Chapter : I

INTRODUCTION

a) Present Crisis in Society

b) Need for the Present Study
a) Present Crisis in Society

Who is Vemana? What is his philosophy? What are his contributions to the society? Is there any necessity to study Vemana's philosophy? What is the present crisis in the society? All the questions above are being murmured in the minds and the hearts of the people.

Since the dawn of the rationality thinkers and scholars of every age have thought about man and human society. They thought about man's sufferings and happiness, his relations with his fellow beings and the ideals of a good man in a happy society. During the times of crisis, depending upon the place and the time some problems assume utmost importance. In such situations the intellectuals assume the role of reformers and try to reform the men and human society. They exhibit universal qualities like love, affection, harmony, sympathy, co-operation, sacrifice and service above caste/creed, colour, region, race and religion. Their reformations appeal to head, heart and hand. That is why they go beyond the time boundaries and become suitable for application whenever the human-kind faces such burning problems.

Such reformers are seen in different fields of human life, namely social, economical, political, moral, religious and cultural.
One may be serious about one field or two fields or all fields. All depend upon the demand of the then existing human society. Most of the prominent theories and practices have been the products of such reformations. Until the burning problems are solved, the men are made to lead their normal life, their reformations are continued by these reformers. Their reformations concentrate on what 'ought to be rather than on what 'is'. The advant of a reformer indicates something wrong in the state of affairs in the society. When a thinker is moved deeply in his head and heart, he starts an indepth keen study of the existing social conditions. Later he tries to evolve a new set of ideals and values in order to help man to void such crisis in future, apart from making human-life happy. In every century such reformers are common in every country. India is no exception, in enjoying the blessings and messages, the reformation and saviourship by people like Vyasa, Valmiki, Vasistha, Rama, Lord Krishna, King Janaka, Lord Mahavir, Buddha, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Kabir, Rajaramohan Roy, Tilak, Motilal Nehru, Subhaschandrabhosh, Aurabindo, Vivekananda, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Gandhi. Among these noted social philosopher thinker and reformer is Yogi Vemana.

It was beyond doubt that whether Vemana belongs to 17th or 18th Century. Accordingly to A.C. Brown, Vemana belongs to 17th
Century. R.L. Campebell opined that he belongs to 16th Century. According to Mac Donald he belongs to 16th Century. According to Less. E. Gower, he belongs to 14th Century. According to Rallapalli Anantha Krishna Sharma he belongs to 18th Century. No body coincides with each other. Vemana was born in an ordinary peasant family followed Virasaivism due to its radical ideology. But by the time of Vemana the radical ideology of Virasaivism degenerated to such an extent that the saivite mendicants were mostly impostors and roamed about the villages and collected funds from gullible peasants. They performed a plethora of fraudulent rituals and ceremonies. On observing all these things Vemana lost faith and criticised bitterly and equated them as bandits. It is also beyond doubt that whether Vemana belongs to Reddy community or Kapu community. It is also a controversial one. In his child-hood his brought up was not a steady one. Due to over affection he was brought up as a proud child. He was highly social and cordial with all classes of people. He was a roaming child. Never he used to care the field. He used to attend regularly the temple activities. He used to evince keen interesting Harikathas and Folk arts that are carried in a village. Through this Vemana got close touches with epics. As he was very closely associated with people belonging to different religions, he got good acquaintant with them. When he was an adult his rationality made him to think deeply about the impact of
curruption, prostitution, the Devadasi and Basivi systems on society.

Vemana's father was Komaragiri Vema Reddee and mother was Mangamamba. Vemana was the third son of his parents. Venkatareddi and Ramachandrarreddi were his brothers. We know the birth residence and caste through the following poems.

\begin{verbatim}
The village of our body in which the deity
Dwells is in Hill Town (The head);
his is in back street (The spine)
There is silence in the first house.
We gaze and continually view it,
This is the road of beatitude!  

Pakanati Reddee, and Motah Reddee and
Tota Pedda Yerra Reddee these are all stubborn,
Wretches accomplished in all hardness
Thus have they gained celebrity.
\end{verbatim}

According to the above poem, he belongs to Reddee caste which was uncivilised in those days. His residence in Kondaveedu western street first house of Mugachintapalli which is in Cuddapah District which comes under Rayalaseema, Andhra Pradesh. We can find 'Vemana Temple' at Kataripalle, Kadiri Taluk, Ananthapur District and his 'tomb' is found at Nallacheruvu Village, Andhra Pradesh.

There are many cock and bull stories in publicity. Some say he spent his early days with Vesyas (Prostitutes) and vexed with that life Vemana renounced worldly life, but did not teach the
people the advantages of such life. There may be a few hundred poems written by Vemana. But the researchers collected more than four thousand poems. We cannot differentiate which are original and which are added.

When he became adult by roaming in different villages he got good knowledge about different areas. Along with this he developed good association with prostitutes. By the time he became a married person his family became poor. Due to separation of family members he was durable to gain through agriculture only. With the poverty he faced some ups and downs in life. There was no peace either in him or in his family. In order to come out of his poverty he made friendship with people who knew the preparation of gold. Leaving the village, he became the wanderer and tried for jobs in the towns. He approached the rulers but in vain. After realising there is no use in roaming outside, finally he reached his own native place. Both his family members and villagers found fault with him. He understood that nobody is having moral strength to find fault with him. The people called Vemana as a mad fellow. Vemana was vexed with life. He repented a lot. He realised the social injustices in the society. People are only on untruth, some truth seekers become his disciples. His detachment made him a nude monk. He conquered nudity. He was very much moved with
the atrocities amoralities in the society. Such reactions of Vemana became messages to the whole man kind ultimately. Vemana never said that he was a sage. But told that he was vexed with the worldly life. We understand his position through the following poem.

When we are born in the womb of our mother,  
at first, we had not clothing, nor shall have  
it at our latter end Is it not it then a joke for us  
to wear clothing in our intermediate life?  

According to the above poem we can imagine that Vemana is "Digambara" (naked). In Tanjor palace in a drawing Vemana is found without clothes (naked).

Vemana was one of the most novel and creative of thinkers of that age. Besides being a poet, he was very much alive to the problem of man and society in the various spheres of individual life and social existence. His keen observation of the man and the society made him to think rationalistically and become a social reformer. As a social reformer, he was guided by his value preferences personally, interpersonally and socially. All his social policies and ideals revolved around the reformation of the individual and the society. That was why his social philosophy can be dubbed as a radical of the radicals. Without any fear or favour Vemana undertook the reformative style of life. He critically examined the human life and its burning problems. He offered solutions to end
the human misery. It was here, he showed his realistic temper and adopted a practical approach to solve the human problems.

Vemana did not produce long literary works like those produced by the 'Puranic' or the 'Prabhandha' poets. Nor was he, like them, a profound scholar well versed in grammar and poetics. Yet he wrote great poetry, adopting a simple native meter, 'ataveladi', and in a language that common people spoke in their every day lives. His poetry was the result of his genuine humanism and of his rationalistic approach to all human problems and as such, it has a universal appeal. We can, therefore, rightly place Vemana among the great poets of the world.

Nothing that is narrow. Vemana's poetry transcends time and place. Even though his teachings and critical utterances related to the social, economic and religious problems of his time, there is the quality of universality in them. In spite of differences of nationality, of language, of religion, economic and political institutions, man's fundamental problems are the same everywhere problems regarding his humanity and the growth of his mind.

What does man need to live a long, happy life? This is not a question of recent times. It arose even when man was in the earliest evolutionary stage. The mental development that modern man has attained is tremendous. He has conquered nature. Time and
distance are no longer barrier to him. He is able to move with incredible speed, and is visiting other heavenly bodies. Nothing can check his progress. He goes freely where ever he wants to. Notwithstanding all this wonderful progress, he is not happy. What is the cause? It is not far to seek. His selfishness, his self-deception and his indifference are the cause.

Vemana was a humanist, a progressive thinker and a psychologist who could discern the depths of the human heart and mind. Man should exercise his reasoning powers, develop his sense of judgment and perform his duties and responsibilities. He should never forget his humanity and his duties as a human being. This is the substance of Vemans's teachings. The following stanza is remarkable in as much as it contains a true dedicated man.

"Anyulakunu vachechu napada tanadiga

Nennuvadu bhuvini nunna vadu" 

"Only that man is a living man who feels the sufferings of his fellow men as his own. And when such a living man meditates upon the meaning of this life and the life hereafter, he becomes a supreme human being. Vemana implies that all the others may be considered a dead so far as the duty of man as man is concerned. How well he has pointed out man's first duty. What great meaning is contained in four short lines: Unless man cultivates his attitude,
he can never solve his problems. There can never be peace and happiness in his life.

Who can overcome fate? There is no help against fate. What man suffers now is the result of his past ‘karma’. Nothing can be done to ward off the blows of fate. Things happen according to God’s will. The human problem can never be solved, for no sooner is one problem solved than another arises. Who are we, either to help others or to harm them? Such beliefs and questions are frequently given utterance to by our so called philosophers, of whom there are any number in the society of our time. There have been, too, some extreme fatalists who look on calmly doing nothing even when their neighbors are being robbed in front of their eyes. They ascribe everything to man’s ‘karma’ or fate. What sort of men are these pseudo-philosophers?

Vemana was a bitter enemy of this king of fatalistic philosophy. He was a great optimist and believed in man’s creative effort.

“Bhumilona Puttu bhusara mellaru tanuvulona puttu tattvamella sramamulona puttru sarvambu tanounu”

All the articles essential for man’s existences have their source in the earth. All philosophies arise out of the human mind. It is human labour that produces everything.
Man’s history reveals to us the progress that he has achieved through the ages since the time he was living on trees. We can find there have been incessant efforts at progress in the different fields and in the different stages in his development. Man’s will to live better is the one dominant factor that has brought about all revolutions, reforms and scientific inventions and discoveries. He has achieved almost all that he could wish for.

While, on the one hand, man must strive to achieve higher and yet bigger things, he should, on the other hand, always remember his duty as a man. This is the greatest rule of conduct. Man cannot afford to forget that he is a social being. He has to be aware of the inseparable link between his welfare and that of the society in which he lives. Everything in the universe obeys certain natural laws, and man, being the pinnacle of evolution, should not disregard the duties enjoined upon him by his moral sense. If any man looks at other man’s wives with lustful eyes, will not his wife be looked at in the same way by other men? If you rob others, it is but just that others should rob you. The golden rule is to consider your neighbor’s difficulties as your own and to do what you would want them to do to you. This one principle is enough as foundation for the creation of a really cultured society. It is utterly useless merely to quote rules of conduct from ‘dharmashastras’ in which,
very often, principles praised in one place are condemned in another place.

'Dharma' and justice do not originate in books; their real place of origin is the human heart. They depend upon place, time and circumstances. Only that ethical (dharma) is the best which is conducive to the progress and happiness of society. Anything that causes the disintegration of society is 'adharma', even if it is found in the 'dharma shastras'.

There is in our country, no lack of 'dharmashastras', 'niti shastras' and works of good counsel. Most of these books repeat the same things, though indifferent words. And they are: Speak the truth. Do good deeds. Revere your parents and teachers as you would revere the gods. Character is the best of man's adornments. Do not covet others possessions. Do good to others. Maintain your self-respect and dignity – and one can go on adding to this list endlessly.

Though it may be argued that Vemana, too, taught the same things, there is a fundamental differences. There is a certain uniqueness in his telling them. His sayings are full of rationalist thought and a remarkable realism pervades them. One must possess a keen sensibility and a sympathetic understanding to see the greatness of Vemans's utterances. Look at the following highly
thought-provoking and practical suggestion he has given us with regard to speaking the truth:

"Nijamuladu vani nindinchnu jagamella
nijamuladaradu neechuthonu
nijamahathmu gooda nijamada Valayuna"\(^8\)

"Mean people look down upon a man who tells truth. Truth must never be spoken when dealing with such people. Tell the truth only when you are in the presence of truthful men." This is very sound, worldly wise advice. We are told how to avoid trouble from hypocrites. I am afraid, people who believe in truth as Harischandra practiced it, will not like what Vemana has said here with regard to truth.

As Dr. C.R. Reddy has said, whenever Vemana was in doubt with regard to the righteousness or otherwise of an action, he did not refer to ‘dharma shastras’ but applied his naturally unerring commonsense, and took a decision. It was this great poet who set rationalist criticism on its throne.\(^9\) Here is another of Vemana’s verses in which he speaks about giving charity.

"Dosakari yaina doosarikadaina
pagathudaina veda Brahmudaina
Vatle leni pedavani keedagu neevi"\(^10\)
During Vemana's time, the disparity between the rich and the poor was very great. The poor had to depend on the rich for their existence and they invariably lived in misery. But the rich people, in accordance with the injunctions in the ‘Dharma Shastras’, gave charity only to the high-caste people and those were always Brahmans. And even among the Brahmans only certain sects were worthy or receiving charity. It was immaterial whether the recipient was really in need or not. It is enough if he belonged to a caste specified in the sacred books. And even that charity was done for prestige. It was mere showing off. Both the giver and the receiver were hypocrites. It was like a game. We see this sort of game being played even today. We very rarely find a sincerely generous person.

Vemana’s heart was filled with genuine love for the poor. There was no vagueness in his statement. His ideas are to the hearts of thoughtful people as the sun’s rays are to the lotus. He asked the rich to give relief to those who starved, who ever they might be. The starving must be fed, whether they were good or bad, high-caste or low-born, friends or foes; even if they were ‘chandalas’ (untouchables). A rich person, however worthy he may be, by virtue of his birth, does not deserve charity, Vemana declared. Vemana’s heart went out to the indigent, and his words are full of significance. One must have a really feeling heart to
understand their full import. We thus see that Vemana was a great humanist and a sincere friend of the poor. He says "Give freely to the starving poor and save their lives. Love all living beings. The 'jeeva' is God. Man is born to live, to live long and in peace and happiness, and not to die soon because one has to die sometime or other. The adage: (He who is born has to die) should not be misunderstood. Its purpose is that we should live without fear of death. It does not mean that we should think of death constantly and die long before death actually comes. If man had given way to despair because death was inevitable, what could he has achieved? There would have been not progress of any kind. It is a truism to say that man has to die sooner or later. But he has to live happily and peacefully as long as he lives. He should not suffer by injustice in spirit of fatalistic resignation. The good things of life produced by his labour are meant for him, too, not only for the affluent.

They should be shared by all. Such is Vemana's practical philosophy, born out of his humanism. The rich in his days lived most selfish lives thinking that the poor suffered as a result of their past 'karma', and that it was but just punishment. They did not feed the hungry even though they had plenty of food, They were indifferent spectators of misery, starvation and death. Addressing such heartless rich men, Vemana said:
"Jeevi pokamunde Jeeva vasthuvu lichi
Jeevi nilupa valayu Jeevanamuga
Jeevi thologu venuka Jeeva vasthuvu lela"?

"Give the life-sustaining things when there is life in the body. No charity can help once the life ceases. Of what avail can the good things of life (Jeeva Vastuvalu) be after death? This is the direct question that Vemana put to the indifferent rich of his time. Even today this is the most pressing of man’s problems all over the world.

Those were the days where the poets were in the courts of the kings enjoying riches and pompond writing the 'Prabandhas'. The society was divided and subdivided into thousands of castes. The upper caste people were enjoying privileges. There was a huge gulf between the uppercaste people and lowercaste people and between the poor and the rich. The doctrine of Karma seems to have reinforced its strangle-hood on the minds of mass. Vemana raised his voice against oppression and took the side of poorer sections of the society. He rejected the feudal ideology and was the most virulent critic of the octopus grip of the status quo. He is the poet of the people and was the foremost anabaptist, the pioneer of the social protestantism and the "Morning Star" of our reformation, creative imagination for wit and humour for originality and boldness of expression and for capacity to debank superstitions and to expose pretensions.
He has created awareness among the people in the society towards the exploitation of the feudal landlords and the religious people of his days. He is a social rebel constantly at war with he upholders of the caste system. He is even more violently opposed to the practice of untouchability, the worst crime of man against man. He disliked the then prevailing caste system. He was against righting for caste superiority. According to him no caste is high or low. Fighting for this is of no use. All castes are born from only one caste. That caste is called by Vemana as human caste. Calling a caste as high or low is a dead talk. This is revealed through the following poems.

*They that were born in higher castes and creeds;*
*And they that are proud of their learned weeds;*
*Won't they be slaves in mind to the wealthy breeds*
*Listen to Vema spokesman of vox populi*.  

*Higher than worship it’s intellect that stands*
*Stronger than a word it’s the mind that ever stands*
*Better than caste it’s is virtue of man that stands*
*Listen to vema spokesman of ‘voxpopuli’*.  

*Why do we, even now hold caste in our fold*
*And resort to creeping the seeds age old*
*Who is now the twice-born castes as we are told*
*Listen to Vema, spokesman of vox populi*.  

Vemana is a pucca realist. He hated the caste. He criticised
the practice of caste. He analysed that one who was born in higher caste uses it to suppress the other people. He insults the people by using harsh words. He tries to show pride by showing that he is born twice. But Vemana warns that, every man or woman is born in only one place that is mud. So, Vemana expresses this as an open secret and establishes that caste never comes with birth.

Vemana proves that wealth enjoys superior value than caste. A person who is born in lower caste, if possess wealth or money will be respected in society. Vemana after seeing the debacle of the village crafts men, in changing their professions for earning more money, hackled at them for their dual life.

Vemana saw untouchibility as a social curse. This is a symbol for social adharma. He analyses that muscle and meat is same in a Harijan and all others. No doubt, by caste people may differ. But there is one man residing in every individual. He is a human being. So, Vemana criticises that the blind people who can’t see 'human being' in a man alone is jumping with joy sticking to castes.

Vemana argues that it is by behaviour only any man has to become Harijan but not by birth. One who fails to keep up his word alone is a mala or harijan. One who practices untouchbility and argues illogically alone is a mala. Vemana's philosophy on caste is not born out of selfishness. His only anxiety is that man is not able to live like a man. The persons who dishonour and disrespect his own persons are called by him as 'human-cows'.
The following verses tell about the mala caste in a wonderful manner.

_Caste is a pariarism, a wife is a parcel of mala-mutra_
_Can love be produced in the body towards such a wife_
_The mind through spiritual knowledge becomes a form of God._ 14

_A pariar eats flesh, all other people eat_
_Fat are not they one caste?_
_They do not see that all castes are in fact one._ 15

_Why dost again and again abuse a pariar?_
_Are not his blood and flesh and thine one?_
_Of what caste is he who is immingled with him? The deity animates his entire works._ 16

In the above verses Vemana questions the people who eat the meat by observing that even the ghee they eat contain the fat. So, Vemana unveils the truth that all people come under Malas if food-habits decide the caste. That is why he concludes that all people belong to one caste. That is the caste of human being. The condemnation of caste by Vemana opened new doors in society. According to him Malas are superior to the people who kill the living beings. The reason is Malas eat usually dead cows. He laughs at the people who takes second bath after touching Malas. He equals this with the human cows who contaminate the water with their bath.

We see him not only as a poet but also as a humanist and social reformer. His poetry reflects his humanity and his ideal of social justice. Humanism was his religion, and social equality was
his life's goal. He proclaimed that distinctions of race, religion and caste should be rooted out and that humanity should become one family. He condemned the idol worship, superstitions and practices. He desired that people should develop a critical and rationalist outlook. There is an inseparable relationship between man's economic and social problems, he said. He asked men to work hard and earn money by right methods and live contented lives. It was labour that produced everything, he said emphatically.

Whatever be the subject that Vemana discusses, he discusses it with a remarkable clarity and in a most rational manner. "Races and castes must go. Religious distinctions must be effaced, social equality should be established. But these tasks cannot be accomplished by mere talk. The one essential factor is man's economic independence. His social problems can be effectively solved only when he is economically prosperous", said Vamana.

Vemana wished that all humanity should live in world of freedom, peace and happiness. The glaring disparity between the rich and the poor made him very unhappy. He felt that there could be no peace in society until that disparity ceased. To remove economic inequalities, he suggested a number of ways. He exhorted people to adopt his suggestions for the sake of social justice. While he asked the poor people to make every effort to achieve economic
independence, he also desired the wealth to share their wealth with
the poor and the needy. He, however, wanted them to do so with
discrimination. He said that help should be given without
considerations of caste or creed. The only criterion must be real
need.

If a few rich persons live lives of luxury while millions suffer
for want of food and clothing, there will be discontent in society.
Realising that this discontent will lead to anarchy, the rich must
act generously towards the poor" said Venama again and again. But
the heartless rich men did not pay heed to Vemana's teachings. The
naturally emotional Vemana could not contain his righteous anger.
He condemned the callousness of the rich in the strongest terms.
He said, "These sons trumpts throw away thousands and lakhs to
please the prostitutes who satisfy their passions, but will not give a
handful of rice to a man dying of hunger". He did not stop there, he
went further and said "seize the wealth from the wealthy, through
violence if need be and distribute it among the poor" Vemana thus a
revolutionary.

Besides this, this revolutionary poet suggested another wise
method to bring about an egalitarian social system. Vemana knew
that at one time the Telugu villages were prosperous, and that life
there was happy and contented. The institution of joint family was
a binding force that contributed to co-operative endeavour and economic well-being. People firmly believed that living together and working together was the surest way to happiness. Every farmer had enough persons in his own family to do all the agricultural work, and wives and husbands, brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts made the family both strong and prosperous. Heads of such families were regarded as the leaders of the villages. Sometimes the head of a family gave his daughter in marriage to a young man of a poor family and made him a member of his own family. This made the family stronger and richer because the son-in-law sincerely strove for the family into which he come. Such marriages proved very successful, and thus the joint family of these days contributed not a little to social cohesion and co-operation. The rich were considerate towards the poor and the disparity in their styles of living was not abhorrent. But this social order was crumbling by Vemana's time. The disparity between the rich and the poor grew greater, society broke up owing to class distinctions. There were no marriages alliances between the rich and the poor. The rich looked down on the poor, and the poor were sullenly subservient to the rich. The classes lived in distrust and contempt of each other. Vemana's love of humanity and sense of social justice could not endure this painful division in society. He strove hard to bring about unity and cordiality. His ideal was a classless
egalitarian society. The structure of social equality could be raised only on the foundation of co-operation living, he firmly believed. There should be free intercourse between the rich and the poor, and the two classes must be closely bound by marriage ties, he advised.

The following verses of Vemana in which he speaks about the marriages.

*He who takes a connection of his own and without reckoning his wealth, looks only to his age bestows the dowry and thus gives his daughter (woman) in marriage, this is the wisest of all.*  

*Given one's daughter to a rich man is like the water of a well flowing into the sea. But a woman given to a poor man is like watering a lime tree with sea of water.*

*Through a man's wealth he gets an excellent wife (punyavathi).*

*Thus a fit husband is also gained by an excellent woman.*

*By the fortune (bhagam) of both, friends and good sons and the eight blessings will be gained.*

*When a marriage contract (manuvu) is made by a rich man with a poor one, wealth and became thereby united what then is possession and what is poverty.*
If you bestow your daughter in marriage looking to wealth,
It is as if you gave her for a price
The dignified way is to give her to an equal
If thou give her to a poor man, they remain
Entwined in close attachments. 21

Mother, father, friends and relations
And all others will seek and desire a young man
They will give him the girl but not
Fortune with her.22

Vemana condemned dowry system even in those days. He reveals that it is nothing but a selling it as a bad practice. He recommends to give the girl to a poor boy who knows the difficulties and who knows the real love. He also condemned child marriages. A young wife to a old man is also condemned by him as dangerous. That is why without value to money if marriages are performed in between equals, they are the strongest.

With regard to the family Vemana holds that a house becomes heaven, if there is a wife with good character and children who enjoy good behaviour. According to Vemana the heaven here on earth. He gave prominence more to empirical values than heavenly values. He is against to neglect the empirical world.

Vemana is against destroying families with selfishness. He supports combined families. He expects every woman to shine like a
lamp. For him every house is a temple. Through several poems Vemana warned people not to listen to their wives for separation. To him such people are mad people. After marriage of any person neglects his parents, Vemana views such people as bad people. He went to the extent of cursing such persons as dead persons who fail to serve their parents in their old age.

Vemana expresses how relatives from wife-side and mother-side become friendly and father-side become enemical. From mother-in-law side, the son-in-law receives all rewards. Even from the maternal uncle some well but father side. People divide the property and take away. So in daily life human relations are governed by economic loss.

They that are from the wife's are near and dear
They that are from the mother's aren't that near
One quarrels with the ones from the father's dear?
Listen to Vema, spokesman of vox populi.... 23

Vemana found fault with drinking alchohal. He appreciated a drunkard a superior to a fellow who tells lies. He cautioned the people not to take the narcotics. It is nothing but weakness. One who yields to this will be destroyed by it. A fellow who drinks will spoil his health but a fellow who tells lies destroys the society. The second fellow is always dangerous according to Vemana.
Vemana attacked the life of prostitutes through the following verses.

\begin{quote}
A wore devoid of lewdness is the devil's daughter;
Joyless work a plague of rubbing.
Thus a village devoid of a liberal man is demon's town. \footnote{24}
Say not, this one, she is not fresh and this one is fresh.
Be she old or young, the enamoured paramour cannot quit her.
Can you call an old buffalo's milk nasty?
Love goes by liking alone. \footnote{25}

The whore praises all the ways of the whore monger
The whore's mother exposes his infamy
It is hurtful to meddle with a whore who hath a mother. \footnote{26}

It is ruin to go with a gypsy's whore
Who can restrain a sinful mind
If she will leave the village I beg one elsewhere. \footnote{27}

A wore's elder sister will cares and kiss you.
The paramour gazes at her through love of his whore
Those of the wife's side are all his relations. \footnote{28}

It is a fool that leaves his own wife at Home
And goes away to seek a harlot's dome:
Isn't a like gathering gleans, leaving ripe corn field?
Listen to Vema, spokesman of vox populi. \footnote{29}
\end{quote}

According to him a fellow who leaves his wife and goes along with a prostitute is merely a mad fellow. It is a share madness, his own field with crops and moves in collecting the debris in other fields. It amounts to saying that man should run after illusion leaving his complete expenses. It is share ignorance to run after the run of the prostitution leaving the run of the wife.

Vemana is gifted with the poetic talent and the description is very natural.
Vemana has seen that in the society at every step there will be some obstacles. The stone in a shoe never allows a man to walk freely. A fly near the ear makes continuous sounds. If it enters into the ear it bites and blood flows out. If some foreign material enters into the eye it creates burns. It hampers perfect sights. If a thorn enters into the leg it gives serious pains. If opposition comes from one’s own house it is a continuous suffering. It is an indescribable suffering. So, all these experiences can be rectified with proper thinking and cleverness. It is easy to rectify them. Similarly Vemana cautions every good man to be careful with a bad fellow who comes nearer to him. The creatures which enter into the roots will destroy even a big tree. Thus, Vemana as a great thinker, social reformer, humanist and great philosopher always attempted to offer practical solutions to the realistic problems faced by the people both personally and socially.

Vemana's message, therefore, is for the entire humanity. He has taught us what man's highest duty is, and reminded us again and again that our welfare is dependent on how well we perform this duty. A similar philosophy is the basis of all Tolstoy's novels and short stories. Vemana was a believer in one God, a great humanist and a practical philosopher. There is no ambiguity anywhere in his writings.
REFERENCES


4. Viswanatha’s definition of poetry that it is language producing aesthetic pleasure “Vakyam Rasatmakam Kavyam” and Mathew Arnold’s definition that poetry is a criticism of life – both these definitions are true in respect of Vemana’s poetry. See his verse “Nikkamaina Manchi Neelamakkatichalu” Verse 928. (One sapphire is enough if it is genuine)

5. He recognizes the distinction between the Supreme spirit and the individual self, and assigns to the human will a place and an importance which prevents him from considering men as more puppets in the hands of some superior power. Campbell- Vemana Through Western Eyes – V.N. Naria,


7. The purpose of duty (Dharma has been the onward progress in evolution of all living beings. Therefore, it is certain that whatever promotes this progress is Dharma. --- Mahabharata
8. Play the wise in a council of the learned but effect the fool in an assemblage of fools. Kural. P. 191. verse 714


10. During Vemana's time, the caste-system was more rigid than it is today. The 'mala' (Panchama caste) had no caste. They were thought to have been excluded from the Vedas. And they were not allowed to live within the village: Even today we see them living outside villages in segregation: They were not deserving of charity even when they were starving because they had no caste. It was believed that one was born as a 'chandala' in consequence of his 'karma' in the previous life. Vemana used the expression 'Vedabahya' only because it was in vogue in his time.

11. Kulamu galugu varu gothramu galavaru
   Vidya cheta virrageegu waru,
   Pasidi galugu vani banisa kodukulu
   Viswadabhirama Vinuravema.


12. Pujakanna nencha buddhi nidanambu
    Malakanna nenchha manasu dhrudamu
    Kulam kanna nenchha gunamu pradhanambu
    Viswadabhirama Vinuravema.


13. Ibid.
14. Malakulam yali malamootra bandhamu
Puttade shivambu pottalona
Manasu yathma buddhi man Brahmamoorthi ra/
Viswadabhirama ... Vinuravema.
C.P. Brown : Verses of Vemana, Asian Educational Services,

15. Malamansamudinu, mari sarva janulella
Krovvudindu rokka kulamu gade
Kulamulanni yokka
Kulamuga joodaroo, Viswadabhirama ... Vinuravema.

16. Malavaninela man man nindinpa Nodala raktamamsa mokati gade
Vanilona melagu vani kulambedi, Viswadabhirama ... Vinuravema.
Ibid, poem 893, P.215

17. Thamaku bandhujanuni damu dodukavachi kalimiganaka vasu
kalimi joochi dhakshinanu yosugi tharuni nichhina vadu parama
guru danangabadunu vema:
C.P. Brown : Verses of Vemana, Asian Educational Series, New

18. Kalimi galgu vanki kasuyaka nichhuta bhuvineer nadiki Barinatu
Nimmaku jalarasi neerettinatlundu Peda kichhu manuuvu prabalu
vema. Ibid, Poem, 1187, P.283

19. Purusha bhagyamunanu punyavathi doraku Punyavathiki natlu
purusha dabbu Eruvuri bhagmunanu hitulu suputrulu Estha
bhogamulunu namar vema Ibid, poem 1188, P.283

20. Kalguvadulemi Kanigichhu manuuvu
Kalimilemula natugalipi yundu
Kalimi jooda nekkadalemira, Viswadabhirama Vinuravema.
Ibid, poem 1189, P. 283


27. Dommariyagu lanjatho guda dosanbu Papi eima manasu pattaradu Veedu gadalipote velludu retlanoo, Viswadabhirama Vinuravema. *Ibid, Poem 357, P. 93*
