is her mother-in-law and worlding is her father-in-law.

Akkamahadevi has personified four sister-in-law as to the four great enemies of man such as lust, anger, ego, arrogance, and selfishness. These are the real enemies of a man which don’t allow to succeed in the life. If one wanted a meaningful life he \ she must be away from the above mentioned natural instincts. Man cannot be saved by any wrapped by untimely desires.

Karma has become the husband of Akkamahadevi, by favour of her own mind, which has been considered as her friend. She mediated on Shiva. Akka considered Shiva, Linga, Hara as her ultimate goal to search Cennamallikarjuna. Akkaahadevi says that four sisters and brothers-in-law are keeping guard and not allowing her to wed Lord Cennamallikarjuna. Finally, Akkamahadevi prepares to kill karma, ego, lust, and anger to in order to go towards Shrisailam to marry Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

Akkagal Sruistivacan

Lingangalige shhadakshariyane
Shhadvidha mantranglendenisi
A mantra lingangalige hradaygudi
Panchendrivangalane
Shhadvidh mukhangalendenisi8
When the lingas so transformed
With mantras the fivefold sense
And heart:

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Became the sixfold face, for these
The subtle senses were
Material substance

Lack of faith turns one a sceptic; Such a sceptic enjoys neither this world
nor the other. Indeed the finds no happiness whatever - IV/40.

Karmanyevadhikaraste
Ma phalesu kadacana
Ma karmaphalaneturbur
Ma te sangostvakarmani II/47 9

"Your right extends only to (the performance of) action and never to the
'fruit'. Let not the 'fruit' of action be your motive; (but at the same time) do
not also adopt the state of inaction. Even though renouncing the wish for the
'fruit', do not on that account give up all action itself".

Idea death, according to the Gita: Let us also look in this connection
at the Gita's idea of ideal death;

Antakale ca mameva
Samaranmutva kalevaram
hah prayati sa madbhavani
Yati nastyatra samsayah VIII/5
Prayanakale Mana sacalena
Bhaktya yakto yogabalena caiva
Bhruvormdhye pranamavesya samyak
Sa tam param purusamupaiti divyam.
Omityekaksaram brahma

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"He who at the time of death concentrates upon nothing but me and casting off the body departs (from this world) attains my spirit, of that let there be no doubt - VIII/5.

He who when departing from here concentrates on the supreme spirit and with his heart full of devotion and his mind unshaking, by the power of yoga fixes his life force (vital breath) neatly between the tow eyebrows, reaches that supreme divine spirit.

He who recites the mono-syllable OM indicative of Brahman, and contemplating Me casts off the body and departs, attains the supreme state - 13”

We are living in the midst of the period subject to Dewey’s influence. John Dewey is the typical effective American thinker; and he is the chief intellectual force providing that environment with coherent purpose.11

Dogmatic common sense is the death of philosophic adventure. The universe is vast.

Refutation has its legitimate place in philosophic discussion; it should never from the final chapter. Human beliefs constitute the evidence as to human experience of the nature of things. Every faith is to be approached with respectful enquiry.

Philosophy should aim at disclosure beyond explicit presuppositions. In this respect Dewey himself has done some noble work.
The soul essentially is identical with God and shares omniscience and bliss with him. Yet it is also different from God for it is an atomic mode of God. And because it is identical with as well as different from God, the relation between them is also that of identity and difference.

Ramanuja rejects the conception of bhedabheda or identity and difference, and advocates the view of vishistadavita or identity-in-and-through-and-because-of difference or identity as-qualified-by-difference.

The individual souls are organically related to the absolute. They form the body of God and have no independent existence apart from Him. Yet they have their own individuality and merely qualify God.

As essence, they are one with God; as modes they are different from him. They become similar to God and share His glory and greatness. They enjoy like God infinite conciousness and infinite bliss which is the essence of God and through him theirs also.

Ramanuja’s view of the relation of Brahman to the world may be summed up as follow: he explains this relation in organismic terms:

Brahman and the world together constitute an organism of which Brahman is the soul and the world is the body. As embodied by the world of chit and achit, Brahman may be said to be immanent in the world and has a universal status.
But in so far as remains unaffected by the changes of the world, Brahman may also be said to possess a transcendent status. Apart from these statuses, Brahman is also the indweller (antaryami).

As qualified by the world and as possessing the other auspicious attributes in limitless abundance, Ramanuja’s Brahman is saguna Brahman or supreme personality related to the individual as the object of devotion without being deprived there by his purity or perfection.

Is it not enough
If, among the five senses, you are dear to one?
Is it not enough
That, among seven vices, you are Dear to one?
What if it is a chain of gems;
Does it not bind you quite as well
O Cenna Mallikarjuna? 13

For any person, the five or sensory pleasures are:

1) The pleasure of exotic smell which is felt by the organ, nose.

2) The pleasure of taste which is felt by tongue.

3) The pleasure of seeing various captivating and tempting beautiful things.

4) The pleasure of touch, which is experienced by the most sensuary organ, skin and

5) The pleasure of being attracted by various tempting sounds such as pop-music etc which is experienced by the organ ear. Even it one becomes a
slave to the pleasured any one of these one’s downfall and doom are certain.

Similarly there are seven evil addictions and a true divotee of God must avoid all of them. They are:

1) Having great pride in one’s body.
2) Pride of his own strong will and intelligence
3) Pride of richness.
4) Pride of owning kingdom or laws
5) The exuberance of having high connections
6) The pride of having enthusiasm in many things. (usually bad and undesirable)
7) The pride of having a good number of slaves or assistants under him.

These prides or high over estimation of one self generally lead to the following crimes:

1) Eating dirty things such as meat etc.
2) Drinking many things that should not be drunk
3) Indulging in gambling and betting.
4) Prostitution
5) Speaking cruel and evil words.
6) Hunting of animals for the purposes of sports, food and to fulfill one’s vanity.
7) Theft (It includes all types of thefts)

If any person gers himself involved in any one of the above evil deeds, his downfall and doom is certain. Any type of attachment to worldly things
takes one away from God. Both hatred and love towards persons or things are both attachments, and tie, one to the object which one hates or loves. One is an iron chain and the other is a golden chain. Both are chains, and philosophically both are bad and both should be avoided.

What we know of matter does not help us to understand the co-ordinated maintenance of life. Life is a different order of fact.

Radhakrishan observes, “Evolution is no explanation. It does not say why the process should have ever occurred, why life should occur at all”\(^{14}\)

For Swami Vivekananda, religion has to be scientific. As Vivekananda observes, “It is said sometimes that religions are dying out, spiritual ideas are dying out of the world.

**Tagore and Christianity:**

Tagore says, “The God of Gitanjali is no impersonal, imperturable absolute of Hindu philosophy but in fact, whether he be explicitly Christ or not, He is at least a Christ-like God, and the experience of his suppliant and lover is one with the deep core of all Christian experience.

He recognizes the deep influence of Ram Mohan Roy on his own religious thought. Thus, Ram Mohan Roy was the first great man of our age with the comprehensiveness of mind to realise the fundamental unity of spirit in the Hindu, Muslim and Christian cultures.

**Background:**

Tagore says, “To me the worship of the Upanisads and the teaching of the Buddha have been things of the spirit, and therefore endowed with boundless human growth”.

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Non-violence is not Cowardice:

Mahatma Gandhi asserts, “My creed of non-violence is an extremely active force. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness.

Non-violence requires, training, discipline and dedication. Non-violence is application in all human affairs.

Satyagraha is active in character.

There is no room for violence in it.

The motive of satyagraha is love for all at all times.

Five cardinal virtues:

1) Ahimsa (harmlessness or non-violence).
2) Satya (truth fullness)
3) Celibacy (Brahmacharya)
4) Asteya (non-stealing) and
5) Aparigraha (non-possession or poverty).15

Akkamahadevi:

True, there is in Akkamahadevi utterances a kind of imagery which appears grotesque if we disregard its symbolism; for example, when she describes her marriage to her lover as a union of ‘a headless bridegroom to a legless bride’ or uses the repulsive image of a flea suoking the flesh of a male buffalo to characterize one who would not know the merit of the saranas; at times a violent phrase like ‘I will dig a hole in my heart and bury their (saranas) holy feet in it’ exactly serves to express the passion that moves her devout and humble spirit.
In her 'Yoganga Trividhi', which is included in this volume, there are pleasant images - like the one about the Cuckoo beckoning aloud as the mango trees put out their shoots, or of the bee of consciousness swooping upon the fresh lotus spreading its haunting perfume on the western lake. But generally, the imagery here is suited to the cryptic style in which her yogic experience is to be couched.

The soul of man, for instance, is a fascinating pearl in a pot with nine holes; there is the frisking monkey perched upon a buffalo's horn in a wise woman's house; or the leafless tree in soil-less garden, bringing forth fruit-no fruit. However, it is not for her poetic imagery and style that we read and re-read Akkamahadeiv's vacanas.

We go to her again and again to share the experience of a great love, the greatest of all possible, when the lone lost individual soul seeks, through agony and ecstasy, to be united with that one person who alone shall satisfy her longing and in whom she shall find her ultimate fulfillment.

Pure poetry, which is a cry of the whole being is found where she, in a sort of despairing eagerness, calls upon swarms of bees, the mango-tree, the cuckoo and the light of the moon to let her know where her lover may be seen. But even where in the same key, she makes the same inquisition of parrots, cuckoos, bees, swans and peacocks, her poet eye is on each thing she questions.

We actually hear, in her verse, the shrill prattling of the parrots and the cuckoo's lifted voice, and we see the bees darting about and the swans frolicking on the lake.
Spiritual progress, under the right guidance, is suggested by the noble image of a sea-voyage:

“If you should steer yourself by the starry path
Along the bottomless, unbounded sea,
It'll carry all your merchandise
Island to island, in your ship”.

Apparently rhetorical, Akkamahadevi speaks with conviction where she says not only that dust from Siva’s feet is her aids to beauty, and the sandals of the saranas her chaplet crown, but when she says that her naked state is a splendid robe’. Characteristic of universal religion is that it has to be acceptable to all minds.

“And this religion is attained by what we in India call Yoga, union. To the worker, it is union between men and whole of humanity, to the mystic between his lower and higher self, to the lover, union between himself and the God of love, and to the philosopher, it is the union of all existence. This is what is meant by Yoga”. And the aim of yoga is union, realisation of oneness. Vivekananda says, “Religion is realisation, not talk, nor doctrine, nor theories… it is being and becoming not hearing or acknowledging, it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes”.

Take ‘God created Man’, picture of Michelangelo showing the creation of the world. The picture has to be used in an entirely different way, if we are to call the man in that queer blanket ‘God’ and so on. Of course, we can only express ourselves by means of pictures.

This is rather queer… I could show Moore the pictures of a tropical plant. According to him the Gita teaches the method of the combined pursuit of Jnana and Karma.
The wild boar and the elephant
May meet upon one path;
But should the elephant step aside
In fear of the wild boar,
Pray, does that make the boar
A lion, O Cenna Mallikarjuna?\(^{18}\)

Say a pig and an intoxicated elephant come face to face on a road. Because the elephant is intoxicated, it is not in its senses and due to some blurring of its vision and senses, it steps aside. By this, if the pig thinks that it has frightened the elephant, and so it is equal in strength to a lion; can it ever become a lion?

In the same way, if a highly rich and worldly man thinks that he is second to none, and he is equal to a ‘Sharana’, can he ever become a ‘Sharana’? A Sharana stands on an entirely different pedestal, and a worldly man, however great he might me, in the eyes of Lord Cennamallikarjuna, is never equal to a saintly man.

Conclusion:

Womankind has given to the world many an empress, warrior and freedom-fighter, many an anchorite, artist and scholar, but it has given only one Akka Mahadevi! It may be asked; Hasn’t it given the Sappo of Greece, the Theresa of Christianity, the Lalleshwari of Kashmir, the Rabis of Arabia, the Andal of Tamil Nadu, the Mira of Rajasthan, Muktayakka and Helavanakatte Giriyamma of Karnataka? Doubtless all of compare, she stands a cut above as a unique personality, never before encountered in the annals of human civilization.
When all is said and done, the life and achievements of Akka will leave the indelible imprint on our minds of a unique personality. When we consider her long trek to Kalyana and from Kalyana to Srisaila on her pilgrimage, the episode of Kausika in her life must have caused an intense inner agony. She alone could have come out alive from such a difficult situation.

Nothing can equal the dramatic tension and triumph of Akka’s philosophical confrontation with Allama Prabhu, not even Mira’s. Akka composed vacanas, during her short span of life.

Yoganga Trvidi, in tripadi metre and lyrical vacanas of Korawanji bear witness to her myriad-minded genius.

Akka had these faculties—intellectual brilliance, mortal probity, aesthetic sensibility, religious fervour, all given to her as nature’s endowment.

She challenged her God - long. Loved Cennamallikarjuna, by saying, I’m none of your lily-livered, chicken hearted fools - I’m not afraid of miasma which you have created to put a mortal on the false scent.

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References:


15. Contemporary Indian Philosophy by Ramashankar Srivastava Ranchi University, 1965, p. 220.

