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## MYSTIC ELEMENTS IN THE VACHANAS OF ALLAMMA



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### ABSTRACT:

Allama is one of the greatest mystics of the world. He is a great yogi. Very few yogis in the world could match him. In Veerashaiva literary works he is described as *Maya Kolahala* meaning the conqueror of illusion and an incarnation of Shiva. He is the Void or *Parabrahman* incarnate. He is the *Charajangama* or walking God. He is himself the Veerashaiva Philosophy personified. In one of the yogic texts of Tibet his name appears at the top of all yogis.

**KEYWORDS :** greatest mystics , Veerashaiva Philosophy personified.

### INTRODUCTION:

Very little is known about his life. Harihara's *Prabhudevara Ragale* the thirteenth century poetic work, Chamarasa's *Prabhulingaleele* (1430 AD) and *Shunya Sampadane* of Gurulu Sidtfhaveeranna Odeyaru (1480 AD) and *Prabhudevara Purana* of Yelandur Hareeshwara (1600 AD) are the main works depicting his life and achievements.

In the above works he has been mentioned as Allayya, Allama Prabhu or Prabhudeva. Allama in Sanskrit means mothergoddess. Ma in old Kannada, means *appa* or *ayya* meaning father. Thus the word Allama denotes confluence of Shiva and Shakti i.e. Parashiva and Mothergoddess, two in one. Allama Prabhu also means *Nirajana Chakravarthi* or Emperor of purity.

We can depend upon Harihara's *Prabhudevara Ragale* and Chamarasa's *Prabhulingaleele* to sketch Allama biography as they are comparatively ancient and authentic works. Harihara describes Allama as a son of *Nagavasahipathi*, the head of a school of dance and music at Balligave situated in the present Shikaripur taluk of Shimoga district of Karnataka state. He receives his early education at Balligave and masters the art of playing with musical

instruments like Mrudanga a sort of heating drum. When he grows up as a young man he takes up the service of the deity Goggeshwara at a temple in his native village. Once he meets at this temple, a lovely young girl Kamalathe, the daughter of Dhanadatta a famous merchant of the village. Both fall in love with each other. They get married and live happily for some time. Kamalathe dies of a fever after a few days. Allama Prabhu suffers her separation intensely. He becomes rather mad and goes out of the house wandering here and there. Once when he was sitting in the flower garden outside Balligave, casually scratching the ground with his toes he notices a golden pinnacle beneath. He informs this to the king of the village. The king orders to dig the ground there and a temple was found buried under the earth. It was an old temple with a closed door. Every one was curious to know as to what is inside the temple and none dared to enter into it fearing worst to happen.

Allama thinks that as he has no interest to live further after losing his beloved wife Kamalathe, he makes up his mind to enter the temple. When he enters the temple he was wonderstruck at the sight before him. An old monk was sitting in yogic posture holding Ishtalinga on his palm and deeply absorbed in yoga staring at it uninterruptedly. This sort of yoga is known as *animisha yoga* (animisha means to stare with half closed eyes continuously) or Lingayoga. For this reason the yogi is known as *Animishayogi*. He could see a light shining there without any lamp. Allama Prabhu realises that *Animishayogi* perhaps wants to bless him. He is filled with joy and tries to communicate with him but in vain. He takes the Ishtalinga from his palm and gets initiated with *Ishtalinga diksha*. As soon as Allama Prabhu does this, the yogi's soul departs from his body and he attains *samadhi*. Allama Prabhu finds a tremendous change in him. He feels that he is now the master of all Yogas and divine knowledge is at his disposal. From here he starts his spiritual journey to redeem the people.

### MYSTIC PILGRIMAGE OF ALLAMMA

Allama Prabhu after blessing Akkamahadevi and directing her to seek communion with the Lord at Kadali in Srishaila, a holy place situated in Kurnool district of present day Andhra Pradesh which was a centre of spiritual giants in those days, leaves Kalyana for his spiritual tour throughout the country. He moves through different places on coasts, mountains, villages and rivers. His movement was unique. Though he was moving, still motionless.

Though he was walking, yet he moves without steps. He identifies himself with the Void. Let us hear the nature of this mysterious journey from himself:

What shall I say of him,  
How tell of him who walks without steps, Motion' JSS moves ?  
What shall I say of him, how tell of him  
Who makes the impossible possible ?  
What shall say of the indivisible glorious one ? The movement of Allayya,  
Sharana of Guheshwara from time beyond times  
Is a blessing to the world!<sup>8</sup>

After leaving Kalyana, first he goes to Ponnambalanath a holy place in south. He liberates noble souls who were leading a righteous life contemplating on Shiva and having mystic experiences with Him. He then moves on to Ramanath who offers worship to Prabhu. Then he passes through southern coast and reaches western sea and bathes in it and sanctifies it. After visiting holy Mahabaleshwara he moves to north and visits Somanath in Sourashtra. He

completes the spiritual tour of sixty-eight holy places. Wherever he goes he redeems the people he meets. Finally he reaches the Himalaya. He wanders in the mountains known as Savaraksha parvata witnessing various caves. At last he sees a vast cave. He sits there in yogic trans absorbed in yoga and reaches the Void of Voids. He identifies himself with Absolute Reality or he transforms himself as Parashiva -

The world and other world are where he is ; The sky and Meru's mansion are where he is ;  
All the worlds and true spheres are where he is ; The pure external principles are where he is ;  
The higher and highest ranks are where he is ;

The orbits of the sun, moon and stars are where he is; The space and outer space are where he is ;

The self subsistent Guheshwara is where he is<sup>9</sup>

By dint of his Shivayogic powers he embraces innumerable crores of universes. By the light of his knowledge he shines with divine splendour.

After deepest meditation he wakes up and perceives through his eye of knowledge that Basavanna has constructed a throne of Void. Is it a physical entity or allegorical presentation of process of Shivayoga to reach a state of Void ? Following description of Hadapada Appanna throws light on this.

And harmonising the ten airs into one ; Allaying the air of divine joy

Making the skilled air into a pillow ; Making joy into a square seal for spring ; Making the tones resounding in nine nerves Sweet to parrot, cuckoo, Bee ;

Spreading mango - sprouts soft to the touch

Which is the highest peace,

Making a loophole of the northern door, A flight of steps of early yoga

and a real threshold of western door ; Built cloisters of seven vices,

And the five senses,

And cancelled greed and lust of flesh, Making an upper floor of upward wheel, Lighting the lamps of sun and moon, Setting a golden pinnacle of the Great light Over the dome of self awareness,

My supreme Guru Basavanna built

A throne of Absolute,

The Void of voids, for ever still

In Lord Basava priya Kudala Chennasanga.

Though this *Vachana* of Hadapada Appanna describes the throne of Void as a process of Shivayoga yet he clearly points out in the end that such a physical model was built by Basavanna which made Prabhu to come to Kalyana for ascending it.

By building such a throne Basavanna waits with great anxiety for twelve years for Allamma arrival to ascend it, His associate *Sharanas* like Channabasavanna, Madivala Machideva and Shoddalabacharasa predict the arrival of Allama. Basavanna's inner conscience also felt that he is nearing Kalayana. At last Prabhu arrives in unrecognisable form with deteriorated body, scattered hair and bleeding foot toes. When he was in front of Mahamane Basavanna did not fail to recognise him. Basavanna's intense devotion to Jangama could help him to know as to who he was. Prabhu was received by Basavanna and other sharanas by washing his feet with all spiritual

pomp.

Basavanna requests Prabhu to ascend the throne of Void built by him. He knew that but for Prabhu who is a perfect Shivayogi none is capable to do it. Prabhu ascends the throne with a miraculous ease casting a spell of spiritual magic on all those gathered there. Thus Void occupies the throne of Void constructed by Basavanna and he exclaims with unbounded joy :  
There was in the perfect Void

A headless elephant.

The elephant came and, swallowing Another elephant, was itself destroyed. Behold the Inner without difference. The outer without support,  
When the bodiless Supreme assumes his seat  
Upon the Throne of petalless flower, It is a wonder to all the worlds!  
I say hail, O hail! To the holy feet  
Of Prabhudeva, Lord Kudala Sangama's  
Sharana!

Other sharanas join Basavanna in praise and padapuje (worship of feet) of Prabhu deva goes on with divine gaiety by sharanas' and sharaneyaru (male and female saints). Meanwhile one lakh ninety six thousand Jangamas who were waiting for dasoha (freefeeding) which was a usual practice in Mahamane felt that they were not cared for by Basavanna who was giving undue importance to Allama Prabhu, the steet magician. In protest against this negligence they walked away from Mahamane. Their contention was that it was wrong on part of Basavanna to offer throne of Void to Allama Prabhu considering him as Parashiva incarnate while many among them were fit to occupy it. They charged Basavanna with these acts of commission and omission and were very angry on him.

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