

PREFACE

1. The Place Of History In Education

India, the land of Dharma attained freedom. In this new age, revolutionary changes are required in many fields. During our freedom movement, one of the leaders wanted our history to be rewritten. In the post independent era, what has come to occupy a pre-eminent position for all round development is education. In this task, history plays a very important role in presenting us a vivid and comprehensive picture of the past besides inspiring our thoughts about the present and the future. Education sans knowledge of history is like expecting a blind to behold beauty. Every branch of knowledge like Science, Philosophy, Art, Music has a history and above all the history of History. Today a historian tries to understand the past, present and the future as did an ascetic through clairvoyance. The fact that Indians held the view that history had more to do than the famous Mahabharatha and the Vedas, corroborates the pre-eminence attached to history. इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत् । “ has been a widely accepted view.

2. Special Features Of Dharmic History

History is multifaceted. It may be said that the history of saints has occupied a special place. In India, there is hardly any difference among Saints, Philosophers, Mystics, Devotionalists and Religionists, whereas elsewhere the word Saint means Devotionalist. It is because each is not only interdependent on the other but also is complementary. As Dharma which is vital for the Society has been the very foundation of all the above whether it is literature, life; all are governed by the principles of Dharma. Therefore history of our Dharma and history of the saints become very important. What is needed to understand the essence of our culture is a correct knowledge of these. Thus in India, only history of Dharma took very strong roots and flourished. The Mahabharatha became a unique history of Dharma amongst all the books of history in the world.

3. Dharmic People

Let us consider some of the important aspects of the history of Dharma. Our Dharma has evolved into a live institution. It is the Dharmic people who often rejuvenated the institution of Dharma

and enlivened our culture. In this age of party power, we may fail to comprehend the resplendence of their personality. Our Paragons of Dharma were taking the country, the language and the people to greater heights through inspiration and vigour. They lived an illustrious life, and their talk used to be mellifluous. Their preachings were supreme. Their reminiscence is invigorating. They built and ruled monarchies; they trounced the invincible enemies. Through their powers of asceticism the entire universe stood amazed. With their mystic powers, they created a heaven in the world. They foreordained our future and enriched our language. They manifested God through the powers of Bhakthi, blissfully dancing, singing, weeping, laughing, goading others to weep and laugh religioso. They endowed the universe with the wealth of the Shastras, gave the world their valuable preachings. Their deeds and words, lives, inspiration and expiration were filled with sanctity, which culminated in the greatest service to mankind and served as panacea. They were not power hungry nor overbearing nor egoistic nor selfish. They showed how a man can scale great heights if he becomes well versed in culture, embraces the perfect Dharma. Their entire life pivoted on love and affection. They were embodiment of kindness. All their acts and deeds were motivated by devotion. It is with this, they saw the God gyrate to the pluck of their monochord. They were totally detached from mundane allurements. Even though such divine souls could bestow invaluable wealth abundantly on the universe, they were themselves in penury. They were great scholars but taciturn. Though kings and rulers respected them greatly and looked to them for guidance, they remained insulated from power. This is how they led their lives.

This is what conferred supremacy on our culture. It is through their divine influence that our country could emerge as a guiding spirit for the world. They established peace in the world through their spiritual power. Thus it became to be called a 'Dharmic Age' (Dharmayuga). Their ascetic powers instilled high thoughts even in the profligate. The very tiger known for its ferocity eschewing its instinctive traits revelled in the company of its own prey peacefully. A gory indulgence like war did not transgress Dharma. Love pervaded the entire world. Co-operation, courtesy, demeanour, the quintessence of Society made life wholesome. Now the country,

the people, the language suffer from the absence of such saintly guidance and this has become responsible for the present catastrophe. The scarcity of such a tribe has paved way for Kaliyuga and our country and our people are drifting towards downfall. Man has reached the coveted goal. Now there is a downslide. Lack of proper mentors can be ascribed to the present state of affairs. Man has become brutal; even worse. Our march is not progressive but retrogressive. The result, our life unsafe and unhappy.

It is contrary to the principles of human science to believe that even an ordinary man would be an exemplar. Their level of thinking and living is different and distinguished. An ordinary man eagerly craves to follow in the footsteps of such luminaries. The entire Society treads the path shown by the ascetics without any qualms. It is only the illusion of a daydreamer that everyone in the Society leads one's life through the light of conscience. But this is in sharp contrast to reality. It is the sacred souls in whose wisdom lies the past, present and the future of the mankind. Though this appears to contradict the democratic principles; it is a stark reality. The present state of chaos, trials and tribulations would not have been there if they were alive. It is sad that though there are leaders who have proved their mettle in their respective realms, there is a total absence of wisest souls to visualise the real well being of mankind and be the perpetual guiding spirit. It is our misfortune; the vicious influence of Kalipurusha. It is where the God has deceived us.

कालो हि दुरतिक्रमः ।

Be that as it may, it is unpardonable that we have even failed to remember such great souls. We are sure to throw ourselves into wilderness by not pursuing the path shown by them, let alone failing to look upon them as our real guides. Our total dependence on them is our only choice. With this as our goal, there is not even an iota of doubt in achieving emancipation from the sufferings in our life. Rather than lamenting on the absence of such leaders, it is wise to remember such great souls all through the journey of our life.

The Divine Path Of Dharma

The path they pursued is straight and clear rid of thorns and hindrances. The path of Sanatana Dharma has always been fearless and absolutely free from anxiety. The very word 'Sanatana Dharma' is mistaken to conjure up a picture, which becomes an object of

derision and caricature in the eyes of commoners. Today, the Society seems to be distraught with Dharma. Rationalists argue that it is in the fitness of things to jettison out Dharma from practice by expurgating the very word 'Dharma' from dictionary. This can be attributed to the present condition in which we find Dharma being practised. It is believed that it serves as a mask for the traits like one's expediency, barbarity, conceit, arrogance, rascality. Though it appears to be true, it is far from real. This is a sign of lack of wisdom and myopic sight of today's generation. To have the manifestation of Dharma, it does not suffice to merely read books, to delve into history but one should strive to experience it. Only then can one realise its formidable influence. Dharma is not Ostentation. It does not lie in daubing a thick line on the forehead, acquiring scholarship of Shastras for self-attainment, committing veiled acts of injustice. This is a hearty life, besides the way of infusing the knowledge into our life. Really a power that turns what is ephemeral to eternal. An act of austerity that brings the intense bliss to our experience. It insulates itself from the allurements proffered by the people, the status and other mundane objects. It does not suffer from frailty of sternness about impulsive weakness of man. It is detached from the notion that fulfilment of desires arising out of such frailties, such allurements is the ultimate goal of man's aspirations. From the standpoint of Dharma, every day's questions of man and the temporary problems of Society are negligible. Obstacles confronted by a nation, a race, in an age are trivial. The 'Sanatana Dharma' (Dharma spanning aeons) is a perfect antidote for all kinds of maladies of the entire world for all times. It is blunderous to gauge it in a short perspective, from a stunted angle and from the viewpoint of specific time and place. Our problems cannot find solutions from it. Only Paragons can realise the meaning of Dharma. It is better for others to simply follow it without any debate. It is in our own interest we find solution to our problems only within the ambit of Dharma. Instead, gloating over the transitory pleasures attained through the path trodden out of ignorance can aptly be compared to the life of a dog relishing its own blood caused by its gnawing pieces of bone. Therefore it calls for a great deal of judiciousness while considering the aspects of Dharma. Reformers should bear in mind that it is improper to criticise Dharma unrestrainedly.

5. The Contours Of Dharma

It is natural for cynics to be assailed by the doubt about what Dharma means. Though it appears a very simple question, no other question is so controversial, intricate. Many commentaries have emerged about the aspects of Dharma. But none of the comments appears convincing. It should be cited here that the only answer to all the questions haunting the whole world through ages is Dharma. While enumerating its characteristics, the logicians dubbed 'happiness' is 'what is pleasing to all'. Instead of expressing happiness in terms easy to comprehend, they have made it more complicate. Happiness is not indiscriminate. One man's happiness may be another man's hardship. This illusion is born of our ignorance about the real happiness. The explanation to this should be understood on the delicate principle that happiness has a definite origin. We should get seized of the task of explaining Dharma with the firm view that there should be a convincing answer to a unique question in the world. It is Indians who have found redress for the universal problem through 'Sanatana Dharma'. They developed our culture on this foundation. Thus it became age old and infinite. In the backdrop of the supremacy of Dharma, our being proud about a mere temporary redress can be likened to the inconsequence of an individual's difference of opinion in a united struggle. For them the individual interest always remained subordinate to the larger interest. It is in this broad perspective, they cultivated goodness.¹ Ideological differences though were there, were never an impediment for the noble path. Such differences lose out their entity to this broadest path. This is the most comprehensive view. It is our great fortune to become the inheritors of the wealth of such a unique principle. But our wisdom lies in cherishing it.

It is Dharma, which integrates everybody's prosperity on the one hand and on the other compliments individual attainment. The fundamental principle of Dharma is 'Practice', its very pulsation. Dharma is like the thread of a garland. Man devoid of Dharma like

1. The storing up of personal and communal possessions, nay, the very forming and holding together of a social organisation at all, would be wholly impossible if the inherent selfishness of the individual were not restricted and restrained by Dharma, if rights were not controlled by Duty, if the production and distribution of wealth were not governed by Law, and the liberty of each were modified by the needs of all. **-The Science of Social Organisation**

a garland with snapped thread smashes himself into smithereens. This is the epitome of Dharma.¹

This is fundamental to the progress of humankind. The present state of turmoil is a concomitant of laxity of Dharma. With no cementing factor to engender unity of mankind being available, man has indulged in mutual conspiracy and recrimination. The noble qualities of sympathy, co-operation, help are uprooted. The basic tenets of Dharma have vanished. The situation has become perilous with each looking at the other with suspicion and hostility. This yields a catastrophe. Rejuvenation of Dharma is the only solution for this. World organisations, judicious enactments, laws, treaties fail to eliminate depravity in man. They are counter productive.² Dharma confers cordiality. This is the primary lesson to be learnt. Religion, law, indebtedness all lead us to the same road i.e. unity, Dharma exactly means no other than this.³ If virtue of a man is chiselled out into a visible form, that should be interpreted as Dharma. It is bestial for a man to be without Dharma. The unwavering belief in God and our close association with Him are the fountainhead of such a noble feeling. The real secret of Dharma lies in seeing Him in animate as well as inanimate things. This is the inherent preachings about cordial relations. The edifice of cordiality is sustained by nothing but Dharma. No peace without cordiality. No end to squabbles without the intervention of peace.

1. धर्मोति धारणे धातुः महत्वे चैवमुच्यते ।

आधारणे महत्वे वा धर्मः सतु निरुच्यते । ।

धारणाद्धर्म इत्याहुर्धर्मो धारयते प्रजाः । ।

मत्स्य. पु. ४५-२७

महाभारत कर्ण प ११९

2. The glories of science and art and military trappings and bravery and all the splendours of the finest civilisation are more dust, nay more, they are so much explosive powder, so much the stronger agents for destruction if the civilisation is not based on Dharma. **-S.S.O**

3. The words religion, law, legal obligation are derived from Latin roots having allied meanings ligare, legere, lex, legis. That which holds a thing together makes it what it is, prevents it from breaking up and changing it into something else, its characteristic function, its peculiar property, its fundamental attribute, its essential nature is its Dharma, the law of its being primarily.

-S.S.O

Dharma is that which uplifts to heights of honour and greatness, Dharma is that scheme, that network of the duty of each which holds together all the children of Manu in organic cohesion and prevents them from falling apart in pieces, in ruin and destruction.

-The Science of Social Organisation

Dharma really means something more than religion. It is from a root word which means to hold together! it is the inmost constitution of a thing, the law of its inner being. It is an ethical concept which includes the moral code, righteousness, and the whole range of man's duties and responsibilities. **-The Discovery of India, P.51**

It can be conclusively said that only Dharma is the manifestation of God in the form of cordiality.¹ The roots of Dharma can be traced to the Vedas and the allied Shastras. The edifice of Dharma founded on these has many portions. Each one of them dazzles in different colours. In the context of man's duties and obligations in life, this becomes the ethos of a hermitage. The professional acumen needed for a living can be termed as 'Varna Dharma'. Expertise is 'Karmayoga'. The goal of life is salvation. Knowledge and devotion pave way for salvation. It requires religion and other tools.² Thus, devotion to God (courtesy, love, trust) which serves as the mother root branches out and culminates in the form of our 'Sanatana Dharma'. Without attempting to understand its root, beholding a branch randomly with inadvertence, denouncing the whole tree only speaks volumes about our triviality but cannot whittle away the grandeur of the tree. Therefore if the people, nation are to progress, it is inexcusable to cobble up detestable principles and exposing the vulnerable people to the dangers through their experiments. It has become a passion in this modern world to wax about such acts of bravado!

Having understood the intricacy of Dharma, and marching under the stewardship of great souls is our great fortune. All other religions of the world are a clear travesty of our Aryan doctrines. Others cannot survive without this.³ Through their perfect knowledge of such broad doctrines only, great men were responsible for the progress of our nation. As they were not unenlightened like others, they cherished Dharma as lively as it had ever been. In a world devoid of Dharmic guides, we still harbour the hope of seeing light on our march in obscurity only through their remembrance. All that we need is to persuade our minds towards it. If we inch away from very Dharma, is it ever possible to remember proponents of Dharma? Can we ever progress? What is the remedy? There is no alternative but to gravitate towards it using all our discernment.

In the opinion of a few, the ultimate goal for all men is the same,

1. धारकाद्धर्मो हरिः

याभिभर्ति जगत्सर्वम् ईश्वरेच्छाह्य लौकिकी।
सैवधर्मो हि सुभगे नेह कश्चन संशयः।।

2. Briefly Dharma is characteristic property scientifically, duty morally and legally; religion with all its proper implications psycho-physically and spiritually; and righteousness and law generally; but duty above all. **-S.S.O**

3. This has been well delineated in GangaPrasad's "Fountainhead of religion".

to reach through different paths, which everyone can tread that best suits. There is no difference of opinion about the fact that everybody aspires to get complete happiness. Many Dharmic experts who dreamt of such a wholesome life have striven to make it real. Greek Philosopher's 'Republic', 'Communism' of Marx and his followers and Gandhiji's 'Ramarajya' are all such wishful dreams. The principles of 'Republic' have reached all corners of the world. The path of 'Sanatana Dharma' does differ. In this context it is quite natural for thinkers to find it puzzling that Dharma is the only path to achieve happiness. It is out of place to dwell on the merits and demerits of great principles of the present day. The doctrine that the chief path for man's progress is none other than 'Sanatana Dharma' ¹ is well debated and long experienced. It is far from true that there are many approaches to a goal. As the goal is the same, so is the path. All the paths pursued towards that goal, though originate from different places should not be in conflict with one another.

Therefore, the path pursued by the mankind today is unscrupulous. The atmosphere is not conducive. The ultimate good of man has been elusive inspite of grandiloquence of great leaders about their professed doctrines. The real flag bearers of the right path are our ancient noble souls. We have to submit ourselves to their leadership and need to toe their line without any digression.

6. The Essence Of Acharya's Doctrine

Those sacred souls presenting a splendid picture of happiness they dreamt of through their intellectual powers did not rest satisfied. Wading through the insurmountable problems of life, coupled with their discernment, intellect and above all devotion to God, not only did they become immortals but also led their ardent followers to the goal. Sri Madhwacharya and his followers occupied a prime place in the conglomeration of such noble souls. Mere intelligence and scholarship do not make a man perfect. Unblemished friendship, firm devotion to Almighty are fundamental principles of human life. It is the Acharya who propagated the message that this only is the great secret of Sanatana Dharma. All aspects of Sanatana Dharma acting in cohesion make this great

1. यतो अभ्युदयनिश्चयससिद्धिः सधर्मः।।

attainment relishing. Life is purposeful. A whole truth. Is not cunning; beset with difficulty. Has no attachment; riddled with obstacles. Life should be enjoyed well. Problems should be overcome with utmost judiciousness. What should be in the background for all these are Love and Friendship. Life sans love is insipid. Man attains peace through total submission to Almighty with full love. This makes life meaningful. Then it is worth encountering problems and disentangling ourselves. Or else, our life would be like toiling to carry boulders to a rocky hill under the scorching Sun. Does the God exist? Is bliss our sole aim? Such a life of constant doubt dwindles our soul. Before we realise our follies, time will have elapsed and we will have no alternative but to rue about it. If we heartily love Him, there is happiness. To sum up, happiness is the sole aim. The path to it are Love and Friendship. To dilate further on it is inappropriate and unnecessary. This is the beauty of life. This is complete life. Everybody should strive for this; live for this.¹ It is these paragons who achieved and made the world realise that with this, man becomes superior to animals,² culture becomes meaningful.

This is well manifested in every aspect of their life. This is clearly reflected in the path shown by them. This is conspicuously embodied in their followers. Mankind should be ever indebted for their ineffable service.

7. The Acharya And His Followers

They attained their stature as great men not merely by defeating opponents in debate through their singular erudition and exhibiting their great scholarship. They showed the royal route to friendship. They preached how to love God. It upheld their greatness. Many impediments stared them in their face in this regard. They had to find a common solution to the multifaceted problems of life. They did demonstrate it. Reminiscing their lives is itself a great feat for us. This ensures our progress. Hence this effort. Emboldened by the fact that it would be admirable, this task is undertaken though it appears Herculean. The author is confident that this will receive readers' approval.

1. स्मर्तव्यः सततं विष्णुः विस्मर्तव्यो नजानुचित् सर्वे विधि निषेधाः स्युः एतयोरेवकिंकराः।

2. ब्रह्मावबोधधिषणम् मनुजम् विधायमुदमापदेवः

-भागवतम्

II. PREDECESSORS OF ACHARYA

1. Practice Of Dharma

The whetstone for happiness is peace. Without peace; ostentation, wealth, valour, strength rouse brutality. The present generation has greatly realised the need for peace. The ultimate and practical goal of Sanatana Dharma is again peace. When one visualises a congenial situation such as the following, it will have a soothing effect on one's body and mind: sufficiency of daily necessities, development of an attitude free from malice and jealousy, living with contentment and cooperation, flourishing of Shastras, music and fine arts, a society abounding in friendship, graceful behaviour, large heartedness, accomplishment and piety. Such a pleasant dream was once a reality in our country. It is not correct to hold the view that such a reality is a result of founding a strong state. Then there was a perfect union of culture and Dharma among the people. As a result, their attitude was of a high calibre. Relegating their mundane desires, people were intent on enriching the spiritual life.¹ Hankering after the unending worldly accomplishments, falling into the cauldron of voluptuousness and getting intoxicated, did not make life meaningful. Hence, even a common man of those days was considered mystical and wise. Our culture-AryaDharma was then alive in the entire nation.

The royal patronage is greatly responsible for this. What was enjoined on them was to punish the unscrupulous and to protect the virtuous, but give no heed to the hollow cries of the boors. Every Kshatriya had perfectly understood that this was the sacred duty which was a definite tool for attaining righteousness. This clan stood in array for the protection of Dharma and cherishing its tradition. Our ancestors responsible for the establishment of society knew that this was an onerous responsibility. It was Brahmins who practised Dharma and guarded against the candle of Dharma getting extinguished. Kings were its care takers. Many great kings who were renowned in carrying out such a sacred task became icons of Dharma. The king Janaka was a paragon amongst them. God instilled mysticism-subtlety of Dharma in the protectors of the

1. ध्यानिकं सर्वमेवैतत् यदेतदभिषद्भितम्।

नह्यनध्यात्मवित् कश्चित् क्रियाफलमुपाश्नुते।।

-मनु ६. ८२

nation. Vivasvan was most fortunate to be so instilled. Vivasvan taught its secrecy to Manu. Ikshvaku inherited the gist of Dharma from Manu. Lord Krishna emphasised that the tradition of Dharma so cherished began losing its sheen under the grind of ages, by the time the Lord began preaching Bhagavadgeetha. As a sequel, it has become crystal clear that the kings turned torch bearers in the task of protecting this tradition. Then Dharma stood greatly encouraged in all spheres. It was a time of a spate of yagnas and yagas. There were series of great philosophical debates in the royal courts. Myriad students were studying in gurukulas. Innumerable saints were ecstatically absorbed in their meditation. Besides patronising these noble pursuits, the king himself trod this path.

2. Tradition Of Dharma

It is revealed by Bhagavadgeetha that in Dwaparyuga only, the ancient Shastras propounding Dharma were on the wane. Though Dharma regained its strength during the reign of Pandavas, it remained unprotected in times that ensued. What became the need of the hour was to establish a tradition to keep Dharma well protected, as the rulers themselves violated Dharma, and in view of the general belief that in Kaliyuga, the Hindu society abounds in mere Brahmins and Chathurthikas without Kshatriyas and Vyshyas. This onerous task fell on the shoulders of the saints as those attached to family were unequal to the task. In Kritha and Tretha yugas, Sanakadis had become renounced. They were personification of Dharma. They were the children of Chathurmukha Brahma who was directly preached by Hamsaroppi incarnation of God. Their disciple was Rudramshasambhoota Doorvasa Muni. He was a great soul indeed who studied Vedas under Sri Vedavyasa and a follower of Bheema cult. He had the eternal blessings of Lord Krishna.¹ This is the time when the upheaval task of protecting the real tradition began. Gnananidhi having had education under the guidance of Doorvasa successfully carried out this responsibility.

Perhaps it was the advent of Kaliyuga subsequent to the end of

1. ततः परमहंसाये कृष्णभीमानुशिक्षिताः।
व्यासाश्रयादत्रिजाद्य वेदशास्त्राप्यवर्तयत् ।।

-मणिमंजरि ५.१

Dwapara. Because it was adumbrated in Mahabharatha that the moment Duryodhana was defeated, Kaliyuga was set to unfold. After ruling for thirty six years, the Pandavas in the beginning of Kaliyuga itself coronated King Pareekshitha and reached the heavenly abode. In spite of King Pareekshitha ruling in Kaliyuga, because of his mystic powers, the vicious influence of Kali could not be ubiquitous. He vanquishing Kali had restrained his influence. Afterwards till the reign of Kshemakaraja, Dharma somehow continued to exist owing to the continued existence of Kshatriya clan.¹ The successors of Gnananidhi; Garudavahanatheertha, Kaivalyatheertha, Gnaneshatheertha continued to protect the tradition of Dharma.

By then, roughly after one thousand years of Kaliyuga, the practice of Dharma, culture had slipped into the hands of unscrupulous rulers. It is when, God incarnated as Buddha to establish Buddhism.

Emperors Chandragupta, Ashoka and others widely propagated Buddhism. Again Kanishka and other kings of Kushana Dynasty who established their kingdom in India, greatly patronised it. In A.D.400, emperors of Gupta Dynasty fully encouraged Arya Dharma. Nevertheless Buddhism did not suffer any decadence, but extended to still greater dimensions. Again in A.D.700, Harshavardhana supported it.

Thus, having been so strongly propagated for nearly one thousand two hundred years, Buddhism encompassed entire India. It was chaos everywhere, Dharma having been relegated, with the result the very existence of Arya Dharma suffered the prospect of extinction. As Arya Dharma has been an ancient one, it does not merit the word extinction. Bhattakumara was in the vanguard of upholding it to spread awareness of Dharma among people. Bhattakumara who was born in the beginning of A.D.800 got rid the people of their obsession with Buddhism and became instrumental in its annihilation in India by establishing and propagating that the Vedas alone were true, conduct of yagnas and yagas were the real feat of man.

1. तैः क्षेमकांतैरिह भारतादि शास्त्राणि शुण्वद्विरशेषविद्भिः।
व्यासप्रसादाच्चकलौच धर्मो ज्ञानं च सुत्रातमगात्तनाशम् ।।

-निर्णयम् ३२. १३८

His contemporary Shankaracharya upholding the Vedic creed founded Adwaitha philosophy. But his philosophy came in the way of accomplishing his aim of uplifting the Vedic creed and his line of thought appeared like an improved version of Buddhism.¹

Paratheertha, the disciple and the successor of Gnaneshatheertha in the great tradition of Sanakadis, then being the protector of Dharma had chosen Sathyaprajna to be his successor. His disciple Prajnatheertha had to encounter difficult times.

3. Peril To Vedic Tradition

Though this great tradition seemed to get support through the predominance of Adwaitha philosophy, the real Vedic tradition did not get any inspiration from it. Not only that, Prajnatheertha had to face gruelling times in his earnestness to sustain Dharma. Prajnatheertha had harrowing experience from the followers of Adwaitha philosophy in their hilarity of propagating it. He had to rub out symbols of his tradition. He was stripped of his regalia. The helpless Prajnatheertha reluctantly agreed to follow Adwaitha philosophy. After recovering his regalia, he went to a solitude with his entourage to contemplate on the best task ahead.

Such crises are not new to history. Dedicated men of virtue and other luminaries thoroughly protected Dharma or politics by their acts of renunciation and have become immortal bequeathing the inestimable assets to posterity at a time when Dharma or politics had begun to degenerate owing to the dwindling Divine support and vicious effect of evil forces. It is no uphill task, that never fails to attract admiration, to be persistent in achieving the prosperity of the nation and successfully propagating Dharma at a time quite propitious and when all round support is pouring in. On the contrary at times unpropitious, the task of protecting Dharma and getting it to illumine with greater brilliance for the future generations is not only stupendous but also nobler. It is only such sacred souls who have enriched our culture. It is the strength of the thread on which the glory of a garland of priceless gems solely depends. Suppose

1. Some of Shankara's Brahmin opponents called him a disguised Buddhist. It is true that Buddhism influenced him considerably

-Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Discovery of India P. 153

the thread is getting snapped, is it not the act of restoring the garland its original form that keeps it shining further! Such accomplishment is the real achievement, dedication. When Dharma suffered at the hands of overpowering demons, sages and saints persisted in Dharma secretly. Afterwards when Dharma attained a new vigour with the grace of God, their supreme contribution became memorable. Owing to the onslaught of Muslims, when the entire nation was in peril, the struggle of Rana Prathap for the survival of Hindu Dharma is no mean. His sacrifice and courage are immense. His name occupies a high place in the memory of Hindus. Further, the persistent struggle of Lakshmi Bai in protecting Hindu Dharma from the influence of Westerners is permanently etched in our memory. Thus not one or two but many great examples manifest themselves gloriously.

Undoubtedly Sri Prajnatheertha's contribution to Dharma is a milestone. This great soul carrying the formidable yoke of Sanatana Dharma which had its glory spanning three yugas, battled relentlessly against all odds that came in the way of protecting it unmindful of peril to his own life. Indeed the greatest soul who blessed us with the likes of Madhwacharya, Teekakrithpada and Mantralaya Prabhu who strove to preserve for us the entity of the tradition unscathed. Their fortitude, commitment to tradition, piety were unflinching and immortal.

Prajnatheertha was deeply worried about how to foster his tradition in the days to come. A diabolical situation unprecedented and unforeseeable in his life befell him. During discussions with his disciples, he said – "What is the recourse! Such a peril has happened! I do not lament the gruelling experience that my body undergoes. But it is excruciating that my Ashrama Dharma may get lax. By virtue of my noble deeds in my earlier births, I am not only blessed with this superior birth, but also goes with it the divine responsibility of protecting the assiduously treasured Dharma. How to discharge this responsibility successfully? If I fail in this sacred duty, I may expose myself to the anger of such a great guru. When Dharma is saddled with patronage and people become dedicated, if they call me as the sinner for having failed to protect the tradition, can there be a greater disrepute, sin?" Puzzled, he prayed to God – "Oh Almighty, Narayana, Vedavyasa! Why this test; flinging me into such a deep crisis? Do I deserve such a test? I possess neither

the mystic powers of my guru nor do I have such ascetic powers. Having encumbered me with such a diabolical task and left me in lurch, does it behove you to revel in my moments of crisis! Have not the Vedas been proclaiming you as the protector of the unprotected, the saviour, the force to create and dispel the fear? Oh Almighty! where have your such supreme powers gone? It is true I am nothing. I do not deserve to be graced with manifestation of your supreme powers. That apart, how intense is the burden cast on me? Will not its failure defame you? Will not the Sanakadis, your devotees, receive the ignominy? It is time you blessed me. I beseech you to place on me your hand of extenuation for all my blemishes. Or, you may lose your acclaim as the ocean of kindness, purger of the acts of sinner.”

Then he had intuition to undertake penance invoking his guru. After finishing Chathurmasya at village Nandi, he decided to go to Badari. Accordingly, after observing Chathurmasya, doing the sublime act of taking a holy dip in the Ganges, he proceeded to Badari absorbed in profound thought of God. His journey, with his entourage, for protecting Dharma resembled a platoon of soldiers marching forward in their crusade. Prajnatheertha was its leading light. Soon after reaching the divine land of Badari, he took a holy bath in the icy waters of the Ganges and had darshan of Badari Narayana. It was like a child that did not know which way to go finding itself securely placed on the lap of its mother and enjoying her warmth. With this, heaving a sigh of relief, finishing Ahneeka, etc in all piety, coupled with breath control ritual through Pranayama, he performed the act of long penance invoking the God enshrined in the heart of his guru. Devotion is bliss, bliss devotion! Pleased by his devotion, his guru manifested before him. What a wonderful moment of ecstasy! He embraced his disciple as a father would his child. Prajnatheertha was struck dumb choked with emotion! Tears of bliss coursed down his cheeks. He stood dumb found as Dhruva did when he had manifestation of God.

Prajnatheertha's guru understood everything through his mystic powers. There was a generous flow of affection towards his disciple. He himself averred – “My son! I am aware of your difficulties. You really deserve to enjoy my blessings. You are endowed with the grace of God. The course you were forced to choose under the most trying circumstances was not wrong. I am overwhelmed by

your courage and uprightness. Why are you so crestfallen? How can your Ashrama Dharma suffer any deficiency? धर्मो भवत्यधर्मोपि कृतो भक्तैस्तवाच्युत। पापं भवति धर्मोपि येन भक्तैः कृतो हरेः।। Is it that you are not aware of what it says? Being the follower of Bheemasena Mata and having become sanctified by my preachings, isn't the secret of Dharma known to you? With the sole aim of continuing to protect the tradition you need to persist in your own course even if it means some departure from the set tradition. When the very tradition of Dharma has remained well protected and its strict observance has been going on unhindered, in such a perfect situation, wouldn't such trivial aspects have surfaced? In the absence of Dharma, can they exist? This has become the order of the day. कालो हि दुरतिक्रमः । Nobody can swim against that current. We are sure to get the great strength needed. यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत । अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानम् सृजाम्यहम् ॥ Is it not the Divine vow? Hasn't Vasudeva proclaimed धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ? Indubitably, we will have great men in our long tradition to add new lustre to our Dharma. Then your service will become yeoman to be greatly blessed by God. Till such time, though you and the like minded around you follow the popular philosophy and hold sermons on the books concerning it surrendering to intimidation, yet persist in the thought that the God is supreme, has infinite qualities, and all are his servants. This only is the secret of Upanishads, the pith of Dharma. You ought to preach this secretly bestowing sanyasa on whom you consider deserving. Let him preach another virtuous person similarly. Thus let the tradition go on eternally. Exert yourself to see that this light doesn't burn out. You along with your disciples go to Puri, the land of Purushothama and settle down there. It is where you will free yourself from impediments through His blessings. Deal with the rest using all your wisdom in the manner appropriate to the situation. Never get despondent. You always have the Divine protection. Let all your endeavours find fulfilment.” Concluding thus Prajnatheertha's guru disappeared.¹

The bliss Prajnatheertha derived from the manifestation and the preachings of his guru was inexplicable for him. A new energy pervaded his body. It aroused great enthusiasm in him and he

1. नारायणः परस्वामी सत्यज्ञानादि सद्गुणः।
तस्य दासोऽस्यहम् सत्यमित्युपासाप्रवर्तताम्।।

exuberated the confidence of conquering the whole world. He became elated with joy. "I am the most fortunate! Now the purpose of my birth has been fulfilled, Oh God! I am grateful to you for this fortune. How kind you are!" Thus addressing the God, he became absorbed in bliss.

His new found exhilaration drove all his earlier trials and tribulations to oblivion. Without losing time, he again had the divine darshan of Narayana and left for Puri Jagannath, the land of Purushotama with his entourage.

Thereafter, in strict accordance with the instructions of his guru, he preached the pith of his tradition to a deserving disciple, who in turn taught these to his disciple. Thus, that great tradition passed on by Sanakadis went on untainted and undeterred. Though not patent its effects, like a smoulder quite live to recrudescence, when time comes.

There are great conflicting views about Achyuthaprekshacharya succeeding Prajnatheertha. It is evident from the historical proof that there was a gap of four centuries between Shankaracharya's period and that of Acharya. Sathyaprajna and Shankaracharya were coevals. Prajnatheertha's period began in the last days of Shankaracharya. Evidently the intervening period after Prajnatheertha and the succession of Achyuthaprekshacharya must have seen four to six generations. There is enough proof of this in 'Mani Manjari'. After Prajnatheertha, the succeeding line of Sanakadis grew further and further untrammelled. It is mentioned there that this line continued with Achyuthaprekshacharya succeeding.¹ Besides, NarayanaPandithacharya, the author of 'Mani Manjari' in his own literary work 'Sri Sumadhwa Vijaya' while writing about Achyuthaprekshacharya has described that the latter's guru at his last moment had him by his side to preach" where the author has not mentioned the name of the guru. If that were Prajnatheertha, he would not have omitted his name. Moreover as the successors of Prajnatheertha sporting the symbols, customary to the other

1. एकं वंशधरम् शिष्यम् कृत्वोपास्तिमशिक्षयत्।

अन्यम् सन्यस्य सोपिस्वम् संप्रदायमशिक्षयत्।

सोप्यन्यमित्ययम् वंशोनोदच्छिद्यतभाग्यतः।

-मणिमंजरी ८-३२-३३

*विनीतमाम्नाय शिरोविशारदम् सदैवतत्वम् प्रबुभुत्सुमादरात्।

गुरव्दित्वोपगताम् निजाम् मृतिम् कदाचिदोचेतमुपह्वरेगीरम्।।

मध्वविजयम् ६-४

sect, continued to protect secretly their own tradition in reclusion, their names might have failed to become known. As Achyuthaprekshacharya was very fortunate besides enjoying the privilege of being Madhwacharya's guru, only his name must have become known. Sri Jagannathadasa while extolling the line of gurus has also extolled all from Hamsanamaka Paramatma to Prajnatheertha as ಪರಮಪಂಸಾಖ್ಯಾಹರಿ ಗುರುತಮನೆನಿಸುತ್ತಿಪ್ಪ ಪರಮೇಷ್ಠಿತತ್ಸುತರು ಸನಕಾದ್ಯರ | ಕರಕಮಲಸಂಜಾತ ದೂರ್ವಾಸ ಜ್ಞಾನನಿಧಿ ಗರುಡವಾಹನತೀರ್ಥ ಕೈವಲ್ಯಯತಿವರರ | ಜ್ಞಾನೇಶಪರತೀರ್ಥ ಸತ್ಯಪ್ರಜ್ಞ ಪ್ರಾಜ್ಞ || Further he has said in his tributes as ಸೂನುಸುತಪೋರಾಜ ವರಕುಮಾರ | ಮೌನಿಕುಲವರ ಅಚ್ಯುತಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷರಂಪ್ತುಗಳ ಆನಮಿಪೆ ಅನವರತ ಭಕ್ತಿಪೂರ್ವಕದಿ || It does not indicate that the immediate successor of Prajnatheertha was Achyuthaprekshacharya. The exact interpretation of the foregoing lines is still elusive. The result, it is to be seen whether further facts to come will corroborate our presumption. Ultimately there are sufficient grounds to believe that four to six generations succeeded Prajnatheertha.

4 .Achyuthaprekshacharya

It may be said that the history of Madhwa philosophy (Historic Age) dates back to the period of Achyuthaprekshacharya. We have learnt much about Achyuthaprekshacharya from Sri Sumadhwa Vijaya, Sampradaya Paddhathi, Mani Manjari and SriKoormam inscriptions.

It is revealed in Mani Manjari that Paratheertha of this tradition was in Gujarat. It is very clear that his successor Sathyaprajna was at badari in Himachal Pradesh. It is not that clear which place his successor Prajnatheertha belonged to. There is a mention that he went to Badari after finishing Chaturmasya at Nandi Grama. It is not clear which province this Nandi Grama belonged to. However it may be somewhere in North India. It is evident that from their he went to Puri, the abode of Purushothama and settled there on being so ordained by his guru. There after, he must have so changed his places as the changes happening in political atmosphere. However, from then on nobody must have tried to go to the north. Because by that time Muslim invasion which Ghazni Mohammed began culminated in the establishment of the regime of Sultan kings in Delhi. Consequently, chaos came to prevail in the north and the atmosphere there was not conducive to Dharma. On the other hand with the reign of Hoysalas and Kadambas

emerging in Karnataka, Hindu religion received patronage. This must have attracted the saints and encouraged them to settle here. At last it was in Karnataka where Dharma found a patronage in an atmosphere of peace during the time of Achyuthaprekshacharya. Above all, Achyuthaprekshacharya realising that Dakshina Kannada famed as the land of Parashurama was sacred settled in Shivalli (now Udupi) of that district. Barkoor is a historical place. While the reign of Hoysala king Narasimha I had extended upto there, Barkoor was the capital of a ruler, subordinate to the king. A representative of the king must have been there. Therefore Achyuthaprekshacharya might have got royal patronage there. As Shivalli was in its close proximity, and it had become a sacred place with the shrines of Anantheshwara and Chandramouleshwara, Achyuthaprekshacharya used to stay at Anantheshwara temple.

It is quite apparent that Achyuthaprekshacharya was most fortunate. The rare privilege of conferring 'Sanyasa' on Sri Madhwa was the fruit of noble deeds in his earlier births. Pandithacharya has mentioned that Achyuthaprekshacharya in his earlier life had received alms on many days from the very hands of Draupadi Devi.¹

Food is the basic aspect in moulding an individual's life. It is because of this, strict restraints have been imposed on a Brahmin's diet and it has been considered no less than yagna. Best food habits will implant sterling qualities besides inculcating an attitude to engage invariably in noble deeds. How sacred must be then the food offered by the noblest Bharathi Devi! Just by accepting it Achyuthaprekshacharya had the greatest honour of becoming Acharya's guru! He had the benefit of great learning from Acharya which in no small measure enabled his enlightenment. The effect of food is clearly evident. Especially in this modern age, the importance of best food habits needs to be emphasised. Indiscriminate eating and at places regardless of suitability are the root cause of perversions like laziness, hatred and jealousy, infidel tendency. In addition unprecedented kinds of disease afflict us. Therefore in our path of progress, we must accord priority to systematic practice of food habit. Proper abstinence is also important. Without, progress is not possible!

1. पुरैषकृष्णाकरसिद्धशुद्धि मद्रान्नभुक्त्या किलपांडवाले।

विशोधितात्मा मधुकृत्प्रवृत्तिमार्चचारकांश्चित्परिवत्सरान्मुदा।।

मध्वविजयम् ४-७

Achyuthaprekshacharya was also known as Purushotama theertha. It was not much popular. But in Sri Sumadhwa Vijaya, this name appears only once.¹ It has been cited in SriKoormam stone inscription that Acharya was the disciple of Purushotamatheertha. It also becomes evident from this epigraphy that Achyuthaprekshacharya had become a great scholar with the blessings of Sri Hari.²

Achyuthaprekshacharya was teaching only Adwaita philosophy. And practised only that philosophy. Yet, the doctrines of Adwaita were not very acceptable to him. His guru at the last moment of his life had Achyuthaprekshacharya beside him to advise "My Son! None of our predecessors ever became Aparokshajnanis through the principles of Adwaita. This is not wholesome. This is not what my guru imparted to me as the subtle principle. He advised me that it should be our firm belief that Narayana alone is supreme and we are His servants. Attain salvation by worshipping Him with your mind imbued with such thoughts" in a manner quite similar to how Sathyapragna ordained Prajnatheertha. Obeying his guru, Achyuthaprekshacharya with great devotion to Narayana stayed on in the sanctum of Anantheshwara Narayana in Shivaroopya Grama. There, doing his service to Anantheshwara he always used to pray in a voice choked with devotion thus: "Oh Ananthesha! I am at a loss to comprehend what the real principles are. Being a descendent of the noble tradition of Sanakadis the path of emancipation is still invisible. Striving all through my life to acquire scholarship, debating, delivering sermons I am still not convinced of this shashtra. My efforts for years have gone in vain. Even though the subtle principles that my guru taught me appear suitable, the way to execute them is yet to be discovered. Assailed by doubts, my life has become miserable. Oh Purushothama! Lead me to the right path. My guru has blessed me with certainty of my emancipation only on my total surrender to you. This has delivered me from my apprehension. How long should I remain haunted by this perplexity? Oh Lord! I beseech you to lift me out of this predicament". Lord Anantheshwara, who always showers His love on his devotees,

1 हेतुवादिनि विशंकटबुद्धौ तीर्थमर्थयतिगंतुमनुज्ञाम्।

तंदिदेश पुरुषोत्तमतीर्थश्चित्तर्थ स पुरुषोत्तमरक्षाम्।।

-मध्वविजयम् ६-३३

2 ...सन्मुनिर्जातः श्रीपुरुषोत्तमाभिध महातीर्थस्सुमत्यग्रणीः।।

pleased by his devotion, blessed him and said, "Soon you will have a very good disciple, from whom you will learn the real spiritual aspects and attain greatness by serving me". Achyuthaprekshacharya was exhilarated with infinite bliss. With a sense of achievement, he spent his time waiting for the moment of fruition.

III. THE ACHARYA

1. Atmosphere At The Time Of His Birth

The fervour and festivity associated with the preparations amongst the angels adorning their abodes preceding the incarnation of God and arrival of great souls is not within our knowledge. These must be learnt only from the great books expounding Shastras and Puranas. History clearly reveals that not only does the atmosphere become conducive prior to their arrival but also necessitates their stepping into this mundane world. The sway, time holds is boundless. No one can escape from its preponderance. Events most unforeseeable happen in their extremely natural course by dint of time to our utter bewilderment. Would anybody have dared guess some two to three decades ago from now* that India would ever have deliverance from despotic British colonialism through our long drawn non sanguinary battle for freedom? Then one would have mocked at it as a mere hallucination! Now it is a dream come true. Nothing can withstand the grind and subjugation of time. What emerges in its minuscule form looms so large that it meanders to all directions to cast its ubiquitous influence, would be naturally reduced to nothingness in the crossfire with the emerging counterforce. What is invincible today would tomorrow be discarded and left forsaken. What time connotes is such an encounter. It is Sanatana Dharma which stands above such an encounter. Though it abandons itself to the inevitabilities imposed by time and becomes so lax detrimental to its form and shape, wards off its entity through a minute form and rests biding for the time to resume refulgence. Thus far, it has endured barbarism, withstood oppression and fought them and won. Therefore it is infinite, vivacious; ancient.

At a time when great saints are to appear, the influence of the forces set to harm Dharma suffers a setback and it is then Dharma stands an edge over such evil forces. The situation was no different at the time of Acharya's incarnation. Tired of performing yagnas and yagas, people had succumbed to laziness and they failed to find solace in practice of Buddhism. In course of time, discipline began to acquire higher and higher prominence in Buddhism and life of renunciation meant inviolable refrain. Unable to bear the rigour,

*1949 – Year of first Kannada edition.

people took to indulging in secret acts of depravity. Sensuality came to stay. Social discipline went haywire. The principles of Buddhism did not find favour with intellectuals. It was then that Bhattakumara was born who rejuvenated the Vedic creed and propagated the efficacy of yagnas and yagas everywhere. As a result 'Varnashramas' were placed on a solid foundation. Adwaita philosophy came to be established. Even though a kind of revolution took place in the world of knowledge, for intellectuals there did not appear to exist any palpable difference between the principles of Buddhism and Adwaitism. It did not do any good to a common man. There arose a general cry among the people that the unprolific principles of the school of thought advocating Meemamsa which proclaim the supremacy of yagnas and yagas had done precious little in making the life pleasant and reach the goal by serving its purpose. Ramanujacharya in his incarnation established 'Vishistadwaita' which imparted some knowledge about 'Bhakthi' and the people seemed to be satisfied. But it did not offer a perfect synchrony to the expectations of both the intellectuals and the commoners. It could not be understood where duty, knowledge and devotion would converge. Though the mirth of Bhakthi is beyond contradiction, that very Bhakthi had failed to fall into the right frame. Everybody craved to get a common soothing effect on body and mind. There arose an urgent need to show the path of establishing a perfect fusion of the hidden doctrines of Vedas and other Shastras into knowledge-duty-devotion on the foundation of Aryan culture within the framework of Varnashrama.

People were getting exasperated by political turmoil. If we make a common man impressed about the powers of God and ask him to pursue the path of devotion, he will feel spiritually consoled. Instead his mind did not gravitate towards the philosophy which advocated that the God we worship is both traitless and formless and seeking union with Him is the ultimate goal of life. Moreover it would be puzzling for a common man, who has been grappling with the oddities of daily life merely to earn his livelihood in order to foster his wife and children, to be told that the world is an illusion. Further despaired of the triviality of all his perseverance he feels pushed into a life of dejection. Further, how can Fine Arts, Education, Culture flourish against such a background? Thus everything would be looked upon with derision just as a feat of magic. For a common man there needs to be a solid support to

progress in life; a prop for optimism. Adwaitism could not provide these.

The intelligentsia desired that these be coupled with the support of Shastras for devotion. Common man looked to the men of wisdom and intellectuals to lead him in pursuit of friendship-love-devotion-assiduity in his life. This atmosphere greatly helped the birth of the doctrine which demonstratively reveals with the help of the principles of Shastras and precepts that the import of the Shastras centres upon devotion to God and the aim of performing one's duties is none other than this. This propitious time, kindled the necessity for Acharya's incarnation.

Though ignorant of any definite philosophy, the virtuous - studying Ramayana, Mahabharatha and other epics on the one side, and ignorant of the meanings of the Vedas on the other - engaged in noble deeds in a way conforming to their principles. Their puzzlement about the absence of a definite philosophy became known even to the Devathas. As said by Lord Krishna in Geetha, the Devathas and all men will find progress only through reciprocity of beneficial deeds.¹ Therefore, sharing man's worry, the Devathas too joined him in his prayers to the Almighty. Pleased by their prayers, the Almighty blessed Devathas saying that "Only Vayu, the Jeevothama who can deal with this hour of crisis himself will arrive on the earth and show the virtuous the right path through his own Shastras". The gratified Devathas eagerly awaited the arrival of Vayu.

2. The Incarnation

Udupi is the central place in the sacred land of Parashurama. The Anantheshwara temple, there, is very ancient. People from surrounding places had been thronging Udupi for festivities. On such a festive occasion, to the surprise of all, a devotee began dancing on the nearly fifty feet tall pillar in front of Anantheshwara temple. Everybody got astonished at his strange behaviour. Proclaiming in unequivocal terms, he said "Noble men! you need not be sad that you have doubts about philosophy. Vayu, the Jeevothama will shortly incarnate on earth for the amelioration of

1 देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवाभावयन्तु वः।

परस्परम् भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्यथ ।।

the world". Enthused by this, the happiness of the noble men in congregation touched the zenith.

It was Madhyageha Bhatta who, among others, felt greatly enthralled. His real name was different.¹ He lived in Pajakakshetra, a village nearly seven miles away southeast of Udupi. It is a picturesque locale. There are four holy ponds nearby. Pajakakshetra nestled in such a holy place, is a beautiful agrahara. It abounded in the houses of devout Brahmins. All were highly conforming pious and erudite scholars of Vedas. Madhyageha Bhatta's house was in the centre of agrahara. He was the most distinguished and learned among all the Brahmins. He held discourses on Puranas often. The villagers had the greatest respect for Madhyageha Bhatta. Nobody chose to call him by his full name. As only those Brahmins who had attained scholarship in History and Puranas were being addressed reverentially as 'Bhatta', the villagers also addressed him so. By virtue of central location of his house, his name came to stay as 'Nadumaneya Bhatta'. Though he was not so rich, he had no scarcity of food and shelter. God blessed him with children also. But among them, his two sons died and his daughter became the only child. Again he did not beget any child. This became the main worry for him. Bhatta who had realised that there would be no salvation without a good son was in deep sorrow. He served Ananteshwara, his family deity for twelve years with a sense of detachment. The time to have the blessings of God approaching, he had auspicious omens. After being blessed by Ananteshwara, he returned to his village. The entire village was jubilant about the wife of Bhatta conceiving. Everybody anticipated that the pious Bhatta would really have a worthy son.

At last, as if arising from all noble acts and deeds, great fortunes of Madhyageha Bhatta and righteous acts of Achyuthapreksha charya, the day of answering the prayers of Devathas came,

1. There is an interesting story about the ancestry of Acharya in 'Saraswatha Parinaya' written by poet Raghavendra. It is said that Mayura Verma, the great valiant among Kadamba kings invited the Brahmins from Ujjain, and gifted them with the present Dakshina Kannada in admiration of their knowledge and fearlessness. A radiant and scholarly Vishnu Bhatta of Vasistha gothra was prominent among these Brahmins. He had a son by name Vaasudeva Bhatta. He died at the age of twenty Six. Vishnu Bhatta brought up and educated Hari Bhatta, the son of Vasudeva Bhatta. It is that Hari Bhatta who is known as Madhyageha Bhatta. It is written amongst other things that Vishnutheretha born as the brother of Acharya had the Amsha of Sugreeva (Sugreevamsha) in him.

heralding a new era of prosperity for the nation. On an auspicious day in Vilamba Samvatsara of Shalivahana Shaka 1160 (A.D.1238) the wife of Bhatta gave birth to a male baby. The just born child did not show any signs of confines of gestation. Is it really a child from a mother's womb! What gestational problem can bother Vayu, the Jeevothama, one of the triumviral Parashuklathraya! Like a triumphant king entering his capital, Vayu driving out the 'being' in the mother's womb entered this world.¹

When the child was born, Bhatta was away from home. It was a time of jubilation for the entire village. Sound of conches permeated the heaven. On his way back home, hearing this from a distance, Bhatta thought that it must be a sign of good news and hurried. He was delighted to hear about the birth of his son. He was overwhelmed by joy more about magnanimity of God blessing him with a son, than the birth of his son. This made him devotion more profound. Post birth rituals were held with great fervour. The child was aptly named Vasudeva (व + असुदेवः = ज्ञानात्मको वायुः) as if to suggest that Vayu himself had incarnated on an auspicious occasion through the blessings of Anantesha Vasudeva ordained to carry out the mission of disseminating knowledge. His neighbour Poorvada Mane Bhatta (Poorvalaya Moodilla) gifted a cow for the child. Could there be a better soul to deserve this gift! Poorvada Mane Bhatta had been in long wait for such an opportunity. Eventually to his great fortune, this fulfilled his wishes. This was like Sudhama offering Avalakki (beaten rice) to Krishna. It is relevant to say that the fruits of this act are similar to those of Sudhama. Later, on an auspicious day, Madhyageha Bhatta decided to take the child, which was a gift to him by Ananteshwara, to Udupi for a darshan of Ananteshwara, accompanied by his bosom friends. Night had set in before he could return to his village after getting the blessings of God. When they were walking back home in the dark, one of them possessed by an evil spirit rumbled, "Death would have been certain for you all for your moving about when it is our time to stroll. But the child with you is Pavamana, the protector of the world. Thus, you are still alive". This horrified and surprised everyone though at

1 संपूर्णलक्षणचणम् नवराजमान द्वांरांतरम् परमसुंदरमंदिरम् तत् ।

राजेव सत्पुरवरम् भुवनादिराजो निक्कासयन् परमसौ भगवान् निवेश ।।

- म.वि २-२५

last everyone felt happy and relieved. Bhatta remained amazed. In addition to the affinity, what filled his mind with great regard for his son was the fact that the child was Mahaprana, the son of Vayu.

As a matter of pertinence, Vayu having incarnated in Kaliyuga could not exhibit his prowess as he did when he was born as Hanumantha. Therefore he remained an innocent boy.

As would be natural to time, the tiny tot Vasudeva learnt to smile, crawl, gabble, each to the utter enchantment of the entire family. Bhatta would get blotted with joy seeing the charming way the child moved about and played. The winsome child Vasudeva would cast a spell on the Bhatta couple. The grand sight of the child's swift crawl and return after a pause impressed them as did the description of the deer by Kalidasa.¹ The entranced couple mocked at the very comforts of heaven.

As the days passed, Acharya began displaying ingenuity in his acts as a child. It is quite certain that this Sameeraprabhu, the conqueror of the world and a soul born with the blessings of God, had the great dexterity to show his super human powers. Acharya himself having expressed that "Devathas incarnated as humans conduct themselves as humans only, but do not exhibit their super human powers"² and that "they conduct and act in the manner compatible to their age and the yuga of their incarnation"³ has not displayed such bewildering leelas. The great feats of Acharya are quite appropriate to the yuga; his ancestry; his age. Neither did Acharya choose to do acts like zooming into the space to catch the red hot Sun as he did in his incarnation as Hanumantha. An analysis of his great feats reveals two factors. Firstly, his frequent

1 श्रीवाभंगाभिरामम् मुहुरनुपतित्स्यन्दने बद्धदृष्टिः ।
पश्चार्धेन प्रविष्टः शरपतनभिया भूयसा पूर्वकायम् ।।

- शाकुंतलम्

2 देवा अपि हि मानुषे मनुष्यवत्प्रवर्तते नैवैश्वर्यं प्रकाशिन इति च ।।

- तैत्तिरीय

3 प्रजायते हि यत्कुलेयधारमुगं यथायुगम् ।
तथा प्रवर्तनम् भवेद्विद्वैकसाम् समुद्भवे ।।
धर्मोहि सर्वविदुषामपि दैवतानाम् ।
प्राप्ते नरेषु जनने सरवत् प्रवृत्तिः ।।

acts, impossible for others, vouch for the fact that Acharya was unlike and superior, enjoyed the highest grace of God and therefore the path shown by him is divine. Secondly, certain other super human acts of Acharya, instead of showing his superiority, are done to demonstrate that whatever preached by him in the abiding tradition of Sanatana Dharma, as quoted in the Vedas, are true and practical. From this perspective, if we study the super human acts of Acharya it becomes clear that those were timely and necessary.

Once, Madhyageha Bhatta was not at home. His wife had also gone on errand. She had asked her daughter to mind the baby. As it played, it began crying. With usual tricks, she consoled the baby. Still the child persisted. She exhausted all her wits to pacify the child. Yet the child did not stop crying. At last she became dazed. The child began to cry convulsively and its face turned fiery. There in a corner, lay some cooked horse gram. The girl tried to pacify feeding the child with the horse gram. Could Vasudeva get calm over the dole? He did not become silent till he had eaten it fully. Later the child stopped crying and began to play gaily. When the child's mother returned home after a long time, she was aghast to hear about all that had happened. Saying to herself "that if anybody moving out of the house indulge in gossip with neighbours mindless of time, it is natural for them to forget about their children", she cursed herself as a sinner. Fearing indigestion for the child had eaten horse gram, bad effect of evil eyes on the child, she tried out all types of remedies within the knowledge of a mother. She also performed the usual traditional ritual to ward off the evil effects. But the child's countenance did not suggest anything grave that warranted such anxiety. Vasudeva was playing merrily as if he had relished his mother's milk, instead. She became stupefied at this. Bhatta hearing this on his return home got astonished too. The couple hugged and fondled the child.

Again once, the child holding the tail of a cow strayed into the forest. The anxious Bhatta couple went in search of the child; unable to trace him out they became worried about its whereabouts. The couple on seeing their son toddling back home in great joy holding the tail of the cow, hurried to him and slobbered over. As would the loser of a priceless gem plunge into the ocean of happiness and finding it, they were overwhelmed by joy.

As is common to the middle class, Madhyageha Bhatta was plagued by financial indebtedness. One day his creditor squatting before his house began pestering him for repayment. Then, Vasudeva had learnt to move about and also to speak. Inside home it was lunch time. As the creditor stayed outside the house, Bhatta had sat with his head ducked in deep worry. Vasudeva babbled asking his father to get in for lunch. While his father remained silent, Vasudeva hearing shouts of demand from outside "Settle the account; clear the debt" came out. The creditor mockingly flipped his fingers as a sign of asking the child to get him the money. Immediately, the child collected handfuls of tamarind seeds lying nearby and gave it to the creditor. In his cool reaction, the creditor looked at the child reverentially and left the place with a smile. Bhatta heaved a sigh of relief on learning about it and had his lunch. Later, Bhatta put by some money and went to give it to the creditor after a few days. By then some revolutionary changes had occurred in the life of the creditor. Just when he saw Bhatta, bowing his head in great respect he said, "Sir you are very fortunate. Your child is not of the common clay. He cleared all the dues that day only. Nothing remains to be repaid. Enough, it is a great fulfilment in my life". He could not unravel the experience he had undergone. His voice became choked. Tears coursed down. With due honours, he saw off Bhatta. Astonished and dumb founded, Bhatta returned home. The charm on the face of his son pushed him to the oblivion about all that had just then happened and he cuddled and slobbered the child.

Once, with his family Bhatta had gone to a village Naduvairi for a relative's marriage, where the child Vasudeva went missing in the buzzle of the marriage. A long time after his disappearance, Bhatta went in search of him. On his way, the passers by said "your child was going alone this way. When enquired, he smiled and moved on". For a moment this stilled his heart's throb. Petrified Bhatta fled. He went to the big town of Udupi unable to find his son all through the villages. In the shrine of Anantesha at Udupi, Vasudeva was seen prostrating with smiles on his face. Instantly cuddling the child in great anger, surprise and joy, Bhatta in a placid tone rained questions on the child: "Where had you gone? How did you come so far? How could you find the route? Who brought you here?" The elated Vasudeva replying in childlike terms said – "I did not come alone.....The allegory about Prahlada narrated by you during

your discourse is only true. God exists everywhere. How glorious God is!".

Bhatta was awestruck. "Vasudeva, what are you talking? Are you somniloquizing? How did you come here?".

"That it what I told you, father. I came to Kudwooru Kangudi. Narayana led me to a big temple in Talakude. From there it is he who brought me here".

There was no mischief in the child's words. As if describing a scene, he was natural in his narration. The child were to have come out with more about God, if it was not for the bond of filial love for the son. Bhatta fondled the child and to ward off the effects of the evil eyes, carried it back under veil to his village after paying his obeisance to Anantesha.

Thus, in his very early age, Radiance-Courage-Bravery-Devotion began to manifest in Vasudeva. Some of the old and the experienced saw in the child divine characters as contained in Geetha like Benefaction-Radiance-Courage and concluded that he must be a great soul.

When he was three years old, Choodakarma was done to the child Vasudeva signifying his initiation into learning. As the child was just beginning to learn, Bhatta wanted his son to write and rewrite letters, the practice usual to become familiar with them. Vasudeva exclaiming "Why do you write the same letters again and again, for me!"¹ wrote himself very clearly the letters that his father introduced him just the previous day. For Madhyageha Bhatta, this became more surprising than all other astounding prodigious revelations of the child. Bhatta said to himself, "the child must be an extraordinary soul. Usually, it is believed, one who displays great intelligence as a child may fail to do so when it attains adulthood. His intelligence is strange. May God bless him with good longevity! What a great son for poor and helpless beings like us! I pray to God to bless that this fortune be ours even in times to come". He felt apprehensive that somehow this fortune would not remain with them and that there would be many more to claim their stake. He consoled himself considering all these must be his figment of imagination.

¹ लिखितमेव पुनर्लिखितम् कुतः ।।

As Bhatta had been giving religious discourses, all in his house had become quite conversant with religious matters. Once, Vasudeva's mother went to neighbouring village Neyampalli along with him. A religious discourse by one Shiva Bhatta was going on there. His interpretation was not in consonance with the real import. Suddenly Vasudeva rose and in his ingenuous and intelligible tone said "respected Shiva Bhatta, your interpretation does not appear to be appropriate". Shiva Bhatta was taken aback about the boldness of this boy. The whole audience nodded its head in appreciation of the precocious interpretation by Vasudeva. Returning home, the boy narrated all that happened there to his father – "father, am I correct?", he asked. Startled at this, Madhyageha Bhatta said to himself in reply, "may God bless you! May you be always our beloved!". The father had the experience of the singular spiritual knowledge of his son. One day during his discourse, Madhyageha Bhatta skipping the word लिकुचः whose meaning he did not know went ahead. Making bold, Vasudeva got up and said in an obedient tone, "father, forgetting to give the meaning of the word लिकुचः as lemon, you might have proceeded. Bhatta has profuse admiration – unexpressed, about his son's versatility, majesty and flair. Word's volleying out of Vasudeva's mouth while he was playing with balls became famous as 'Kandakastuthi'.¹

After the dusk of his childhood, Acharya's boyhood dawned. Madhyageha Bhatta solemnised his son's thread ceremony at his fifth year. The boy Vasudeva as a highly lustrous and immaculate Brahmachari, performed daily sacred rituals of Sandhyavandana, Agnikarya and others in strict adherence to the rules of Ashrama.

Vasudeva was returning home alone from Durga temple on a day. He noticed a snake approaching him to bite. Unnerved, the boy swiftly killed it stamping its hood against the ground with his toe. It has been revealed by Pandithacharya that a demon appeared in the guise of the snake to kill Vasudeva.

1 अंबरगंगाचुंबितपादः पदतलविदलित गुरुतरशकटः ।
कालियनागक्ष्वेलनिहंता सरसिजनवदल विकसितनयनः ॥१॥
कालघनाली कर्बुरकायः शरशतशकलितसुररिपुनिवहः
संततमस्मान् पातुमुरारिः सततगसमजवखगपतिनिरतः ॥२॥

Vasudeva's early education began under the aegis of a scholar of Poogavana family in the village. He evinced more interest in his playful activities than in his studies. His teacher giving him advice began testing his knowledge about lessons that had been already taught to him. Impeccable answers sprang in a sputter uncannily from young Vasudeva's mouth. The teacher was nonplussed. From then on, he taught him with greater affection. Perhaps Vasudeva had his education for nearly six to seven years there. He became a scholar by studying under this teacher's guidance many relevant subjects chiefly Veda, Vedanga, Kavya, Nyaya, Vyakarana. Vasudeva said to his teacher that his interpretation of Ithareya Upanishad was incompatible, and confided true philosophy to him. This paved way for his lasting solace. His son had been suffering from congenital headache. Vasudeva just blew into his ear and cured him. Thus Vasudeva paid to his teacher these two gurudakshinas helpful both to the mundane and the celestial.

Vasudeva was coming of age. Thoughts began to arise in his mind – "Having been born as a human, it is enough to have imbibed the manly traits germane to manhood. Let me put an end to this kind of life. Why this abject life! What use is the incessant prayer when we fail to do what God has ordained? It is just like a jewel adorning my head.¹ Besides, Devathas have pleaded with me. They have apprised me of the ruin that Tattva may suffer at the hands of Asura succumbing to their destructive powers. Their words have been deeply rooted in my mind.² Therefore it is time for me to bring the purpose of my incarnation into focus. My disposition as an ordinary being must have failed to please God. The kindest and most resplendent God who has blessed me more than others is manifesting to me always. But blinded by the obscurity of worldly life, I am unable to behold his infinite forms. When the very consort of Narayana, Lakshmi Devi herself always worshipping Him still not satisfied, yearns to serve Him in His different forms, why is that I am lolling about? Enough". Sameera, the very life of the universe, considered sanyasa as the only suitable path towards accomplishment of the task assigned by the

1 भगवदाज्ञाम् शिरसि अनर्घ्यशिरोरत्नवन्निधाय ।
आज्ञामन्यैरधार्याम् शिरसिपरिसरद्रश्मिकोटीरकोटौ ।
आदेशमौलिमणिमुज्वलवर्णमेनम् ।
2 हारवद्धुदिनिधाय ।

God. "Moreover, Prajnatheertha with the blessings of God has carefully nurtured and protected against all odds the ancient tradition initiated by Sanakadis. That lies in the hands of Achyuthaprekshacharya now. He is waiting for me as willed by God. Therefore I should continue this tradition reviving the sacred philosophy". Thus he vowed. Acharya an omniscient, the very life of the universe, one who had assimilated colossal seven crore Maha Mantras, instead of letting his mind drift towards the comforts and pleasures of family life interwoven with misery, looked upon it with contempt. Once, when Vasudeva went in search of a guru who could offer sanyasa, he came to Achyuthaprekshacharya. Explaining everything to him, he pleaded for sanyasa. It was an oncoming of the rarest and long awaited boon for Achyuthaprekshacharya. He ordered Vasudeva to be at his service there.

Madhyageha Bhatta having not seen his son and suffering the pangs of estrangement went searching his son. He was not only surprised but also got cross at seeing his son during service to a Yathi. He tried to persuade him in all possible ways to return home. But Vasudeva turned a deaf ear and told his father that he was determined to take sanyasa. Even though Bhatta was disappointed he did not know what to do. Immediately he prostrated before his son. The clever Vasudeva came out with his wits to say that a father's prostration before his son signifies his permission for sanyasa. Bhatta returned home helplessly. The whole world turned void for him. The house looked empty. He lost interest in food. Nights became sleepless. Life became devoid of meaning. He worried about his son day and night. After a few days, he went again to his son. He exhorted his son in different ways. Cogitating that he must not take sanyasa without the permission of parents, Vasudeva said "you will beget another son. He will take care of the future of the family. Till then, I will stay home" and returned with his father. After sometime, when another son was born Vasudeva seeking the permission of his father – told his mother "If you have the desire to see my face, give me your permission. If not I shall disappear from here into an unknown distant place". Perturbed at this, both of them assented.

After getting his parents' permission, Vasudeva went to Achyuthaprekshacharya and pleaded with him for sanyasa.

Delighted by his earnestness, Achyuthaprekshacharya in strict conformity with rituals bestowed sanyasa on Vasudeva on an auspicious day renaming him as '**Poornaprajna**'.

In just forty days of his sanyasa, the Acharya humbled one Vasudeva a great scholar himself in Nyayashastra, in a debate. This was Acharya's first victory. Desirous of going on a pilgrimage to Kashi, Acharya sought the permission of his guru. As he could not do without his disciple, the guru did not oblige. Meanwhile, hearing an oracular voice that the Ganges would arrive there itself to settle in Madhwa Sarovara, Acharya took a holy dip and worshipped Hari.

As Achyuthaprekshacharya was always greatly immersed in the study of Adwaita philosophy only, he began teaching Acharya lessons on Isthassiddhi. But in Mangalacharana Shloka यानुभूतिरजामेयानंतात्मानन्दविग्रह। महदादिजगन्माया चित्तभित्तिं नमामिताम् ॥ itself, Acharya pointed out thirty two flaws. The guru had no replies. Scholars present there were baffled about the moot point. This served as a prelude to the dissemination of an acceptable philosophy.

Those days, as the study of and discourses on Puranas were very much in vogue, study of Bhagavatha which was superior among the Puranas was popular. Acharya began teaching Bhagavatha to a few students. The different books the students had dealt with differently and they weren't able to arrive at correct interpretation. Answering all their questions, Acharya enlightened them with perfect interpretation. Some of them with an intention to test its competence wanted Acharya to recite the Panchamaskandha. Acharya spontaneously outpoured the proses of Panchamaskandha and delineated its intricate meanings. Realising that Acharya was a scholar of scholars, full of brilliance, and considering him fit to nurture his tradition, Achyuthaprekshacharya coronated him as his successor to Vedantha Samrajya and renamed him as '**Anandatheertha**'. As a sacred soul that had authored Shastras reverberating with bliss, the name 'Anandatheertha' had perfect synonymity. As the meaning of the word Madhwa compares exactly with the quotation मध्वित्यानन्द उद्दिष्टः वेतिशास्त्रमुदाहृतम् ॥ he became popular also as **Madhwacharya**.

Thereafter, Acharya specially engaged in debates shook the very foundation of the widely spread Adwaitha philosophy thus paving a smooth way for establishment of Sadvaishnava philosophy. A sanyasi, scholar in Nyayashastra who had come to meet Achyuthaprekshacharya, refuted the veracity of Agama in his debate. Acharya silenced him with his dialectics convincingly proving that "Anumana cannot prove itself without being staked by Prathyaksha and Agama. The range (slew) of Anumana is very confined". It was from then, Acharya donned an another name as '**Anumanatheertha**'. Acharya chose to stay in another mutt engaged in teaching, discourses and daily rituals.

Once, two Buddhist scholars, flaunting high esteem, by name Vadisimha and Buddh)sagara came to Achyuthaprekshacharya and threw the gauntlet for a debate. Achyuthaprekshacharya immediately sent for Acharya. As Acharya came, the debate began. Vadisimha initiated the discussion and gave a lecture studded with eighteen Vikalpas with which he wanted to make any replies difficult. Nevertheless, Acharya stunned him with his denouncement of each and every Vikalpa. Both the debaters slunk away. Acharya's fame as a great scholar spread far and wide. There after Acharya began to denounce Adwaitha Bhashya by exposing its defects. Noticing how vocal Acharya was in denouncing that book pitched as the greatest and ultimate philosophy, Achyuthaprekshacharya fumed at Acharya to tell, "If that is so why can't you write a Bhashya yourself?" Acharya took it as the orders of his guru.

3. The First Odyssey

Acharya went on a tour in southern parts of the country at his eighteenth year of age in about A.D.1256. First he went to Ananthashayana with his guru. There he met Sri Vidyashankara (A.D.1220 – 1325), the pontiff of Sringeri Mutt. He humbled Vidyashankara in a debate. As if to conform to शेषं कोपेन पूरयेत् Vidyashankara and his followers walked blazing a trail of Pandemonium. From there, Acharya went to Kanyakumari and reached Rameshwara after a holy dip. There he met Vidyashankara. This time round Vidyashankara sought the help of scholars to confront Acharya. Not a jet of help forth came. Acharya began observing Chathurmasya at Rameshwara. His

rivals tried to harass him, but in vain. After his Chathurmasya, Acharya came to Sriranga. By then, the tidings of Acharya's triumph over Vidyashankara and others having spread all over, people were giving him a rousing welcome everywhere. Moving further from Sriranga, Acharya stayed in a temple on the banks of the river Payasvini. In the assembly of scholars, a discussion on the topic "Ithareya Sooktartha" was held in the temple. Acharya propounded that the Vedas had three meanings, Mahabharatha, ten and Vishnusahasranama, one hundred.¹ There were differing opinions about it. Acharya gave hundred meanings in his interpretation for the word 'Vishwa' backed by grammatical illustrations. Even the scholars in the audience found it impossible to comprehend. History has it that Acharya went to Srimushna and created there a water pond with his wand. In some other place, his prophecy turned real and his omniscience was widely admired. Thus in his very first round of divine odyssey, besides the renown of Acharya transcending all borders, a churning in the philosophy among the people culminated in their equivocating the Adwaitha philosophy itself.

Srimad Bhagavadgeetha has been universally accepted as an epic. Acharya wrote commentary first on Geetha. From here begins the epoch of his writings. He placed his commentary on Geetha before his guru Achyuthaprekshacharya, for his review. The latter was immensely pleased. He heartily blessed his disciple holding the book in great reverence. With the permission of his guru, Acharya went on a pilgrimage to Badari in A.D.1262 at his age of twenty four. After a holy dip in Sheethalaganga, he placed the Geetha Bhashya written by him at the lotus feet of Narayana. Acharya had a dream where he was ordained by Lord Narayana to edit the words "I shall explain the meaning of Geetha within my abilities" as "I shall explain in a nutshell" in his Mangalacharana Shloka. In total obedience to the Lord's order, he did edit.² He offered his deep service to Narayana through observance of total silence and total abstention spanning a Mandala. In his dream on a night, Acharya was ordered by Vedavyasa to visit Badarikashrama for his darshan. Through a note, Acharya apprised his disciples that he would depart for Badari next day at dawn and that he was

1 स्यात्तथेत्यमपि संभवनितार्थस्त्रयर्थतांश्रुतिपुक्तिदशार्थम् ।

- म. वि

2 गीतार्थम् वक्ष्यामि लेखतः ।

not sure of his return. Acharya's writings in the course of spreading his message to the world, "No other land is so sacred as Badari, no other river is so pure as the Ganges, no other God is so supreme as Lord Vishnu, you have no better mentor than me" ¹ are unique.

One Sathyatheertha the most ardent of the disciples began to follow Acharya. But he could not keep pace with Acharya of Vayu Amsha. Acharya who saw Sathyatheertha slogging signalled him with his finger to return. This mere signalling impacted Sathyatheertha's catapulting into the midst of his fellow disciples.

Acharya, moving spankily driven by the eagerness of seeing his guru, the God, reached Badarikashrama. That sacred place impenetrable to humans was splendid like Vaikuntha. Acharya prostrating before Badarayana heartily extolled him. Badarayana hugged him in great affection. Acharya blissfully spent sometime enjoying Badarayana's proximity. Later with the permission of Vyasa he came to the abode of Narayana. Acharya had the orders of Vyasa and Narayana to write a commentary on Brahmasootras which would reflect their real views. He returned from Badari carrying their orders in all humility. Acharya, denouncing the twenty one commentaries on Brahmasootras, wrote his commentary acceptable to Badarayana.

It was his disciple Sathyatheertha who did the whole writing. People were dismayed at the super human ingenuity of Acharya on his mission. The contemporary men of virtue amongst the cream of scholars who dared debate with Acharya faced defeat only to become his followers. On his return, Acharya journeying through Prayaga, Gaya sowed the seeds of Vaishanava philosophy in Bengal. In the coming days it is that seed which sprouted, and grew into a tree nursed by Krishnachaitanya. Even today it is being widely practised. Later, in about A.D.1262, Acharya came to Kalinga (present Orissa). During the reign of Rudrambe (A.D. 1261), daughter of Gajapathideva at Rajamahendri, the two great scholars Shobhanabhatta and Shambushastri being humbled in debate by Acharya became his disciples and took sanyasa. It is they who were the first to continue the tradition of Acharya and were renamed as **Padmanabhatheertha** and **Naraharitheertha**.

1 नेदृशंस्थलमलंशमलन्नम् नास्यतीर्थसलीलस्य समम् वाः ।
नास्ति विष्णुसदृशमननु दैवम् नास्मदुक्तिसदृशम् हितरूपम् ।।

Acharya came to Udipi again after touring all over Andhra and Karnataka with his new disciples. Within a few days after coming to Udipi, Acharya sent Naraharitheertha again to Kalinga to bring the idols of Sri MoolaSeethaRama.

As the number of Acharya's followers swelled, Udipi was abuzz with learning activities. It was more than a university. Daily, Acharya would perform Ahneeka on the shores of sea after a wholly dip. On his way, he would emotionally immerse himself in doxology. It is that devotional chant of Acharya which has become Dwadasha Stotra. While he had sat by the sea, a ship towards the shore was on the brink of sinking due to a snag. The crew which was greatly perturbed came to Acharya. Kneeling before him, the crew implored to help them. Immediately Acharya whizzed the sash in his hand. The wind thus raised moved the ship swiftly to the shores. The crew in an overwhelming devotion offered invaluable things to Acharya. Instead of accepting any of them, he desired to have a lump of Gopichandana left behind in the ship. He took it to Udipi and had it washed in Madhwa Sarovara. He installed with great devotion the idol of Krishna found in the lump amidst pomp and festivity near Ananteshwara temple.

By then, Acharya's parents had attained eternal peace. His younger brother who had performed their obsequies and had become renounced, approached Acharya to seek sanyasa. Acharya formally bestowed sanyasa and named him anew '**Vishnutheertha**'. When the son of Acharya's guru during the period prior to his attaining sanyasa was about to perform yagna, one malevolent towards his guru's son obstructed the proceedings. Acharya clearing the way saw to it that the yagna was performed successfully. The town of Udipi became a perfect nucleus for Acharya's tradition with the installation of the idol of Krishna. This did not mean the end of his mission. Again he undertook northern tour.

4. Acharya's Second Pilgrimage to Badari

Acharya on this pilgrimage reached Maharashtra. It was the period (A.D.1262-71) of (Mahadeva) Eshwaradeva's reign. Intimidating all the wayfarers, he had them slog to build a tank. When Acharya was passing along this route, the king impudently asked him also to dig. Acharya ingeniously said that he did not

know how to do it and asked him to demonstrate so that he could take the cue. Under the spell of Acharya's words, the king persisted in digging the ground himself with a spade as if possessed. Chuckling, Acharya left the place. At that time, Balban was the Sultan of Delhi at Agra. In order to cow down rebellion, he had dispatched his army to the banks of the Ganges in A.D.1266. Apprehending espionage by his enemies, he had kept the army on the far bank banning the entry of ships into the Ganges. In such an absence, Acharya with his uncanny powers effortlessly crossed the river with his team and proceeded further. Mistaking them for enemies the soldiers advanced to attack them. Acharya went to the sultan and spoke to him in his own language. This, besides fully convincing him imbued him with divine feeling. The material wealth looked despicable for him and he offered his kingdom to Acharya. Declining this offer, Acharya continued his journey.

Though bothered all along the route by highway men, Acharya reached Badari comfortably where he had the darshan of the Lord and placed at the lotus feet of God whatever he had written till then. Lord Badarayana was pleased by Acharya's Sootra Bhasya. As a sign of his memory, Badarayana blessed Acharya with pure stone idols. Acharya was ordained by Badarayana to dispel the misgivings of the people through an appropriate commentary on Mahabharatha, the epic more helpful than the Vedas. Acharya accepting the orders in great reverence returned to Bengal to reach the banks of Bhageerathi. It was Dhanujaraja's time. Acharya came to the king crossing the river through his super human powers. His entourage stayed behind. On learning this, the king helped them cross the river by sending a coracle. He paid rich homage to Acharya and felt a sense of great fulfilment when Acharya blessed him.

Acharya began observing Chaturmasya in a serene garden near Hasthinavathi. While he was strolling on the banks of the river Gomathi, he was accosted by a shoodra who to test the efficacy uttered " या ओषधीः ", a hymn in the Veda with a seed on his palm. But the seed did not sprout nor did it grow into a tree. He began propagating that the Vedas were false. Hearing this, Acharya reciting the hymn demonstrated how the hymn could make the seed sprout and grow into a tree. Thus he established the

truthfulness of the Vedas and averred that only those who have merit can have the powers invested with them.

Acharya proceeded to Kashi from there. Indrapuri, a scholar saint in Kashi got into a debate with him, when he asked how could knowledge and deeds be instrumental in attaining salvation. Not only did Acharya give apt reply but also denounced the philosophy of Adwaita. Continuing his journey, when he came to Hrishikesh, a shaivite devotee of Rudradeva paid tributes to Acharya and had his blessings.

5. Mahimas

The king of Goa conspired to dethrone Acharya. But marvelled at his divine powers, the king begged for excuse. Acharya blessed him and stayed there for sometime. He made a seed sprout and grow into a tree through his craft in music in Pashuva, a village there. On his way from there to south, he came to the village Kalasa of Balehonnur Taluk in Hassan District of Mysore State. The villagers were trying hard to place across a big boulder to help people cross the river, but in vain. Acharya lifted and placed it at the desired spot with no exertion. Even now it is popular as Bheemana Kallu. This place is known as Ambutheertha. The flow of the river water in the valley is very swift and deep. Even to date the inscription on the boulder " श्रीमदाचार्यैक हस्तेन अनियस्थापिता शिला ।" can be seen.¹

By that time, Padmatheertha had succeeded Vidyashankara in Sringeri Mutt. Being cajoled by his disciples, Padmatheertha with Pundareekapuri, a scholar in the lead came to Udupi and entered into a debate with Acharya. In the debate, Acharya literally disproved all his arguments and humbled him. This meant the task of demolishing the mission of Adwaita philosophy and establishment of own philosophy, a great fruition.

6. King Jayasimha

Padmatheertha realising that outsmarting Acharya in the debate was impossible stole Acharya's library in the custody of his follower Shankaracharya. It was his belief that this would put an end to Acharya's philosophy. But it proved to be a great illusion. Then the

¹.In the opinion of P. C. Rice this may be in the middle of thirteenth century. This is the only available stone inscription of Acharya's period – VI MG.89.P.293

district of Dakshina Kannada was under the rule of Jayasimha, a powerful king. He was the grandson of Kadambaraja and father of Raviverma Kulashakara Perumal. His kingdom had extended from the district of Dakshina Kannada upto Travancore of Malbar. He had become an aficionado of Acharya having heard about his extraordinary charm, super human powers and spiritual scholarship. Considering the presence of such a great soul in his kingdom as a rare fortune, he became anguished at the heinous act, recovered the library from Padmatheertha with the help of some middlemen. Placing them at his feet, the king begged Acharya to bless him. Padmatheertha sneaked away in shame.

Acharya went to Kabenadu after completing Chaturmasya at Pragrayavata. He stayed there for sometime at Madanadhipa temple. There the king met Acharya for the first time and extended a warm welcome. From there he brought Acharya to Vishnumangala temple amidst pomp and ceremony. It was a very grand spectacle. Though it was scarce in regalia usual in heaven, because of the divine charm of Acharya, this ceremony disenchanting the regality of very Indra. This Jayasimharaja had the rare fortune of serving Acharya all because of his great acts of nobility. To a great extent it is better for the elated to imagine than anybody trying to describe this glorious ceremony. It can only be said that such a ceremony may not happen even in celestial places; not excepting heaven!

7. Thrivikrama Pandithacharya

Acharya taught Bhagavatha to Hrishikeshatheertha at Vishnumangala temple. He stayed there for sometime. He came to a place 'Kudilu' after accepting the restitution of his library from the king and blessing him. An important incident occurred there. One Thrivikrama Pandithacharya, a relative of Shankaracharya, follower of Acharya, and son of Subrahmanya Suri belonging to Likucha family of Angeerasa gothra was a great scholar. Having heard about the excellent scholarship, he came for a debate with Acharya. The debate lasted fifteen days as programmed.

In his debate, Acharya proved beyond doubt how shallow **निरीश्वरसांख्य, निरीश्वर भट्ट, प्राभाकर** were and established the veracity of the Vedas. Outsmarting the school of **ब्रह्मपरिणाम** thought, he criticised the doctrines of **पाशुपत, गाणापत्य, स्कान्द, सौरमत.**

Rejecting the cult of equality of Vaisheshikas, he snubbed that doctrine. He argued corroboratively that the existence of a special force governing the difference between one thing and the other should be accepted. He proved that there is absolutely no difference between 'Shoonyavada' of Buddhism and the doctrines of Adwaita. Acharya concluded saying that "Narayana alone has infinite qualities. He is supreme, independent, flawless, the animate and the inanimate world exists apart and is governed by him. Detachment-Devotion-Worship-Omniscience are the tools. Attainment of salvation only through His blessings, Bliss arising from salvation differs, no trail of misery, the achievers of salvation do differ from God. Deriving the bliss of the kind one deserves or acquiring **सायुज्य-सारूप्य-सामीप्य-सालोक्य** itself is salvation". Acharya's effusive speech matching the majesty of clouds, debating style, inimitable erudition bewildered all. Conceding his defeat, Thrivikrama Pandithacharya prostrated and implored Acharya to shower grace on him. In fulfilment, besides initiating him into the fold of Vaishnavism through investiture, Acharya taught Bhashya to him. He had him always in his close association.

Pandithacharya was not ordinary himself. To be debating with Acharya for fifteen days, he must be of rare sagacity. The debate between him and Acharya could rather be likened to the Geetha in the form of dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna. Acharya revealed all the principles of Dualism to him. This made him very fortunate. Once while Acharya was offering oblation to God, Pandithacharya had the manifestation of all the three incarnations of Acharya. Instantaneously he composed 'Vayustuthi' that had a deep bearing on what the Shruthis propounded. Acharya blessed him by adorning Vayustuthi with two shlokas composed by him in extolment of the claws of Lord Narasimha, mandating their recitation at the beginning and at the end. Acharya also gave Pandithacharya an idol of God as given to his disciples taking to sanyasa.

8. Compositions

Pandithacharya pleaded with Acharya to write another book elucidating the meaning of Bhashya. Please with his request, Acharya wrote 'Anuvyakhyana', a gem of literature. Its four chapters diverged from Acharya in absolute and unbelievable simultaneity

in his dictation to his four disciples. He composed '**Sri Krishnamrutha Maharnava**' on the request of a devotee at Dhanvanthri Kshetra.

A debate took place about the meaning of Karmakanda Shruthi **वैषष्टेनान्वां** in a village Uchabhoothi. Acharya giving a satisfactory answer displayed a bit of his profound knowledge in Karmakanda. He wrote 'Karmanirnaya', a commentary on **महानाम्नि**.

His guru Achyuthaprekshacharya realised that Acharya's Bhashya was the real truth. He felt himself like a congenital blind getting to see the world. He began to read it everyday. To facilitate his reading in times of urgency such as **साधनि च्चदशि**, ('Sadhani Dwadashi'), Acharya wrote 'Anu Bhashya', an epitome of Bhashya. Thus the total number of books written by Acharya are thirty seven. They are as follows:

I. Upanishad Prasthanana

- Bhashyas on**
- (1) Eshopanishad
 - (2) Kenopanishad
 - (3) Kathopanishad
 - (4) Prashnopanishad
 - (5) Mundakopanishad
 - (6) Mandookyopanishad
 - (7) Taithireeyopanishad
 - (8) Ithareyopanishad
 - (9) Chandogyopanishad
 - (10) Brihadaranyakopanishad

II. Sootra Prasthanana

- (1) Brahmasootra Bhashya
- (2) Anuvyakhya
- (3) Nyayavivarana
- (4) Anu Bhashya

III. Geetha Prasthanana

- (1) Geetha Bhashya
- (2) Geetha Tatparya

IV. Ruk Prasthanana

- (1) Rig Bhashya (Meaning focused on God for the first forty Ruks of Rig Veda)

V. Puranas and History

- (1) Mahabharatha Tatparya Nirnaya
- (2) Bhagavatha Tatparya
- (3) Yamaka Bharatha

VI. Independent books on philosophy

- (1) Katha Lakshana
- (2) Pramana Lakshana
- (3) Tattva Sankhyana
- (4) Tattva Viveka
- (5) Mayavadha Khandana
- (6) Mithyanumana Khandana
- (7) Upadhi Khandana
- (8) Tattvodyotha
- (9) Srimadvishnutattva Nirnaya
- (10) Karma Nirnaya

VII. Agama Shastra

- (1) Tantra Sara

VIII. Stotras and Others

- (1) Dwadasha Stotra
- (2) Nrusimha Nakha Stotra

- (3) Krishnamrutha Maharnava
- (4) Jayantee Nirnaya
- (5) Yathi Pranava Kalpa
- (6) Sadachara Smrithi

Thus, Acharya wrote and taught thirty seven sacred books. One day when he was teaching, it got dark. Acharya pointed his toe forward. Immediately there sprang a beam of light as brilliant as that of Sun.

Acharya being a great prophet, had the omen that vice would be rampant in the world owing to the loss of his works caused by the vicious influence of Kali. He knew that incarnation of Goddess Durga was inevitable to destroy the wicked. He thought of protecting Dharma before such incarnation. He had all his works etched on copper foils, hid its capsule under the ground at a place called 'Kadatala' and installed an idol of Lord Krishna on it. As Vishnutheertha, younger brother of Acharya was in deep meditation at Kumaraparthava, Acharya issued a mandate that it should be his brother's mission to recover the hidden capsule and propagate the philosophy again.

As would behave a saint, Acharya while touring places walked distances along with an ox carrying his works. It is needless to say that the ox carrying Acharya's sacred works was most fortunate.

Eagerly desiring for such a fortune, the angel Indra guised as ox had always been beside Acharya. Poornaprajna had great affection for the ox. While he was teaching, the ox used to hear very advertently. One of the students of Acharya, wondering how intricate Acharya's works were, asked "Is there any one competent enough to render his commentary on them?" With a smile, Acharya pointed at the ox. Responding to Acharya's fun, that student also for fun cursed the ox with death. When the curse spelt death on the ox, Acharya recited Dwadasha Stotra efficacious enough to save one from the jaws of death, and brought back the dead ox to life. It was this Indra in the guise of ox who incarnated as Sri Jayatheertha and became popular as Teekakritpada with his commentaries on Acharya's works.

9. Acharya's Disappearance

By then Acharya thought that the era of his presence before the eyes of the people was coming to an end. As ordained by him, Sri Naraharitheertha brought the idols of Sri MoolaSeethaRama from the treasury of Gajapathi and handed over them to Acharya. Acharya had worshipped these idols in his earlier two incarnations. Now after worshipping these very sacred idols along with the idol of DigvijayaRama, being worshipped by him daily, for a period of two months and twenty days, handed over them to Padmanabhatheertha together with Mahasamsthana.¹

Earlier while giving sanyasa to his younger brother Vishnutheertha, he had also bestowed sanyasa on seven others so that each in bimonthly terms performed the sacred rituals for the idol of Krishna installed by him at Udupi.² Acharya gave the idols to them as set out below:

	Name	Idol	Mutt
1.	Vishnutheertha	Bhoovaraha	Sode
2.	Ramatheertha	Vitthala	Shirooru
3.	Hrishikeshatheertha	Rama	Phalimaru
4.	Vamanatheertha	Narasimha	Kanooru
5.	Adhokshajatheertha	Vitthala	Pejawara
6.	Narasimhatheertha	Kaleeya Mardana	Adamaru
7.	Janardhanatheertha	Kaleeya Mardana	Krishnapura
8.	Upendratheertha	Vitthala	Puthige

Acharya entrusted the tradition of his guru to his devotee

- 1 अनीतम् नरहरिभिक्षुणाससीतम् श्रीरामम् खगजदिनानि पूजयित्वा ।
दृष्टस्सन् विपुलं हृदब्जनाभतीर्थत्वम् पूजाम् कुरुमहतीमितिह्यवादीत् ॥ - नरहरिस्तोत्रम्
2. Later Sri Vadiraja popularly known as 'Bhavisameera' extended the period to two years in keeping with the change in times. The same system is in vogue now.

Sathyatheertha. It is this tradition which has grown and branched out into now famous Bhandarageri Mutt and Bheemanakatte Munivirinda Mutt.

Acharya was very much inclined towards Ithareyopanishad as it greatly deals with the mahima of Hari and Vayu. Even as a boy he ennobled his guru Poogamashastri by preaching him the real import of this Upanishad. What was great about Sathyatheertha was that he had heard Acharya's discourse on it thrice. Acharya himself has written about its greatness.¹

Before his final disappearance from people, Acharya began to teach Ithareyopanishad on the ninth day of Magha Shuddha of Pingalanama Samvatsra. That day's teaching was quite earnest and still heartier. Padmanabhatheertha and others including Pandithacharya forming the audience had stayed entranced by and lost in the discourse of Acharya. The whole scene partook of the one in which Prahlada preached and danced singing the glory of Hari with the children of the demons. Seshadeva always listens in the sky to Acharya's teachings. Specially that day all Devathas are very zealously listening to mellifluity of Acharya's eloquence. This special worship of Acharya did please Lord Sri Ramachandra so much that the Lord is dancing in adulation before Hanumantha in Kimpurushakhanda. Lord Krishna enshrined in the heart of Bheemasena is waltzing. Badarayana has also graced Acharya; pleased no less. On such an occasion of divine bliss, Devathas rained flowers on Acharya. Pile of flowers of grand variety and extraordinary aroma like Parijatha, Sougandhika, Mandara, Sarasiruha ensconced the corporal abode of Acharya's soul. The blissful audience before Anantheshwara gazed at the sky awfully and adored Acharya filling the air with ovation. That pile of flowers stood as it is for a long time. The frightened disciples carefully removed the flowers. What a great surprise! all remained appalled and benumbed as if struck by lightening. Then was heard an oracular voice – "I shall continue to be here in invisible form, while being present in visible form at Badari studying Shastras, relishing the nectar of infinite qualities of Lord Narayana under and in consort with Badarayana".

1 महाभूतिःश्रुतिस्थैषा महाभूतियतो हरिः ।
विशेषेणात्रकथितः सर्वज्ञः शाश्वतः प्रभुः । ।

- इति ऋक् संहितायां

The whole lot of disciples sunk in the ocean of sadness, all the sanyasis among them concluded that, "When Hari and Vayu have so willed, it does not enjoin on us to be sorrowing like this" and stuck to the service of God as ordained by Acharya.

ब्रह्मान्तागुरवः साक्षादिष्टम् दैवम् श्रियपतिः ।
आचार्याः श्रीमदाचार्यास्संतु मे जन्मजन्मनि ॥

10. Acharya's Personality And Significance Of His Works

The only book perfectly enunciating Acharya's life is 'Sumadhwa Vijaya' authored by Narayanapandithacharya; neither stone nor copper inscriptions. It is possible to make a rough guess about Acharya's personality through his works and SumadhwaVijaya. Narayanapandithacharya was the son of Thrivikramapandithacharya who on being humbled in debate by Acharya became his disciple. Therefore he must have written it from what he had seen. Certain traits described therein take Acharya to legendary heights. Firstly, his description of Acharya's physical appearance in thirteenth chapter is heart touching.

The nails of Acharya's feet blazing with red outmatched even the dazzle of Padmaragamani. His heels resembled the lump of a tortoise. His calves sparkled the reflection from a mirror. His thighs appeared like the trunk of an elephant. The silk robe worn by Acharya was a perfect match for his complexion. His flat stomach, sleek and slim nape and neck, broad forehead wore three lustrous streaks. Acharya's sparkling holy mantle appeared glued to his body. He shone like Meruparvatha kindle bright by the Sun. His broad chest, high scapula, stout, robust, rod like and long shoulders and arms were assuring. His palms glistened like tender mango leaves. The whorls on his fingers were ideal. The resplendence of his face resembled the untarnished effulgence of full Moon. His teeth as the buds of Jasmine set in a perfect line do, scintillated brightly. His rosy lips, eyes broad like Lotus were an ideal of beauty. His mere look meant fulfilment of one's desires. Petals of Tulsi decorated Acharya's splendid ears. His ruddy and plumpy cheeks resembled young tortoise. Acharya's eyebrows had the adroitness to create or destroy the world. His magnificent head was superior to the rest

in the world. The subtlety of Acharya was monumental to the stipulations guiding an immaculate feat of sculpture.¹

The sublimity of Acharya cannot be portrayed in a more natural and touching way. His very grand form proclaimed that his incarnation was for amelioration of the world. Through a mere darshan of Acharya one would get immersed in the ocean of devotion.

The innate strength of such a sterling and imposing physique of Acharya is simply ineffable. Though this was quite conspicuous in his earlier incarnations as Hanuma and Bheema, it alludes here and there in the present incarnation. The marvellous feat of Acharya lifting away a large boulder with one hand without a scintilla of exertion at Kalasa is enough for even an indiscreet person to understand his physical strength. Once Gandavata, a wrestler could not just shake him. Acharya continued his discourse unperturbed and unfazed even while being strangled by another great wrestler Purvavata. Acharya while on a tour demonstrated his unusual physical strength by giving a call to fifty of his disciples to attack him together. Not only was he strong himself but also inspired others. During his northern tour, when highway men pounced upon Acharya's team, he got them defeated by his disciple Upendratheertha and made them retreat. Thus he became invincible in muscle power. This apart, he proved himself to be far too superior to others in matters of diet. Once he surfeited himself with 200 bananas at Vishnumangala after a meal, 1000 bananas at Ishupathakshetra, 4000 bananas and 30 pots of milk at Goa offered by a devotee Shankara. He ate the whole offerings made by Agnisharma and other devotees. It is the very same Acharya who stood out as a gourmand, carried out the vow of total abstinence and silence for 48 days at Badari as a means of worshipping God. Though such feats may not be any super human for Acharya, a towering mystic among mystics, it is much more for those musing on his personality.

Acharya always enjoyed good health and robust physique. Not even a day was he afflicted with any ailment. He knew not hunger and sleep. Free as he was from the vortex of natural bonds, he never abased himself falling a prey to weaknesses and debasing

1 म. वि १३-२९-३६

indulgences which usually besiege human kind. Transcending all such excitements, his life of excellence was shining like a star.

Acharya would always remain awake all through his meditation on God. After his morning bath before sun rise, he would perform Ahneeka with a curtain in front. His students finding Acharya wear a brilliant look during Pranavajapa after his Ahneeka, all done even before they woke up, would feel ashamed and hasten to finish their bath and Sandhyavandana to settle for classes. His pedagoguism was excellent. It is beyond description. Even though Acharya's lecture would go on as effusively as the rushing Ganges, it would get implanted on the minds of the students without an iota of doubt.

Thus, from all angles, the personality of Acharya was unique. It was speckles. Such a great soul was never born and never would be.

Acharya's locution, sonorous style of writing, scholarship, corroborative competence were as classic as himself. It is impossible for ordinary persons to describe them precisely. Yet such an attempt is admirable.

Acharya has displayed great speciality in his works. No proponent of any other religion has written commentaries on original works. Acharya did not remain satiated about having authored some independent books to describe his philosophy in addition to his commentary on 'Brahmasootra'. He has blessed the virtuous as also men longing for knowledge about Brahman with ways and means through his literary works. He has written books in the form of commentaries on all the original books of the Vedas, their parts including Karmakanda, Gnanakanda Upanishads, Brahmasootras determining their meanings, Geetha, puranas and History, Agamashastra, Dharmashastra. Any one in pursuit of salvation has little to despair of the haunting confusion about a definite path. There is no doubt about one achieving fulfilment if one listens to and absorbs all that Acharya's books expound in due reverence to him.

Acharya has rendered yeoman service through his books to all those deserving. He has written four separate commentaries from different view points on Soothraprasthana itself. The meaning of Karmakanda is depicted in Karmanirnya, a commentary on

Mahanamni in its form. He has demonstrated in Rig Bhashya the method of interpreting Rig Samhita. He has composed ten Prakaranas to establish the indispensability of the principles of Dwaitha. In the perspective of Pramana, these are considered great. Kathalakshana has been composed to preach aspects dealing with symposium of scholars, rules of debate, eligibility of questioners, important for enthusiasts of Shastras. He has written Geetha Tatparya to relish the sweetness of Geetha and Geetha Bhashya to fathom its secrets. For perfect interpretation of Mahabharatha and Ramayana he has gifted Sriman Mahabharathatparya Nirnaya. He has also explained the meaning of Bhagavatha, best among the Puranas. The very gist of Agamashastra is Tantrasara. Dwadasha Stotra which enhances Bhakthi is the fountain head of both singing and chanting. The two literary works Sadacharasmrithi and Jayanthiniraya, would correct the very rituals of the pursuer. Thus Acharya has presented to the world the pith of all the Shastras.

Acharya's versatility in writing books is inimitable. He got his magnum opus 'Anuvyakhyana' written by four of his disciples through an extra ordinary act of dictating its four chapters simultaneously. All these books churn out in effect the grand manifestation of Narayana. Acharya whose eyes feasted such manifestation constantly, he who served Narayana and attained unachievable Sahabhoga was himself Pavamana capable of securing salvation to those looking to him. Therefore, his mere expressions became legend, whatever he practised became a divine tradition. His life a model! Those who pursued his path and spent their time serving him ennobled themselves reaching the goal of life.

In his musings on the subject of Acharya's books, Narayanapandithacharya has averred that while even children can comprehend at once, scholars find it difficult to understand¹. It sounds appropriate in the backdrop of Teekakritpada showing Acharya's 'Pramanalakshana' to Vidyaranya. The majesty and arguing style evident in his books are formidable. Not a single word is impertinent. His compositions never tend to impress merely by verbosity and rhetorical. Acharya has clearly depicted in all his

1 बालसंघमपि बोधयद्भृशम् दुर्निरूपवचनम् च पंडितैः।

books that all Shastras preach that Narayana, whom all words connote, alone is supreme. This convergence of views cannot be seen in any other commentator. None of his words suggest of his being overzealous to propagate his own philosophy. Nor is there a tinge of obstinacy to undermine any other philosophy. Not a wee bit of pride on superiority of language is seen. Acharya in his works aptly quotes more and more from the ancient epics than write in his own words.

Thus Acharya's contribution to the world of philosophy is unmatched. There is absolutely no doubt that any fervent, unbiased reviewer of Acharya's works will arrive at a firm conclusion that Acharya's philosophy is superior, and encompasses the essence of all other great works, and that this is the real pith of Indian culture, and all these together churn out that Narayana alone is supreme.

IV. ACHARYA'S SUCCESSORS

1. Padmanabhatheertha (1317-1324)

Considering Padmanabhatheertha fit, Acharya endowed him with the responsibility of carrying on the heritage of Sadvaishnaiva tradition established by Sanakadis and protected by Prajnatheertha. It was **Padmanabhatheertha** who was coronated as Acharya's successor in Vedantha Samrajya. His name before sanyasa was Shobhanabhata. He was from a place on the banks of the Godavari. He was a scholar in the royal court of Warrangal.¹ Harihara and Bukka had held him in high esteem. Shobhanabhata was a great scholar, intellect and wore a brilliant look. He had taken sanyasa in about A.D.1263 after his defeat in a debate with Acharya. Afterwards his erudite scholarship and renown spread far and wide. Teekakrithpada has been all praise for Padmanabhatheertha's scholarship.²

Sri Padmanabhatheertha has many books to his credit. He has written **Sattarka Rathnavalee** and **Sannyaya Rathnavalee** as commentaries on Acharya's 'Bhashya' and 'Anuvyakhyaana'. Apart from these two he is also known to have written two more books 'Anandamala' and 'Vayulelavistharana'. The latter is said to contain eight Cantos, 1101 verses.³ In addition, he has written commentaries on 'Mayavadakhandana' and 'Upadhikhandana'.

Thus Padmanabhatheertha who had widely become known for his great books and reigned Vedantha Samrajya for seven years worshipping Sri Moolarama fell at the Lotus feet of Lord Krishna to rest eternally on the fourteenth day of Kartheeka Bahula of Rakthakshi Samvatsara in A.D.1324 entrusting the Samsthana and the idols to the care of Naraharitheertha, his successor, as ordained by Acharya.

1 यस्त्रयी सकलपक्षशिक्षकस्तत्रसंसदि वरिष्ठसम्मतः ।

शोभनोपपदभट्टनामकः पूर्णसंख्यमनमनुहुर्मुदा ।।

- म. वि

2 श्रीमध्वसंसेवनलब्धशुद्धविद्यासुधांभोनिधयोऽमलाये ।

कृपालवः पंकजनाभतीर्थाः कृपालवःस्यान्मयिनित्यमेषाम् ।।

-तत्त्वप्रकाशिका

3 ವಾಯುಲೀಲಾವಿಸ್ತರಣವೆಂತೆಂಬ ಕಾವ್ಯವೆಂಟುಸರ್ಗದಸಾವಿರದ ನೂರೊಂದು ಶ್ಲೋಕದಲಿ

ಪದ್ಮನಾಭಸಂತೀರ್ಥವರ್ಯರು ಬರದರದು ಶ್ರೀನಗರದೊಳು ಕಾಶ್ಮೀರದೇಶದ

ರಾಜತರಂಗೀಣಿಯ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತದ ಭಂಡಾರದಲ್ಲಿದೆ ದ್ವಿಪ್ರತಿಗೈದುತಂದಿರುವೆ

- ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ ಕವಿಯ ಸರಸ್ವತೀ ಲೀಲಾಪರಿಣಯ.

As Harihara and Bukka had great reverence for Padmanabhatheertha, they espoused the installation of Padmanabhatheertha's Brindavan on an island of the Tungabhadra near Anegondi of Kampli kingdom.

Padmanabhatheertha after entrusting Mahasamsthana to Naraharitheertha, handed over the idol of Sri Gopinatha inherited by Acharya to one Lakshmidharatheertha, his disciple. It is that heritage which is now known as Sreepadaraja Mutt.

पूर्णप्रज्ञकृतं भाष्यमादौ तद्भावपूर्वकं ।
यो खाकरोन्नमस्तस्मै पद्मनाभाख्ययोगिने ॥

2. Naraharitheertha (1324-1333)

Returning from his first Badari pilgrimage, Acharya reached Kalinga (now Orissa). Shobhanabhata (Padmanabhatheertha) and a great scholar Shamashastry together had a debate with Acharya there. Shamashastry was a legend. Descendent of great family of politicians, scholar among scholars, litterateur. He was in a high position both in administrative and literary world in Kalinga. Greatly influenced by Acharya's philosophy, he came to Udipi in A.D.1262 with Acharya as his disciple. Blessed by Acharya with sanyasa at Udipi, he became popular as **Naraharitheertha**. He served Acharya their for sometime, and was ordained by him to bring the idols of Chaturyugamurthi Sri Moolaseetharama from Kalinga.¹ Obeying Acharya's instructions, Naraharitheertha left for his native Kalinga.² He held the reins of administration their for forty years since A.D.1263 and patronised Brahmins defending Kalinga against the attack of Shabaras, the enemies of that state. His ablest administration paved way for peace to settle in the state. His paradigmatic dispensation finds mention in four stone inscriptions of the period from A.D.1263 to A.D.1293. Those stone inscriptions made in connection with the establishment of Yogananda Narasimha

1 तत्रास्ते रामदेवः सकल सुरपति ब्रह्मपूज्यांत्रिकंजः ।

सीतायुक्तस्तमेनम् चतुरतरधियेहानयेत्युक्त आसीत् ।।

2 पुरा बदर्याश्रमयानतः प्रागानंदतीर्थे रजतासनस्थे ।

तस्मादनुज्ञाम् नृहरींद्रतीर्थे प्राथान्वगादिन्विजये सशिष्यः ।।

-जयतीर्थविजयम्

temple can be found at SriKoormagrama and also at Simhachala of Vishakapatna.¹

Thus being in charge of the state's administration and having protected the ancient Dharma, he came to Udupi with the idols of Sri Moolaseetharama in a box collected from treasury² with all regal

1 The Stone inscription at Sri Koorma Narasimha temple reads. "देवः श्रीकमला विलासलहरीपात्रम् कलिप्रोन्मिलत्कलेशकिलष्ट जनेऽखिल क्षितितले संलीन बोधो दये। स्वीय श्रिपदपंकजैक शरणान् संरक्षितम् सन्मुनिर्जातः श्री पुरुषोत्तमाभिध महातीर्थस्सुमत्यग्रणीः । यन्मुनिभाषित भाष्यम् भूष्यं किलतीर्थकप्रवरसंघैः उन्मदवादिद्विरद प्रतिकुंभमंक्रुशम् भवति ॥2॥ तस्मालोक सुरक्षाणाति निपुणान् संप्राप्त कर्तव्यधीर्दधामुत्र तथाऽत्रयोवतिजनान् कालिंगभूसंभवान् । पित्र्याचारमुपैतिसूतुरिति सन्नैतिस्थितौ धर्मतश्यत्रुक्ष्मा पतिवर्गदुर्गनिवहान्भीतानभीतस्वयम् ॥ 6 ॥ यश्च श्री कमठाधिनायक महाकार्यैकबद्धव्रतस्तस्य प्रच्युति वारणाय शबरानीकक्षितीघ्राणानिम् । धत्तेसत्करवालमस्यतटिता संत्यक्त जीवे रिपौ हंतव्यानवशेषणान् निजविधिर्नेयस्य बोध्यस्तराम् ॥7॥ तेनानेन श्रीमन्नरहरितीर्थाख्य मुनिवरेण्येन । कलिसमय प्रह्लादप्रभावपरितोष्य नृहरि रूपेण ॥ 8 ॥

2 तस्याम् नगर्याम् यतिराट् नाम्ना नरहरिः श्रुतः ।
स्वगुरोराज्ञया तत्र प्राप्तुम् स्वरघुपस्यसः ।
ततः सिंहासनारूढम् कृत्वा तस्य मंत्रिणः ।
स्वराज्यम् पालयामासुः नीगृह्यद्विषतो बलान् ॥ ।
जातेकुमारैराज्ञस्तु राजपत्या यतीश्वरः ।
राज्ये संस्थाप्य तंपुत्रम् जगामस्वमठं पुनः ॥ ।
गच्छंतं तं यतिश्रेष्ठम् मंत्रिणश्च पुरोहिताः ।
स्वामिन् कोशगृहेराज्ञो यद्वस्तुमनसेच्छसि ॥ ।
तद्वृहीत्वा प्रगंतव्यं नात्रकार्या विचारणा ।
एवमुक्तो नरहरिः तीर्थार्थः प्रविचिंत्य सः ॥ ।
तथाह परमः प्रीतः ससीतम् रघुनंदनम् ।
सुवस्त्रवेष्टितम् रत्नमंजूषायाम् सुसंस्थितम् ॥ ।
राममालापरिक्षिप्त मुक्ताहार विभूषितम् ।
आम्लानतुलसी गंधमर्चितम् सुरसत्तमैः ॥ ।
सीतया सहितम् देव्यामौक्तिकादि विभूषया ।
रामचंद्रम् स संगृह्य गुरवे चार्पयद्यतिः ॥ ।
गुरुणा पूजितम् रामम् ततः स्वयमपूजयत् । - आध्यात्मरामायणम् - १५ अध्यायः

ततः प्रकृतिभिर्गाढमर्थितो मुनिपुंगवः ।
स्वधर्मनिरतो सत्यम् शशास पृथिवीमिमाम् ॥ १९ ॥
राजपत्याभ्यनुज्ञातः प्रसूतपुमपत्यया ।
कोशादानीयतामर्चाम् मुनिः पूर्णधिये ददौ ॥ २० ॥

- राघवेन्द्रमठगताचार्यागतिक्रमः - वार्दीन्द्रतीर्थाः

dignity and handed over them to Acharya on 23rd October 1317; that is month Ashweeja of Pingala Samvatsara. Acharya worshipped them for eighty days and handed them over to Padmanabhatheertha before leaving for Badari.

Naraharitheertha taking over the reins of Vedantha Samrajya from Padmanabhatheertha on the fourteenth day of Karthika Bahula in Rakthakshi Samvatsara stayed in the peetha for nine years and attained the Lotus feet of Narayana on the seventh day of Pushya Bahula in Srimukha Samvatsara.¹ His Brindavan is on a rock in the middle of the river near Chakratheertha at Hampi.

As Naraharitheertha handed over Mahasamsthana to Madhavatheertha without establishing a separate tradition like Padmanabhatheertha, even now it is believed that he is the harbinger of the main tradition of Acharya.

When Naraharitheertha came to Narayanadevarakere near Hospet in the course of his tour, he got the idol of Lakshminarayana taken out from a tank, installed it and built a temple as ordained by God in his dream. Because of this only it came to be called as Narayanadevarakere.

Naraharitheertha has written commentaries on Acharya's books, 'YamakaBharatha', 'Sootra Bhashya', 'Geetha Bhashya' and others. But none of them is available now.

It can be inferred that the personality of Naraharitheertha was a treasure of ingenuity. He was a learned scholar, statesman, man of letters, ascetic, luminary. He was in the vanguard of both spiritual and corporal paths. To top it all, he was a great mystic. Both his body and soul resonated with, and was gaily steeped in, the praise of Lord Rama. Just as how he shown as the emperor of Vedantha Samrajya, he has set a standard for 'Dasa Sahitya' as well. He has carved a niche in the world of Kannada Haridasa literature through his compositions of Devaranamas. Only a few of them are available now.

ससीतामूलरामार्चा कोशे गजपतेः स्थिता ।
येनानीता नमस्तस्मै श्रीमन्नृहरिभिक्षवे ॥

The following Devaranama is one of the popular compositions of Naraharitheertha

|| ಆನಂದಬೈರವಿ ||

1 ಎಂತು ಮರುಳಾದೆ ನಾ ನೆಂತು ಮರುಳಾದೆ || ಪ ||
ಎಂತು ಮರುಳಾದೆ ಭವದೊಳು ಬಳಲಿದೆ ಸಂತತ ಪೊರೆ
ರಘುಕುಲತೀಲಕ || ಅ. ಪ ||

ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹರಿದಾಸತನ | ನೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಭುದಾಸತನ |
ಪ್ರೀತಿ ಧನಾದಿ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ | ನಿರ್ಭೀತಿ ದೈವಗುರುದ್ರೋಹದಲಿ || ೧ ||
ಏಕಾಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಧನದಗೋಷ್ಠಿ | ಲೋಕಾಂತರದಿ ವೈರಾಗ್ಯಗೋಷ್ಠಿ |
ಶ್ರೀಕಾಂತನ ಸೇವೆಗೆ ಅನುಮಾನ | ಭೂಕಾಂತನಸೇವೆಗೆ ಸುಮ್ಮಾನ || ೨ ||
ಧರ್ಮಕ್ಕೆ ಒಂದು ಕಾಸು ಸಾವಿರಹೊನ್ನು | ಅಧರ್ಮಕ್ಕೆ ಕೋಟಿಹೊನ್ನು
ಒಂದೇ ಕಾಸು | ಧರ್ಮಮಾಡಲು ಬೇಸರಿಕೆ | ಅಧರ್ಮಮಾಡಲು ಎಚ್ಚರಿಕೆ || ೩ ||
ಡೊಂಬನಂತೆ ಬಯಲಿಗೆ ಹರಹಿ | ಡಂಭತನಕೆ ಕರ್ಮವಮಾಡಿ |
ಅಂಬುಜನಾಭಗೆ ದೂರಾಗಿ | ಕುಂಭಿಪಾಕಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾದೆ | || ೪ ||
ಸತಿಯರ ಬೈದರೆ ನಾ ಬೈಯ್ವೇ | ಶ್ರೀಪತಿಯ ಬೈದರೆ ಕೇಳುತ ನಗುವೆ |
ಮತಿಗೆಟ್ಟು ವಿಷಯಲಂಪಟನಾಗಿ || ೫ ||
ಯಾರಿಗಾಗಿ ಧಾವತಿಪಡುವೆ | ಇನ್ನಾರಿಗೆ ವಡವೆ ಬಚ್ಚಿಡುವೆ |
ನಾರಿಪುತ್ರಾದಿಗಳು ಯಾರು ಬಾರರೋ ಸಂಗಡದಿ || ೬ ||
ಭಜಿಸು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾದಿವಂದಿತಹರಿಯು | ತ್ಯಜಿಸು ಕಾಮಾದಿ ದುರ್ವಿಷಯ |
ಸುಜನವಂದಿತನಾದ ನರಹರಿಯ ಭಜಿಸು ಶ್ರೀಶ ಶ್ರೀ ರಘುಪತಿಯ || ೭ ||

3. Idols Of Sri Moola Seetha Rama

These idols got through Naraharitheertha and worshipped by Acharya are very ancient, popularly known as 'Chaturyugamurthis'. There are references about their glorious past in Vasistha Ramayana, Adhyatma Ramayana and Markandeya Purana.

Both these idols are very beautiful. Any pious soul that takes a darshan of these idols cannot but have profound devotion aroused. On seeing the idol of Sri Moolarama an Archaeological official has expressed his bewilderment at the meticulousness of its form, beauty, ancientness.¹

1 सर्वलक्षणसंपन्नाम् पादेद्विरसंयुताम् । - वासिष्ठरामायणम्
वृत्तपीठा लंबकर्णा त्रिविक्रा सीतया सह ।
कर्णतोऽकवर्णतश्चैव पीठतः परिमाणतः ।।
सीतारामार्चयोः साम्यम् - अर्चागतिक्रमः

Sri Jagannathadasa in one of his Keerthanas has narrated history of these idols in the same chronology as has been done by SriVadeendratheertha in 'Sri Raghavendramathagatharcha gathikrama', a book authored by him. Sri Vijayadasa has composed the separate **Suladi** depicting the events leading to the possession of these idols.

Chathurmukha Brahma rejoices in worshipping God in different ways. These idols were made by Vishwakarma as ordained by Chathurmukha Brahma for the purpose of daily pooja. After worshipping them for a long time, Brahma handed them over to Jabalamuni for the benefit of the world. They were then worshipped by Shiva and Parvathi, who handed them over to Dakshaprajeshwara. The Saint Soubhari worshipped these idols which once again reached Sathyaloka. Vyvaswan then earned these idols through penance from whom they reached the hands of his son Vyvaswatha Manu. King Ikshvaku of Surya dynasty made these idols his kuladevathas and worshipped them. His descendents in the dynasty, Mandhatha, Anaranya, Thrishanku, Harischandra, Sagara, Bhageeratha, Ambareesha, Dileepa and other emperors also worshipped these idols. Then the emperor Dasharatha worshipped them with great devotion. He named his eldest son as Rama after the name of the idol which became known as 'Moolarama' from then onwards. Sri Rama, Seethadevi, Lakshmana and Jambavantha worshipped the idols of Moola Seetharama. Then Lord Rama gave these idols for worship to one Vedagarbha, his devotee who was longing for the darshan of the Lord. After worshipping them for some years, Vedagarbha returned them to Sri Rama. Then for the period from Threthayuga to Dwaparayuga, these idols were worshipped by Hanumantha. When Bheemasena met Hanumantha in the course of his search for Sougandhikapushpa, Hanumantha gave these idols to Bheemasena and advised him to continue to worship them in his next incarnation as Sri Madhwa in Kaliyuga.¹

1 अर्चार्तु रामचंद्रस्य निर्मिता विश्वकर्मणा । वृत्त पीठा लंबकर्णात्रिविक्रा सीताया सह ।।
तामर्चयित्वा विधिवद्रंगनाथार्चयासहा । विधिरिक्ष्वाकवेप्रादादर्चयामासतेचसः । निजान्वयनृपैरक्षाम
र्चितामृजानकीपतेः । अर्चा दशरथश्चक्रे तन्नामात्मातन्भुवः । रामस्तामर्चयित्वा चाम् स्वोपास्ति मनुतिष्ठते ।
प्रीत्या जांबवतेप्रादात् सोर्चयामासताम् चिरम् ।। सच देववशादर्च रघुनाथस्यविश्रुता । जगन्नाथे
गजपतेः कोशमेवाभ्यपद्यत ।। - अर्चागतिक्रमः

Then Pandavas and all the rulers upto Kshemaka worshipped these idols before they reached the treasury of Gajapathi, the Kalinga ruler.

ಭೈರವಿ

ರಾಮನ ನೋಡಿರೈ ನಿಮ್ಮಯ ಕಾಮಿತ ಬೇಡಿರೈ ||ಪ||
ತಾಮರಸಸುವಂಶಾಬ್ಜಿ ಶರತ್ಕೋಮ ಕಮಲಾಧಾಮಾ ||ಅ|| ಪ ||

ಧಾತಾನುಜ್ಞದಿ ದೇವತ್ಯಷ್ಟ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ ಅಜ ಪೂಜಿಸಿದ | ಜ್ಯೋತಿರ್ಮಯ ಚಾಬಾಲಿ
ಮುನಿಯ ತಪವರಿದ ಕಾಮಿತವೆರಿದ | ಭೂತಾಧಿಪನ ಭವನದೊಳಚರ್ಚನೆ ಗೊಂಡ
ಧೃತಕೋದಂಡ | ಮಾತಂಗಾರಿ ವರೂಧಿಯ ಜನಕನ ಮೇಧಾಗಾರಕೆ ಪೋದ

||೦||

ಸೌಭರಿಮುನಿಪಗೆ ಸೌಖ್ಯವ ಕರುಣಿಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟ ಜಗಕತಿಡಿಟ್ಟ | ನಾಭಿಜನ್ಮನಿಹ
ಸಗರಸ್ಥಾನಕೆ ಬಂದ ಶುಭಗುಣವೃಂದ | ವೈಭವದಿಂದ ಅಯೋಧ್ಯಾ ನಗರದಿ ಮೆರೆದ
ಕಾಮಿತಗರದ | ಸಾಭಿಮಾನದಲಿ ಸತಿಯಳಿಗಿತ್ತನು ವರವ ದೇವರದೇವ

||೨||

ಜಾಂಬವಂತನಿಗೆ ಜಾನಕಿರಮಣನು ಇತ್ತ ತನ್ನಯಧ್ಯಾತಾ | ಸಂಭ್ರಮದಿಂದಲಿ
ವೇದಗರ್ಭನೊಡನಾಡ್ಡ ಮುಕ್ತಿಯ ನೀಡ್ಡ | ಕುಂಭಿನೀಶ್ವರನ ಕೋಶದಿ ಬಹುದಿನವಾಸ
ವೆಸಗಿದನೀಶ | ನಂಬಿ ತುತಿಸಿಹ ನರಹರಿ ಮುನಿಪಗೆ ಒಲಿದ ಮೋಹದಿ ನಲಿದ

||೩||

ಅಲವಬೋಧಮುನಿ ಅತಿಮೋದದಲರ್ಚಿಸಿದ ಸಲೆ ಮೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿದ | ಇಳಿಯೊಳು
ಬಹುಯುತಿಕರ ಪೂಜಿತನಾದ ಲೀಲವಿನೋದ | ಬಲುನಂಬಿದ ಭಕ್ತತರ ಕಲಿಮಲಗಳ
ಕಳೆದ ಮನದೊಳು ಪೋಳೆದ | ಸುಲಲಿತಗುಣನಿಧಿ ವಸುಧೇಂದ್ರಾಯುರ ಪ್ರೀಯ
ಕವಿಜನಗೇಯ

||೪||

ವಾರಿಬಂಧನದಿ ವಾನರನಾಯಕರಾಳ್ವ ದೈತ್ಯರಸೀಳ್ವ | ನಾರದ ಮುಖಮುನಿ ನಮಿಪ
ಪದಾಂಬುಜನೀತ ತ್ರಿಗುಣಾತೀತ | ಆರಾಧಿಪರಿಗೆ ಅಖಿಲಾರ್ಥಗಳನು ಕೊಡುವ
ದುರಿತವ ತಡೆವ | ನೀರಚಾಕ್ಷ ಜಗನ್ನಾಥವಿಲ ನಿಶ್ಚಿಂತ ಸೀತಾಕಾಂತ

||೫||

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

ರಾಮದೇವರು ಬಂದ ಸುಳಾದಿ

ಧ್ರುವತಾಳ-

ಮಧ್ಯ ವಲ್ಯಭ ಜಯ ಸದ್ವ್ಯುಷ್ಟವಪ್ರಿಯಾ | ಅದ್ವೈತ ಮಹಿಮ ಜಗದ್ವಿಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣ ರಾಮ |
ಸದ್ಗುಣಭೂತಭವಿಷ್ಯದ್ವರ್ತಮಾನಬಲ್ಲ | ವಿದ್ಯಾಂಸರೊಡೆಯಾಘಪ್ರದ್ಧಂನಿ ಅಪ್ರಮೇಯಾ | ಸದ್ವೀರ ಏಕಮೇವ |
ಅದ್ವಿತೀಯ ಷಾದದ್ವಯನನಿಸುವ | ಸದ್ಯಾಣಿವುಳ್ಳ ಗುರುದ್ವಾರ ಸಾರಿದವರ | ಹೃದ್ಯನಜದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದು ತದ್ವಿಹಾರನಡಿಸುವ |
ತದ್ವಿಪರೀತಕಾರ್ಯ | ಅಧ್ವರಭೋಕ್ತ ನಮ್ಮ ವಿಜಯವಿಠಲ | ಮಾರಧ್ಯಂಸನಿಂದ ನಿತ್ಯ | ಸದ್ಯಾಲಗ ಕೊಂಡಮೂರ್ತಿ

||೦||

ಮಟ್ಟತಾಳ-

ಷೇರ್ಮೆಯಿಂದಲಿ ವಿಶ್ವ | ಕರ್ಮನಿಂದಲೆ ಅಂದು ನಿರ್ಮಿತವಾಗಿದ್ದ ನಿರ್ಮಲಶರೀರ ಧರ್ಮಬೋಧಕರಾಮಾ |
ನಿರ್ಮಯನ ಚಾತುರ್ಮೋಗ ನಿತ್ಯ ನಿಷ್ಕರ್ಮಭವದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಮತ್ಸರನಾದ ವಿಜಯವಿಠಲರೇಯನ | ನಿರ್ಮಲ ಚಿತ್ತದಲ್ಲಿ
ಅರ್ಚನ ಮಾಡಿದರು

||೨||

ತ್ರಿಪುಟತಾಳ-

ಬಲುಕಾಲ ಲೋಕೇಶ ತನ್ನ ಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ | ಚಲುವರಾಮನ ಪೂಜೆಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರಲು | ವಲಿದು ಚಾಬಾಲಿಮುನಿ
ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನೆಯಿಂದಲಿ ಸಲಿಸಿ ಮಾತನು ಉಪಿಗೆ ಈ ಪ್ರತಿಮೆ ಕೊಡಲಾಗಿ | ವಲಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಲ್ಲಿಂದ ಶಿವಗೆ ಕೊಡಲು |
ಸುಲಭದಿಂದಲಿ ಆ ಶಿವನು ತನ್ನಯ ನಿಜಾಲನಗೆ ಕೊಡಲಾಗಿ ವಿನಯದಿಂದ | ಕೆಲವು ದಿವಸ ಗಿರಜೆ ಪೂಜಿಸಿ ಆ | ಮ್ಯಾಲೆ
ತಿಳಿದು ದಕ್ಷನ ಯಾಗದಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಪೋಗಿ | ಇಳಿದು ಪೋಗಿವಾಗ ವೈವಾಹಿಕ ಉಪಿ ಕೈ | ಯಲಿಟ್ಟು ತರುವಾಯ
ರಾಮಪ್ರತಿಮೆಯನ್ನ | ಜಲಜಾಗರ್ಭನಾವಶಕೆ ತಂದುಕೊಡಲು | ಪೋಳವ ಸುಮೇರಪರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಟ್ಟು ನಿ | ಶ್ವಲ ಪೂಜೆ
ಮಾಡುತ್ತ ಇದ್ದನೆಂದು | ಬಲುದೈವ ವಿಜಯವಿಠಲ ಜಾನಕೀಪತಿ | ಬಲವಂತ ಭಕ್ತರಪ್ರಿಯಾ ಸುಜನಗೇಯಾ

||೩||

ಅಟತಾಳ-

ತಪಮಾಡಿ ಇಕ್ಷ್ವಾಕುಬ್ರಹ್ಮಗೆ ಮೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿ | ಕೃಪೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಲ ರಾಮನಕೊಡುತ್ತಲೆ | ಕ್ಷಿಯೋಳಯೋಧ್ಯಾದಲ್ಲಿ
ಪೂಜಿಸಲಾಗ | ಅತಿಶಯವಾಗಿ ರಾಮಚಂದ್ರ ಪರಿಯಂತ | ಮಿತಿಯಿಲ್ಲದ ವಾಲಗದಲ್ಲಿ ವಪ್ಪುವ | ಕ್ಷಿತಿಸುತ ತಾನೆ
ಪೂಜಿಸಿ ಹನುಮಂತಗೆ ಪ್ರತಿಮೆಯ ಪಾಲಿಸೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿಂದ ಮಾ | ರೂತಸುತನು ಜಾಂಬವಂತಗೆ ದಯಮಾಡಿದ | ಸತತ
ಮಂಗಳಕಾಯ ವಿಜಯ ವಿಠಲರಾಮ | ನುತಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಲಿದ್ದನು ಸುರರಾದಿಗಳ ಕೈಯಾ

||೪||

ಆದಿತಾಳ-

ವೇದಗರ್ಭಾನೆಂಬೊ ಭೂಸುರರಾಮನ | ಷಾದಸಂದರುಶನವಾ ತಿಳಿಯದಲೆ ಅ | ನೊಡಕೆ ಕೊಳ್ಳದಿರೆ ರಾಘವಭಕ್ತಾ |
ನಿಂದಾದ ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾದು ತನ್ನ ಮೂರ್ತಿಯ | ಆದರದಿಂದಲಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಕಳುಹಲಿತ್ತ | ಭೂದೇವ ಬಹುಕಾಲ ಪೂಜಿಸಿ
ತೀರ್ಥಾಯಾತ್ರೆ | ಆದರದಿಂದ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತ ಬರಲು ಗತಿಗೆ | ಐದುವಕಾಲದಿ ಸೀತಾರಾಮ ಪ್ರತಿಮೆಯು | ಮೇದಿನಿಯಲಿ
ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಪೋಗಲಾಗಿ ಇತ್ತ | ಸಾಧುಗುಣವುಳ್ಳಮುಕುಂದವರ್ಮನೆಂಬೊ ಮೇದನೀಪತಿ ಯಾಗಿ ವಡ್ಡಿ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲೀ | ಆದ
ಅಶರೀರವಾಕ್ಯಾಂತರವ ಕೇಳಿ | ಆದಿತ್ಯವಂಶಜರಾಮ | ರಾಧನೆ ಕೊಳುತಿದ್ದ ಆ ಜನಾದ ಕೋಶದಲ್ಲಿ

||೫||

ಜತೆ-

ನರಹರಿತೀರ್ಥಗೆ ವಲಿದ ವಿಜಯವಿಠಲ | ಸ್ಮರಿಸಿದವರ ಕಾವ ನಿತ್ಯ ರಘುರಾಮ

||೬||

Thus, it is needless to say how immense the Divine presence is in the idols worshipped by such great souls. When the truth प्रतिमायान्तु सान्निध्यं अर्चकस्य तपोबलात् । is analysed, it is only appropriate to consider these idols as the real Lord keeping in mind particularly the fact that they were worshiped by none other than Narayana and Lakshmi, the supreme spirit of the universe, Brahma and by Vayu in all his three incarnations. It can be so said here लोहवद्वयते हरि : । as शिलावद्वयते हरि : । said in Tirupathi. Those who merely touch such sacred idols are the righteous and the virtuous. Puranas quote that the worshippers of these idols are above human and 'Amshapurushas. The very darshan of the aslant Lord Rama with drooping ears on a round base is magnificent. There is no doubt about just a darshan of a Lord purging us of the heap of our sins. Only to worship this idol, Vyasamuni became Raghavendra,

Vibudhendra – Vijayeendra, Jithamitra – Sudheendra. In the opinion of the jnanis anyone who worships this idol in Yathyashrama is certain to attain salvation. It can be definitely said that the Almighty has blessed this world with this idol for emancipation of his devotees in an age beset with sin.

Sri Moolarama even today has enshrined Sri Raghavendraswami Mutt, the original samsthana of Acharya.

4. Madhavatheertha (1333-1350)

Before he took sanyasa his name was Govindashastri. Becoming a disciple of Acharya, he took sanyasa. Neither his native nor the time he took sanyasa is known. After Naraharitheertha, Madhavatheertha ruled Acharya's samsthana for sixteen years and attained eternal peace at Mannur, a village on the banks of the river Bheema on the day of Amavasya of Bhadrapada Bahula in Vikriithi Samvatsara. After placing Akshobhyatheertha in charge of Acharya's Mahasamsthana he conferred sanyasa on one Madhuharitheertha and handed over to him the idol of Veera Rama inherited from Acharya. Even now this tradition is continuing as Madhavatheertha Mutt. This is situated in Majjigehalli near Mulbagal.

Being a direct disciple of Acharya, Madhavatheertha must have been a great scholar. Though history quotes him to have written some books, none is available.

साधिताखिलसत्तत्त्वं बाधिताखिल दुर्मतं ।
बोधिताखिलसन्मार्गं माधवाख्ययति भजे ॥

5. Akshobhyatheertha (1350-1365)

Akshobhyatheertha's life prior to sanyasa is set out in "Sarswathi Parinaya". It can be understood that he was a genius and statesman. The descendants of Shasthika (Aravattthokkalu) families known for their loyalty were in high positions under the royal patronage in the kingdoms of Kadambas and Yadavas. The descendants belonging to Bharadwaja gothra of Swarnabhandara family, one of the Shasthika families, were appointed as Mandalikas of Jamkhandi by the Chalukya kings. One Keshavabhata was prominent in that

family. One Govindabhata was his only son. It was in A.D.1282 that Govindabhata was born. After completing his education at an early age, he assumed the responsibility of administration even as a youth. For Govindabhata, virtuous, devout, well versed in Shastras, politics as such was contemptible. It was when Acharya's fame had touched the zenith. Entrusting the administration to his uncle Dhundiraja, Govindabhata set out to meet Acharya. As soon as he had the darshan of Acharya, he felt unprecedented reverence for him. Impressed by the felicity of Acharya's speech and his preachings, he took sanyashrama from Acharya in A.D.1312 with his name changed as **Akshobhyatheertha**. Since then, emerging triumphant in debate after debate, he engaged all through in propagating Acharya's philosophy. After Madhavatheertha, Akshobhyatheertha became Mahasamsthanaadhipathi in A.D.1350. Then Bukka was the king of Vijayanagar. Writing of commentaries on Vedas had begun under the stewardship of his kulaguru, Vidyaranya. Vaishnavism did not find much favour their. Moreover, Akshobhyatheertha unable to tolerate the impudence of Somashekararaya of Kampli, the son-in-law of king Harihara, came to Mulbagal on his southern tour. Then Kumarakampa, son of Harihararaya was Manadalika at Mulbagal. He extended his patronage to Akshobhyatheertha. In A.D.1350, there took place a debate on the philosophies of Dwaitha and Adwaitha at Mulbagal between Akshobhyatheertha and Vidyaranya who had undertaken a tour.

Vidyaranya averred that Shruthis and Upanishads advocate the Monoism only. **Tattamas** which had figured in the dialogue between Uddalaka and Shwethakethu in Chandogyopanishad, most popular among the Upanishads, became the first topic. Elaborating on the nine examples in that context, Akshobhyatheertha stating with illustrations what is interesting in the expression **तत् त्वं असि** meaning 'It is you' which appears to advocate non duality? what is its real meaning? what is the gist of that which says 'It is you'? argued that this very expression establishes that Jeeva and Brahma are separate entities. He explained in multifarious ways, on the basis of grammar, **तत्त्वमसि** means Jeeva is the servant of God, there is no Jeeva without God, God only is the creator of Jeeva. Vidyaranya had nothing to say. Vedanthadeshika, then a great scholar in Vishistadwaitha was apprised of the details of this debate and requested to declare which side triumphed. He in his reply

wrote that असिना तत्वमसिना परजीव प्रभेदिना । विद्यारण्यं महारण्यं अक्षोभ्यमुनिरच्छिनत् ॥ meaning Akshobhyatheertha swished off the forest of Vidyaranya with his scimitar 'Tattvamasī' distinguishing between Jeeva and Brahma.¹ In commemoration of this, a victory pillar was erected at Mulbagal.² This is a landmark victory in the history of Madhwa philosophy. It is this which Teekakritpada has mentioned in Mangalacharanashloka of his 'Tattvaparakashika'.³

On his tour Akshobhyatheertha reached Shimoga district. He established his own Mutt at Koodali, a confluence of the Tunga and the Bhadra rivers where already a Mutt of Vidyaranya existed. Besides he counter established another Mutt at Banakara (Balagaru) on the banks of the river Tunga against an Adwaita Mutt which existed at Doorvasapura of Theerthahalli taluk. Then he established his two traditions by handing over the idols of Rama inherited from Acharya to his two disciples Thrylokyabhooshanatheertha and Lokapujya. These two are now popular as Koodali Arya Akshobhyatheertha samsthana and Balgaru Arya Akshobhyatheertha samsthana.

As the atmosphere at Vijayanagar was not conducive to Dwaitism, Akshobhyatheertha set out towards north.⁴

As Vaishnavism was in vogue at Pandharapura there, Akshobhyatheertha touring in the kingdom of Bahamani for some days attained eternal peace at Malakheda on the banks of the river Kaginee on Thursday the fifth day of Margashira Bahula in Vishwavasū Samvatsara (4-12-1365).

Akshobhyatheertha taught all the books on Vedantha to his disciple Jayatheertha. Jayatheertha has extolled that his guru taught him by rote as if to a parrot.

अक्षोभ्यतीर्थगुरुणा शुकवच्छिक्षितस्य मे ।
वचोभिरमृतप्रायैः प्रीयतां सततां बुधाः ॥ -गीताभाष्य टीकांत्य

1. Vedanthadeshikavaibhavaprakasha, Jayatheerthavijaya.

2. Mysore Archaeological Report – 1896.

3. दुर्वादिवारण विदारण दक्षदीक्षमक्षोभ्यतीर्थं मृगराजमहम् नमामि ।

4. अक्षोभ्यतीर्थोपि विजित्यवादिनम् कीर्तिम् हरेः सुप्रतताम् विधाय स्तंभम् प्रतिष्ठाप्य जयांकमश्मनः ततो ययौ भीमरथीतटम् सहः ।

- जयतीर्थविजयम्

None of the books written by Akshobhyatheertha is available. But he is popular as author of many books. That he was greatly successful in outwitting his rivals in debates is amply substantiated by description made about him by his disciple.¹

Thus, Akshobhyatheertha having acquired mastery over both social and spiritual aspects blessed Teekakritpada by teaching Acharya's philosophy besides rendering unmatched service to the philosophy and tradition of Acharya. In the history of Madhwa philosophy, Akshobhyatheertha's renown is immortal.

यो विद्यारण्यविपिनं तत्त्वमस्यसिनाच्छिनत् ।
श्रीमदक्षोभ्यतीर्थाय नमस्तस्मै महात्मने ॥

6. Teekakritpada (1365-1388)

Raghunathanayaka or Dhondopant was the only son of Dhundiraja, the pategar of Jamkhandi under Yadavas of Devagiri*. Not only was he a scholar in Sanskrit as a boy, but also able in statecraft. Nayaka was married at his appropriate age. Raghunathanayaka became the Yuvaraja of Jamkhandi known as Sadinadu. In A.D.1352 Allauddin of Bahamani kingdom sent his army to invade the kingdom of Yadavas. The entire kingdom was looted. People underwent great hardship. This greatly distressed Yuvaraja and prompted him towards renunciation. Another interesting incident happened at this point of time. Yuvaraja who had gone for hunting with his royal entourage had become weary and thirsty. He went to the river Bheema in the vicinity and began to drink water bending down from the horse back. Akshobhyatheertha on his tour of north was doing his Ahneeka there. He was surprised at Nayaka's queer act. He said, "Raghunatha, what is this! Were you an animal in your earlier birth (किं पशुः पूर्वदिहे?) Why this arrogance for you, a progeny of high pedigree? Is this regal splendour lasting? Seek upliftment of your

1. दुर्वादिवारण विदारण दक्षदीक्षमक्षोभ्यतीर्थं मृगराजमहम् नमामि ।

- तत्वप्रकाशिका

पदवाक्य प्रमाणज्ञान् प्रतिवादि मदच्छिदः ।

श्रीमदक्षोभ्यतीर्थाख्यानुपतिष्ठे गुरुन्मम । ।

- सुधादि

* The poet Raghavendrappa in his Shasthikanamavali has said that Dhundiraja had four sons.

-Publisher

soul." As these words were timely, they planted a lasting impression on the already ruffled mind of Nayaka. Relegating all his regal traits immediately, he approached Akshobhyatheertha. Prostrating before him, Nayaka entreated saying "Sir, you are my guru for all times, indeed you have now awakened me, I shall remain your disciple; grant me sanyasa." Akshobhyatheertha responded saying "Raghunatha, I appreciate your spirit of detachment. But yours is still a young family; what will be the fate of your wife? What should the dependants do? Therefore you return home. Get engaged in the study of Acharya's great books. Let us contemplate on sanyasa after some years."

Nayaka imploring in the real sense of detachment said, "No sir, you have always been my well wisher. Please lead me to the path of permanent and ultimate happiness. Let there not be any hindrance. No end to the worldly life" and eagerly sought sanyasa. Akshobhyatheertha in about A.D.1353 ceremoniously conferred sanyasa on him and named him 'Jayatheertha'. Ironically, could the rest of the family so readily tread the arduous path of renunciation? They only knew to and did object Akshobhyatheertha and took back Jayatheertha home. Jayatheertha was perfectly in know of the God's will, did remain silent. Back home, fixing an auspicious time the poorvashrama wife of Jayatheertha was conducted to the nuptial room. Awestruck by the lustrous brilliance emanating from her husband in his serpentine form, she hastened out of the room in horror. The other members of the family flabbergasted by Jayatheertha's extraordinary radiance apologetically admitted their blunder and sought his lenience. Convinced of the immutability of Lord Hari's will, Jayatheertha went to his guru. Akshobhyatheertha taught all Shastras exhaustively to Jayatheertha. Jayatheertha at the end of his commentary on Geethabhashya has said अक्षोभ्यतीर्थगुरुणा शुकवच्छिक्षितस्य मे । वचोभिरमृतप्रायैः प्रीयतां सततां बुधाः ॥ This reveals to what extent he was benefited by his guru's patronage. He reigned Vedantha samrajya between A.D.1365 and A.D.1388. It was on 4-12-1365 that Akshobhyatheertha reached his heavenly abode. Soon after finishing his studies, Jayatheertha began writing commentaries on Acharya's works. Earlier, pleased by his prayers, Durgadevi had gifted him the things with which to write. Sitting in the cave at Yaragola, he began to write commentaries. His disciples would get up early in the morning, attend to their morning routine and bring

Jowar Bakkari through alms seeking. Till then, Jayatheertha would engage in writing and after worship of God would sanctify the alms brought and everybody would ingest the oblation. Writing would resume after the lunch – This was how his routine went on. Once, in about A.D.1356, Vidyaranya through a tour across the country, came to meet Jayatheertha in his cave. Jayatheertha showed the book 'Pramana Lakshana' to Vidyaranya on which he was writing commentary. Seeing the expressions appearing to be mutually incompatible, Vidyaranya gibingly laughed and blurted out "after all this boy's words merit no credence".¹

Immediately Jayatheertha showed his commentary. Vidyaranya greatly impressed by the magnificent way in which the original expressions were composed, majesty of the language, competence in delineation carried the book on his head and took Jayatheertha on elephant in procession.²

Even though Vidyaranya was a very popular scholar in Adwaita he had a thorough knowledge in politics and therefore could appreciate Jayatheertha's scholarship. An ace of etiquette as he was, he could do well to lavish honour.

Jayatheertha's prolific commentaries on the books of Acharya overshadowed those written earlier by Padmanabhatheertha, Naraharitheertha, Thrivikramapandithacharya, Narayanapadnditha charya. Jayatheertha became quite synonymous with the name Teekakritpada. His name stood aloft in the realm of Dwaita Siddhantha.³ As are the names of Trio of sages Panini, Vararuchi, Pathanjali famous for grammar, so are the triad of sages Acharya, Teekakritpada, Chandrikacharya for Dwaita philosophy.

1 अक्षोभ्यतीर्थो परिपूर्वजात वैरिप्रतीकारमसौ विधातुम् ।

अवापविद्या विपिनः कृतीद्रम् पाठम् वदन्तम् जयिनम् गुहायाम् । ।

जयीन्द्रोदय- कर्कहळिळ श्रीनिवासाचार्याः

ततः सभाजनीयन्तम् संभाव्य जयतीर्थराट् । प्रोवाच वेद भाष्यादि कर्तेति श्रूयते भवान् ।

प्रमाणलक्षणव्याख्याम् विदधातुम् भवानलम् एवंचेन्नोमहांस्तोषः विद्यारण्य भवेदिति । ।

- जयतीर्थजयम्-संकर्षणाचार्याः

बालवाक्येन किम् मे-जयतीर्थविजयम्

2 वारणेंद्रम् यमारुह्य गतवान् सर्वदिग्जयी । सवादित्रादि संपत्नौ सत्रा भूमंडलेचरन् । तं समारुह्य नागेंद्रम्

जयतीर्थम् जयास्पदम् । चरयामास तत्रासौ सवादित्रामहंकिल । ।

- संकर्षणाचार्याः

3 श्रीमध्वःकल्पवृक्षश्च जयाचार्यास्तु धेनवः । चंतामणिस्तु व्यासार्थाः मुनित्रयमुदाहृतम्

- श्रीमुष्णमाहात्म्यम्

On instruction from his guru, Teekakritpada went on a tour.¹ It was about A.D.1366 when a war between Gulbarga and Vijayanagara broke out. As there was a state of turmoil, Teekakritpada diverted towards south. After worshipping Krishna at Udipi, he placed his books dedicating them to Acharya. Proceeding further, he visited the shrine of Ranganatha at Srirangam in A.D.1370.² Touring all over south, he reached the Brindavan of his guru on the fifth day of Ashadha Krishna in Vibhava Samvatsara in A.D.1388, attained the Lotus feet of Sri Hari.*

It is Vidyadhirajatheertha who succeeded Teekakritpada. Apart from him Teekakritpada had another disciple Vyasatheertha. He has written commentaries on some Upanishads. In addition, he has written 'Brihat JayatheerthaVijaya' a book comprising eight cantos and 'Anu JayatheerthaVijaya' comprising thirty four Shlokas. It is widely known that Vijayadhvajatheertha, disciple of Mahendratheertha of Pejavar Mutt, who had become famous for his commentary on Bhagavatha, was Teekakritpada's contemporary. He had his commentary on Bhagavatha perused by Teekakritpada and received his accolades.

Thus, after Acharya it is Teekakritpada who occupies a prominent position in the world of Dwaitha philosophy. Without Teekakritpada's interpretation, none of the books of Acharya would be easy to comprehend. Teekakritpada has written the following books.

1. Eshopanishatteeka
2. Shatprashnopanishatteeka
3. BrahmasootraBhashyateeka (Tattvaparakashika)
4. Anuvyakhyanteeka (Nyaya Sudha)

- 1 एवम् समस्तान् समयान् निरस्य संपूर्णधी हृद्यपथा जयीन्द्रः ।
विष्णोः परत्वप्रतिपाद्यभूमा वसौचकार स्वगुरोस्सपर्याः । - जयीन्द्रोदय
स्वगुरुदत्त सुरप्रतिमादिकानुपमसंपदितो जयतीर्थराट् ।
भुवि सदिविजयाय तदातदा किल चचार तदीयवराजय । - संकर्षणाचार्याः
- 2 जलदोरुभाग्यमरविंददृषम् कमलाकरार्चितपदांबुजनिम् ।
आधिजानुसक्त पृथुदीर्घभुजसम् निरीक्ष्य शर्मभ्यशमापमुनिः - जयीन्द्रोदय

* In the opinion of the scholars who have done a review, pursuant to the recently conducted research and as per the available documents, it is at Navabrindavana where Jayatheertha's Brindavan is situated and the one situated at Malkhed is just a Mrithikabrindavana.

5. Nyayavivaranapanchika
6. GeethaBhashyateeka (Prameyadeepika)
7. Nyayadeepika (Geethatattvateeka)
8. Pramanlakshanateeka
9. Kathalakshanateeka
10. Upadhikhandanateeka
11. Mayavadhakhandanateeka
12. Prapanchamithyatvanumanakhandanateeka
13. Tattvasankhyanavivarana
14. Tattvavivekavivarana
15. Tattvodyotavivarana
16. Karmanirnayateeka
17. Vishnutattvanirnayateeka
18. Rigbhashyateeka

Independent Works

1. Pramanapaddhathi
2. Vadavalee
3. Shathaparadhasthotra
4. Padyamala

For those delved into Shastras, it would be a little better to understand how Teekakritpada gives an exhaustive description of Acharya's writings with apt illustrations. The great scholars of different philosophies having tasted his locution, majesty of the language, method of substantiation consider the books of Teekakritpada superior to Patanjali's MahaBhashya, books of Udayanacharya. That Teekakritpada had clearly understood the view deep seated in Acharya's heart becomes quite intelligible in his books. As does **दुर्निरूपवचनं च पंडितैः** of Pandithacharya connote, though the original expressions of Acharya appear very simple, their comprehensive meaning is not a little easy to understand. Only when Teekakritpada gives a multidimensional description of it, does its comprehension become easy. It is not an exaggeration to say that he who is born as Madhwa and has done his education would be failing in his duty unless he reads at least a few letters of Teekakritpada's books. It may be said that of all the commentaries of Dwaitha, Adwaitha and Vishisthadwaitha, the availability of books to match those of Teekakritpada is rare. It is for this reason, the maxim "being born one should either read Sudhe

or rule a state" needs more emphasis.¹ One can experience greater bliss by reading Sudhe than ruling a state. It is impossible to greatly praise the qualities of Teekakritpada while praising his expressions. Therefore the hymn चित्रैः पदैश्च गंभीरैः वाक्यैर्मनैरखंडितैः । गुरुभावं व्यंजयन्ति भाति श्रीजयतीर्थं वाक् ॥ has become more popular. Vadiraja also has extolled him as

माध्वग्रंथान् स्वबंधूनिव सरसहृदालिङ्ग्य विज्ञातभावः
संयोज्यालंकृताभिः स्वसहजमति संभूतवग्भिर्वदूभिः ।
कृत्वान्योक्तिश्च दासीबुधहृदय गृहं प्रौढवृत्तीश्च वृत्तिः
दत्वान्योन्याभियोगं जयमुनिरसकृद्दीक्ष्य रेमे कृतार्थः ॥

Teekakritpada has sung the glory of Padmanabhatheertha among his earlier commentators. Difference of opinion between him and Naraharitheertha in the explanation of a few expressions has become apparent. He has paid his homage at the beginning of his writings to Akshobhyathertha, as he had his education under him and that he was his Ashrama guru.

Though Teekakritpada's scholarship was such an acme, his humility, politeness and veneration for Acharya did well to conform to his erudition. Save his scholarship in four Shastras, he has said in Sudha that he knew hardly anything and he could do such writings only through the great blessings of Acharya.²

Thus Teekakritpada's humility was unmatched. His incarnation has greatly benefited the Madhwa folk. It may be said that it is only through his books the Dwaitha philosophy has won wide propagation and has remained intact.

यस्य वाक्कामधेनुर्नः कामितार्थान् प्रयच्छति ।
सेवे तं जययोगीन्द्रं कामबाणच्छिदं सदा ॥

1 सुधा वा पठनीया वसुधा वा पालनीया ।

2 न शब्दाश्चौ गाढाः न च निगमचर्चासु चतुराः
न च न्याये प्रौढाः न च विदित वेद्या अपि वयम् ।
परम् श्रीमत्पूर्णप्रमितिगुरुस्कारुण्यसरणिम्
प्रपन्नमान्याःस्मः किमपि च वदतोपि महताम् । ।

7. Vidyadhirajatheertha (Vibhava of 1388 – Angeerasa of 1392)

According to the history of succession at the Mutt, Krishnabhata was his name before sanyasa. He was a great scholar. On the third day of Vaishaka Shuddha in Angeerasa Samvatsara he reached the heavenly abode at Yaragola after his reign in Mahasamsthana for four years. He bestowed sanyashrama on his two disciples Kaveendra and Rajendra. Of the idols of Mutt's heritage, Pattabhirama and Moolagopalakrishna came to the possession of Rajendra and Kaveendra had Mahasamsthana and MoolaSeethaRama, Digvijayarama and Jayarama idols. As Vyasaraaja, one among the three Munis came in Rajendra's succession, his tradition has become popular as Vyasaraaja Mutt. Now it is situated on the banks of the Cauvery at village Sosale near Mysore.

माद्यद्वैत्यंधकार प्रद्योतनमहर्निशम् ।
विद्याधिराजं सुगुरुं हृद्यामितगुरुं भजे ॥

8. Kaveendratheertha (Angeerasa of 1392 – Pramathi of 1398)

Kaveendratheertha was known as Vasudevashastry in his poorvashrama. Being a great scholar, he was the most beloved disciple of Vidyadhiraja. He got Mahasamsthana only because of this. He was a great devotee of God. He attained his eternal peace on the ninth day of Chaitra Shuddha in Pramathi Samvatsara and was laid to rest beside the Brindavan of Padmanabhatheertha.

वींदारूढपदासक्तं राजेंद्रमुनिसेवितम् ।*
श्रीकवींद्रमुनिम् वंदे भजतां चंद्रसन्निभम् ॥

9. Vageeshatheertha (Pramathi of 1398 – Sarvajith of 1406)

Raghunathacharya was his name in poorvashrama. It is evident from the Charamashloka on him that he was a great scholar. He was at the helm of affairs of Mahasamsthana only for a period of

There is one more text राजेंद्रमुनिदेशिकम् ।

eight years and attained eternal peace on the third day of Chaitra Bahula in Sarvajith Samvatsara near the very Brindavan of his guru.

वासुदेवपदद्वंद्वं वारिजासक्तमानसम् ।
पदव्याख्यानकुशलं वागीशयतिमाश्रये ॥

10. Ramachandratheertha (Sarvajith of 1406 – Nala of 1435)

He was known as Madhavashastry prior to his sanyasa. Impressed by the teachings of Dwaitha philosophy, he became Vageeshatheertha's disciple. As Shastry was very noble and a good ascetic, Vageeshatheertha granted him sanyasa and chose him to be his successor. He was worshipping MoolaRaghupathi Vedavyasa. Once when he came to Srirangapatna on his tour, he emerged victorious in his debate with Kashinatha, an Adwaitha scholar. The latter presented to him a letter conceding his defeat. Meanwhile Ramachandratheertha met Raghunatha Bhatta, an accomplished scholar.*

Raghunatha Bhatta's scholarship was par excellence. He was known for his invincibility in debates. It was Ramachandratheertha's longing to earn the reputation as शिष्यादिच्छेत् पराजयम् । by grooming such a disciple. It was for this, that he disclosed his avidity to Raghunatha Bhatta. The greatest scholar and renunciation personified as he was, Rahunatha Bhatta thought it as a great opportunity for fulfilment. Looking upon this as a blessing from Lord Ramachandra, and overwhelmed by happiness, he readily consented to sanyasa. He was renamed '**Vibudhendratheertha**' after formal bestowal of sanyasashrama. This name became meaningful. Though Digvijayarama inherited from Acharya had been the main idol of the Mutt, as the idols of MoolaSeethaRama which Naraharitheertha brought from the treasury of Gajapathi of Kalinga state were very ancient, worshipped by Chathurmukha Brahma, those which had passed all the four yugas, they became the presiding deities of Mahasamsthana, its symbol.

After being bestowed ashrama, Vibudhendratheertha himself was

* It is learnt from the tradition that this Raghunatha Bhatta was Ramachandra theertha's nephew in his poorvashrama.

performing Mahasamsthana pooja. His guru Ramachandratheertha after his convalescence giving the idol of Digvijayarama instructed Vibudhendratheertha to triumph over the opponents in debates touring all over the country.

Obeying his guru's instructions, Vibudhendra went on an extensive tour. Jayadhwajatheertha, the disciple of Rajendratheertha had already propagated Dwaithism and spread the influence of Acharya's philosophy all over Bengal in north India. Vibudhendra also touring all over there, defeating the advocates of rival philosophy, established his philosophy there. He bagged a landmark victory at Kashi.¹ Not a day passed without his victory in debate. Everywhere he was invincible in debates. At this time, Ramachandratheertha touring Karnataka came to the village Yaragola near Malakheda. It was his last days. Inviting prominent villagers, he placed the idols and other valuables of the Mutt in their custody and instructed them to hand over them when his disciple Vibudhendratheertha came there.² He left this mundane world on the sixth day of Vaishaka Shuddha in Nala Samvatsara. His Brindavan is at Yaragola.

द्वुमण्यभिजनाब्धीन्धु रामव्यासपदार्चकः ।
रामचंद्रगुरुर्भूयात् कामितार्थं प्रदायकः ॥

- 1 अथ काशीम् प्रविष्टस्य विबुधेन्द्रस्य धीमतः ।
जल्पःप्रवर्ततानत्यो बहुज्ञैर्वादिभिश्चिरं । । - अर्चागतिक्रमः
- 2 This is narrated as follows in Gurukathakalpatharu written by a disciple of Uttaradi Mutt
ततस्तु रामचंद्राख्यतीर्थी साम्राज्यमागतम् ।
कृत्वामुदाददुः श्रीमद्विबुधेद्रेभ्य एव च ॥ २३॥
निर्याणसमये प्राप्ते रामचंद्र मुनीश्वराः ।
यरगोलमुपागत्य तत्रस्थानिदमब्रुवन् ॥२९॥
भो धर्मिणिमुखाः सर्वे श्रूयतामस्मदाशयः ।
विबुधेद्रामहांतोऽस्मन्मठे मुख्याभिमानिनः ॥३०॥
कुलकर्ण्युपनामेत स्मार्तधर्मणमंदिरे ।
निश्चीय देवमंजूषाम् निधायोपस्करानपि ॥३१॥

THE TRADITION OF MAHASAMSTHANA

Vibudhendraheertha (1435 – 1490)

Vibudhendraheertha who had been on his spree of successful debates at Kashi came to know of his guru's departure from the world after sometime. He left the place with a heavy heart. In the meantime, one Vidyanidhi a sanyasi of Shiroor Mutt among the Mutts of Udipi came to Yaragola village on his tour. Having learnt that idols of MoolaSeethaRama belonging to Mahasamsthana were there and with a desire to worship them for sometime, he requested those prominent villagers through some people. Ramachandraheertha who knew how, during the period of Vidyadhiraja, the breaking away of the Mutt led to some difference of opinion had determined against another split during his time. Moreover as he had natural affinity for the most scholarly disciple Vibudhendra, Ramachandraheertha before his demise had entrusted the Mahasamsthana to those prominent villagers of Yaragola to manage it till his disciple returned. There is absolutely no proof of a Tuluva sanyasi being his disciple at the time when Ramachandraheertha breathed his last. That is why Vidyanidhi who came later on his tour, revealing his eagerness to some villagers got those prominent villagers persuaded with their help and took possession of the idols of MoolaSeethaRama under the pretext of worshipping them for sometime. Who would mind returning easily such priceless idols, the symbols of Mahasamsthana? Therefore, Vidyanidhi conspired with sixty three employees who were part of the entourage of Ramachandraheertha about the time of his demise. He promised them that he would reward them with the entire earnings from his tour in return for their securing him those idols for worship. Accordingly the agreement took place. Taking those idols with their help Vidyanidhi proceeded from Yaragola. The prominent villagers were scared to learn this. Unable to muster courage to oppose a sanyasi, they remained shrunk. After his departure from Yaragola, Vidyanidhi founded his own tradition. From then on in terms of the agreement which stipulated equal share for all the sixty three supporters from the earnings of the Mutt, all the successive pontiffs of the Mutt became the sixty fourth recipient.

It is this group of sixty three which arrogated itself to the dignity of Shanubhogas and established its autonomy in the Mutt. Their malfeasance became rampant. The swamiji turned just a stooge in their hands. Gentle scholars visiting the Mutt to seek swamiji's blessings found the atmosphere insecure. At last Satyhadhyana theertha, the famous pontiff of the Mutt in the recent days freed the Mutt from the clutches of barbaric hands of Shanubhogas and established peace. As Vidyanidhi had established a separate Mutt himself with the idols belonging to Mahasamsthana in his possession, in order to pay homage to his gurupeetha, conferred certain honours on Shirooru Mutt in addition to observing some rituals including the method of preparation of Mantrakshata quite in keeping with the tradition of that Mutt.

On his arrival at Yaragola, Vibudhendraheertha learnt about all that had happened. Being the greatest soul, he could hardly entertain any contempt for Vidyanidhi. He rued his fate of not being fortunate to worship Moolarama. In spite of studying all the great books of Acharya through his rare blessings and being coronated in his Samsthana, he missed the fortune of worshipping those sacred idols again. He was worried that he would have to be born again for this fulfilment. Incidentally he had an omen that his successor's successor would have those idols restored. "Well, it is Hari's will, it is simply immutable with the only alternative **submission**". Thus consoling himself¹ he went to Ahobala where he stayed worshipping Lord Narasimha for long. In the course of his tour when he had camped on the banks of a river, he had a dream and came to the possession of an idol of Lord Narasimha with sixteen hands from the river. Even now it is being worshipped in the Mutt once in a year.² From there he came to the village Mantralaya. As he had a dream that Prahladaraja had performed yagna in that village which was under the rule of Vijayanagar king, he got the village as gift. Again touring places from Mantralaya, he came down to Mysore state where he got many estates gifted by its king. Setting out towards south, he came to Tirunelveli a town situated on the banks

1 मध्वतंत्रम् प्रतिष्ठाय नाससंजातकौतुकः ।

विबुधेन्द्रस्तुदाहर्तुम् नैच्छदार्चाम् परंगताम् । ।

- अर्चागतिक्रमः

2 श्रीमल्लक्ष्मीनृसिंहाचारिविबुधेन्द्रयतीष्टदा ।

तस्यहज्याभुजामूर्तिः स्वप्राभिज्ञानपूर्वकम् । ।

- अर्चागतिक्रमः

of river Tamraparni. He attained eternal peace there on the day of Margashira Shuddha of Sadharana Samvatsara in A.D. 1490.

आकेरलम् तथासेतुमागंगंच हिमालयम् ।
निराकृतद्वैतशैवं विबुधेन्द्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Vibudhendraheertha, has been a towering personality in the history of Madhwa philosophy after Teekakritpada. He occupies a pre-eminent position in Madhwa tradition. Every Madhwa has acknowledged in reverence his scholarship and peerless competence in debating. There can be no better proof of excellence in his scholarship than the Charamashloka on him. It may not be redundant to say that Vibudhendra does well as a vital link in the chain of unhindered tradition of Acharya in imparting knowledge. Vibudhendraheertha having learnt most occult principle from a long tradition of gurus, beside preaching them to his disciple Jithamithra, taught all the principles to Laksminarayanayogi who had come to him for learning.¹ Laksminarayanayogi was a great yathi in the tradition of Padmanabhatheertha and younger brother of Brahmanyatheertha of Rajendra's tradition. It was he who became famous as **Sreepadaraja**. In view of great scholarship of Laksminarayanayogi which Raghunathatheertha looked upon as superior to his own, Raghunathatheertha declared in praise "If I am a Sreepada, he is a Sreepadaraja" * Every Madhwa knows the greatness of Sreepadaraja. As was Sreepadaraja the mentor of king Saluva Narasimha in the material world, so in the spiritual world was he the teacher of Chandrikacharya who himself was a paragon of Madhwa philosophy. It is not at all difficult to imagine how great could be the scholarship of Sreepadaraja in view of the fact that he became the teacher of Chandrikacharya. He could acquire such scholarship only because of Vibudhendraheertha. It is also widely known that the disciples of Vyasaraaja, Vijayeendra, Vadiraja and others, were the pontiffs of different Mutts. Therefore it may be construed that Vibudhendraheertha was chiefly instrumental

1 लक्ष्मीनारायणमुनिर्यासदेशकदेशिकः ।

यस्माच्छ्रीपादराजाख्योद्वयगीष्टाखिलागमान् । ।

- अर्चागतिक्रमः

* There are clear proofs that in the seminar of scholars held under the presidentship of Sri Vibudhendraheertha, Sri Laksminarayanayogi was conferred the title of 'Sreepadaraja' as desired by all saints and scholars.

in spreading everywhere the tradition handed down by Acharya. Therefore Vibudhendraheertha's name has become immortal, sacred

Vibudhendraheertha's name has acquired prominence in other ways also. The copper inscription of Vibudhendra's period is the first available among all the other inscriptions about the pontiffs of Acharya's Mahasamsthana getting gifts in the form of villages. Krishnadevaraya has given this in 1412 (A.D.1490).^{*} As revealed by this Krishnadevaraya in the wake of capturing Udayagiri after defeating Prataparudra gifted the village Chikkakulli surrounded by Honnidruge, Bommanahalu, Khanapura, Hirekulli in Beladone region in the month of Vaishaka of Sadharana Samvatsara corresponding to 1412 at the confluence of the Krishna and the Bheema for the

* The question whether the period of this inscription (A.D.1490) corresponds with that of Krishnadevaraya (A.D.1509 – 1530) may arise. It is possible that the seal might have been put on the inscription in Government's account after invasion and capture of Udayagiri, where as it had been decided earlier to gift the village Chikkakulli to Vibudhendraheertha. As there is a reference of this in an inscription related to the gift made to Surendratheertha later, the gift made to Vibudhendraheertha must also be of Krishnadevaraya's period. Such examples of giving predetermined gifts at a convenient future date are aplenty in inscriptions

-Vidwan Sri R.S. Panchamukhi

- 1 वीरप्रतापः श्रीकृष्णदेवराजमहीपतिः ।
नेत्रेन्दु वेदभूषण्यगणितम् शकजन्मना ।
साधारणाब्दे वैशाख्याम् कृष्णवैष्णोसरित्ते ।
श्रीमत्परमहंसाख्यप्रारिवाड्यो निरंतरम् ।
पदवाक्यप्रमाणाञ्चि पारीणोभ्यो निरंकुशम् ।
श्रीमद्वैष्णवसिद्धांत स्थापकेभ्यस्सदागमैः ।
सर्वतंत्रस्वतंत्रेभ्यः श्रीमद्वागीशयोगीनाम् ।
पाणिपंकज संजात रामचंद्र तपस्विनाम् ।
निजांतेवासिवयोभ्यो वरदेभ्यो वरार्थिनाम् ।
विबुधेन्द्रयतीद्रेभ्यो भार्याभिःसहितोमुदा ।
प्रतापरुद्रमत्तेभ पतिजित्वामहाहवे ।
आक्रम्योदयशैलाख्य दुर्गम् गजपतिप्रियम् ।
मठेनित्यान्नदानार्थम् रामचंद्रार्चनाय च ।
देवस्याखंडदीपार्थम् भूयसे श्रेयसेचनः ।
ग्रामम् बेळडोणेदेशे चिक्ककूळीति विश्रुतः ।
प्राच्याम् हौनिद्वेगे बोम्मनहाळम् यस्यदक्षिणे ।
खानापुर्म् प्रतीच्यांचहितीकोळिस्तथोत्तरे ।
देशेकूळूरु मोदरकल्ल द्वापरितः क्रमात् ।
चतुस्सिमासमायुक्तम् दिखारीभूमिस्त्युतम् ।
सहिरण्योदकम् धारापूर्वकम् दत्तवानमुदा ।

-Mysore Archaeological Report 1944.P.71

purposes of daily mass feeding, worship of Lord Rama and Deeparadhana.¹

This makes evident how great the honour was which the ruler of Vijayanagar did to Vibudhendra.

Name Of Shree Mutt

It is essential to dwell a little on the matter of names of the Mutts. There is ambiguity about the names of Mutts during Acharya's period and the periods before and after. As could be seen from the records of the Mutt, instead of the names of different Mutts appearing, only the respective names of predecessors and those of their predecessors find mention. There has been a mention as Shree Rayara Mutt in the records of Shree Mutt. Now the different Mutts have different types of names. Firstly they are veritably named after the respective founders or the celebrated pontiffs, either, or secondly after the places where they are established. The eight Mutts of Udupi, the two Mutts of Sathyatheertha and the Subrahmanya Mutt established by Acharya's younger brother Vishnutheertha have become popular by the names of their places. The Mutts established by Acharya's disciples and the Vyasaraaja Mutt and the original Mutt are known after the names of the founders and the celebrated saints. Silhouetted against this background, the name Uttaradi Mutt is at variance. This has given scope to climb this as the original Mutt. But there is absolutely no proof. It also defies logic. The main contention of their argument is that as the disciples of Acharya, Padmanabhatheertha and others belonged to north, the main Mutt acquired the name Uttaradi Mutt. But this name fails to suggest that this Mutt is the main Mutt. The claim that Padmanabhatheertha and others hailing from north themselves called their Mutt as Uttaradi Mutt is both unreal and unnatural. Even the Mutts of Acharyas of other sects do not have names based on such an absurd logic. Therefore, there is every reason to conclude that after Ramachandratheertha during the period of Vidyanidhi, branching out into a different Mutt this must have come to be called Uttaradi Mutt. One more reason can be adduced for this. As Vidyanidhitheertha, the founder of Uttaradi Mutt was a Taulava, it is but natural for him to have called the Mutt established by him as Uttaradi Mutt. Moreover, mainly because of the absence

of the names of such legendary saints like Vibudhendra, Vijayeendra, Raghavendra, Sumatheendra, Chandrikacharya in the tradition of this Mutt, it must have become popular as Uttaradi Mutt. All said, to claim that "Uttaradi Mutt is the main Mutt just because it has retained its name all along" is simply inappropriate. That apart, in course of time the trio, Vyasaraaja Mutt, Raghavendraswamy Mutt, Uttaradi Mutt becoming very popular began to grow in harmony. Great souls like Sumatheendra, Sugunendra through their magnanimity have exhibited their fraternity by helping Uttaradi Mutt come out of crises. It is everybody's wish to see it continue. Instead of squabbling over trifles like a name it is better to work towards achieving unity amongst Mutts. This is certain to greatly benefit the Madhwa society.

Jithamitratheertha (Sadharana of 1490 – Pramadecha of 1492)

Jithamitratheertha had the reputation of being a great scholar. He was a Shanubhoga and his name was Ananthappa prior to his sanyasa. Though he became a great scholar, may be owing to his past karma he was a block-head and was grazing cattle before sanyasa. For him the sacred thread did not mean any more than a mere thread. He thought it to be customary to wear it only during meals and used to hang it on a peg. Sri Vibudhendra came to the village Agnihalu near the confluence of the Krishna and the Bheema. He could not help laugh at the Shanubhoga's son Ananthappa for finding him in such a state, yet his heart filled with sympathy. The splendence steeped in Ananthappa could hardly escape the cognition of the intuitive swamiji. Pondering a while, he realised that Ananthappa was the most deserving and decided that he should be his successor. The swamiji smiling heartily beckoned Ananthappa who wore rough daubs of Gopichandana.

Swamiji: "Oh Ananthappa, what is this? Is this how you wear Mudra? You sport a bare neck!"

Ananthappa: "Sir, yes it is bare".

Swamiji: "Where is your sacred thread?"

Ananthappa: "Oh....that thread worn during meal, you mean? Sir, it is hung there".

Swamiji: (Laughing) "No, not worn only during meals. But always".

Ananthappa: "Sir, I will do so".

Swamiji: "Do you know how to perform Sandhyavandana?".

Ananthappa: "No Sir, please teach it".

Pleased by his devotion to guru, the swamiji preaching gurumantra, taught Sandhyavandana to him. Later giving him a Narasimha Saligrama, the swamiji fondly advised Ananthappa — "Have bath in the morning as soon as you get up, perform Sandhyavandana as taught by me, have this Saligrama placed in a plate and perform ablution with water. Then worship it with petals of Tulsi, feed it with rice before you have your meals, and leave for your work afterwards. By the time I visit again, you should have learnt to feed the God". The heartfelt blessings of the Jnani who was a devout worshipper of Lord Narasimha were not without fruition. After this, the swamiji proceeded on his tour.

The very next day Ananthappa began his routine in accordance with the instructions of the swamiji. All went on well till things came to sacred offer. Ananthappa invoked God offering rice to Saligrama. The Saligrama did remain the same stone. The unrelenting Ananthappa insisted using such soothing words as a mother would to cajole her child. Yet he did not succeed. At last Ananthappa got angry. Unlike others, he had not thought it to be a mere Saligrama. He felt it to be like one sitting adamantly refusing food out of anger. Immediately picking up a boulder he stood up and threatened saying "Narasimha, if you disappoint me by refusing to eat, this boulder will drop on my head and I will die".

It looked as if the effect of the curse of past life of Ananthappa known to be Rudramsha, was over. It is therefore, the open in the Narasimha Saligrama worshipped by Rudra widened. Ananthappa neither got frightened nor surprised at this. Instead he was overjoyed. Immediately he fed the Saligrama with all the rice in the vessel. It was incredible for the members of the family. They thought that it was unbelievable and did not give much credence to it.

From next day onwards Ananthappa was agog with his routine. He would get up early in the morning, have a bath, perform Sandhyavandana in great devotion, occupy himself for long performing ablution of Narasimha Saligrama. Than he would feed the Lord with a vesselful of rice. Other mundane aspects did not interest him. He was always immersed in the thought of Lord

Narasimha. Everybody began admiring the divine powers of Vibudhendratheertha which brought revolutionary changes in the life of Ananthappa driving him into a state of obsession with God. Things went on like this for sometime and in 1412 (A.D.1490), the swamiji arriving back got a village as gift from Krishnadevaraya, the ruler of Vijayanagar. Then he did not forget to meet Ananthappa. He was astonished to learn from Ananthappa about all that had happened. He expressed his eagerness to watch Ananthappa's method of worship of Lord Narasimha. In obedience, Ananthappa began his worship. Lord Narasimha who daily ate obligingly; did not, that day! Ananthappa exhausted all ways of prayer but to no avail. Ananthappa who was eagerly waiting for a long time for such an occasion was greatly disappointed over his not being able to bring before the eyes of his guru what routinely had been taking place. Feeling the hollowness of life, he was about to smash his head against the boulder and die. The swamiji was startled at this. But the beneficent Lord immediately opened His mouth. Ananthappa was exhilarated to feed the Saligrama as he would daily. The swamiji was bewildered. He developed great affection for Ananthappa. At a time when a different branch of the Mutt was taking shape and when Vibudhendra had decided to install a right person as his successor, his confidence in Ananthappa bloomed. Unhesitatingly, conferring sanyasa on Ananthappa in all ceremony, entrusting the Samsthana to him, Vibudhendra proceeded towards south where he attained eternal peace on the banks of the Tamraparni.

After sanyasa, Ananthappa was named **Jithamitra**. Jithamitra shone brilliantly as a scholarly seer. Even during such a time of religious pollution, people began looking upon him with great reverence influenced by his ascetic powers. Jithamitra was teaching his students under a gum tree on a mound between the Krishna and the Bheema rivers considered as sacred as Prayaga. Every day a Jangama used to attend his classes. The students were wondering who this Jangama was.

Once, when the Krishna was in spate, this Jangama spread a sash upon the water and reached his guru floating on it. The dismayed students realising the powers of their guru fell at his feet and begged for excuse. Once Jithamitra who had become immersed in teaching did not stir a little even when the Krishna was flooding. The students ran in panic. The flood submerged the entire mound.

It did not recede till seven days. Later the flood receded. The swamiji had sat totally absorbed in meditation. Really there was no sign of water having touched his body. The students were amazed at this. Again once the flooding Krishna flowed over him. When the flooding waters receded, the swamiji wasn't there to see. His devotees heard the oracular voice of the swamiji say that he had disappeared and the gum tree under which he sat should be worshipped and also there was no need for a separate Brindavan. Accordingly even now that gum tree only is being worshipped, and the devotees are also being blessed in their dreams. That spot is just fit for ascetics besides being conducive to solitary. History has it that Jithamitra was a Rudramsha. It is said that when Sri Susheelendratheertha Sreepada went there, he had the manifestation of Jithamitra in the form of a Bairagi at Sangameshwara temple there and that Bairagi disappeared into the sanctum sanctorum of Lord Eshwara. It may not be wrong to say that such a great soul has ennobled the tradition of Mahasamsthana.

सप्तरात्रम् कृष्णवेण्यां उषित्वा पुनरुत्थितं ।
जितामित्रगुरुं वंदे विबुधेन्द्रं करोद्भवम् ॥

Raghunandanatheertha (1492 – 1504)

Ramachandracharya was the name of Raghunandanatheertha in his poorvashrama. There are sufficient grounds to presume that he was in Vijanagar kingdom only. After taking sanyasa from jithamitra, he was named **Raghunandanatheertha**. Raghunandana who knew about the extraordinary powers of his guru and paramaguru and the great tradition of Mahasamsthana deemed it a great fortune to have got sanyasashrama. But he was deeply worried about not being able to worship Sri Moolarama, the idol which the very Lord himself had worshipped. He did not know what to do about this. Himself, a name sake of Lord Rama, Raghunandanatheertha resolved to have it restored somehow. He had learnt what kind of adroitness was exhibited by Naraharitheertha, one of those in the vanguard of tradition, in getting the idols. He had heard what kind of confidence his paramaguru Vibudhendratheertha enjoyed from his guru. Such being the case, he was pained at the idols being unavailable. He felt that his guru too must have felt sad for not

worshipping the idols. He was convinced of the impossibility of recovering the idols through legitimate means from those who were so shorn of compunction unabashed in their tenacity to usurpedly sow the seeds of separate tradition. He felt that it was not unfair to recover the idols by means of pranks. While they had taken them into their possession by unfair means, he determined to get them back through similar means only. He discussed this decision with his confidants. One Chandra Bhatta of them belonging to 'Ashwe' Bada family of Athreyasa gothra assured to carry out this great task. Getting permission from the swamiji and being blessed with Mantrakshate, he went to the other Mutt where he gained proximity to be personally serving the swamiji of that Mutt. Thus he stayed there for a long time. Thereafter on the night of Ekadashi of Karthika Shuddha in Anandanama Samvatsara, as the idols of Sri MoolaSeethaRama had been kept in the open unlocked, Chandra Bhatta took possession of the idol of Moolarama and left Bankapura village, the camp of the swamiji of other Mutt. From there he came to Penugonda where Raghunandanatheertha had camped and handed over the idol to him. He pleaded that he could not bring the idol of Goddess Seetha. Deriving consolation from the fact that the consort Goddess Ramadevi who is in eternal union with the Lord resides in Rama's heart, the swamiji worshipped the idol of Moolarama in all gaiety and piety. Heaving a sigh of relief about repossessing the idol of Moolarama, "This is the day of great fulfilment and relief for me"; was how the swamiji's voice reverberated with immense happiness. Greatly honouring Bada Chandra Bhatta besides munificently rewarding him with pecuniary largesse¹, the swamiji set off towards south instructing his disciples to give Chandra Bhatta a respectable position in the Mutt. Touring for a brief period, the swamiji reached Pampakshetra (Hampi), the capital of Vijayanagar and reached his eternal abode near Chakratheertha there. The fame of Raghunandanatheertha whose deeds, the ardent followers of the Mutt must always remember, reached the acme of immortality.

1 अन्धैरपहृतामर्चाम् रामस्य रघुनन्दनः ।
आजहार पुनर्मौल्यात् श्री सुरेंद्रगुरोर्गुरुः ॥

परैरपहृता मूलरामार्चा गुर्वनुग्रहात् ।
येनानीता नमस्तस्मै रघुनन्दनभिक्षवे ॥

Surendratheertha (1504 - 1575)

Venkatakrishnacharya after taking sanyasa from Raghunandana theertha took charge of Mahasamsthana along with the idol of Sri Moolarama. Thus he well deserved his name **Surendratheertha**. A great scholar so absolutely renounced as he was, Surendratheertha held the reins of administration of the Mutt for nearly seventy years. In the course of his vow of fast, he went round the country thrice.¹ Once when he was on his tour round the country he had blessed Bada Chandra Bhatta who restored to the Mutt the idol of Moolarama during his guru Raghunandanatheertha's period at sunrise on no moon light day of Magha Bahula at Prayaga with administration and other honorary awards and had the copper inscriptions so written. Proceeding from there, and after completing several pilgrimage tours, the swamiji came to Vijayanagar in A.D.1513 and set his camp on the southern side of Vijayavitthala temple. Then Ramaraya, the grandfather of Aliya Ramaraya was enjoying preponderance in the state. He extended his hearty welcome and hospitality to swamiji. The delighted swamiji blessed him. Sri Ramanavami was then just a few days away. Mahabhisheka was to take place at the Mutt. Ramaraya who learnt about this approached swamiji and requested with due reverence "I understand that Mahabhisheka is to happen in the Mutt. This is my great fortune. Your Holiness should grace an ordinary mortal like me with the great opportunity of doing such rare service. Your Holiness must celebrate SriRamanavami here only. Let the prosperity and wealth swell in this empire of Karnataka through Mahabhisheka of Moolarama. This is all I beseech swamiji to bless". Pausing for a moment, the swamiji consented. The swamiji thought that it is appropriate to perform Mahabhisheka of Moolarama in the precincts of Vijayavitthala at Pampakshetra the sacred land of Hanumantha on the banks of Tungabhadra popular as Kishkindhapattana for three yugas.

The preparations for Ramanavami went on hurriedly and in all

1 यश्चकारोपवासेन त्रिवारम् भूप्रदक्षिणम् ।
त्रिवारमुपवासेन भूप्रदक्षिणं कारिणाम् सुरेंद्रयोगिनाम्

-Arc.Report 1944, P.139.

pageantry. A beautiful green pandal was soon in place in front of the Mutt near the southern entrance of Vijayavitthala temple. Invitations were sent to scholars, intellectuals and officials. On the day of Ramanavami, Mahabhishekotsava went on in pomp and gaiety. Beholding this, Ramaraya was immersed in divine bliss. He was vibrant with boundless joy. He became speechless with his voice choked. Something struck him. Immediately he sent for holy water and gifted the following villages to the swamiji in adherence to rituals in the name of Lord Krishna.

*1. A village by name Anehosur in Modagallu region along with the Mutt situated in Mayura region (he once again gifted this which was already gifted to Vibudhendratheertha).

*2. Lepageiri in Koppala region.

*3. Shirugapura in Gangavathi region.

*4. Mallapura in Kushthagi region.

*5. Honnamatti in Kushthagi region.

*6. Herakallu in Tekkalakote region (banks of Tungabhadra).

*7. Tholali in Lakshmeeshwara region (banks of Tungabhadra).

*8. Kammarakatte of Mallur in Basavapatna region.

*9. Chikkamorate of Rettehalli region on the banks of Kumudvathi.

The whole gathering wonderstruck at the wisdom of the king in offering the gift so magnanimously to the right person greatly admired him. — "Why such great gifts for me?" asked swamiji. "Your Holiness, it is not for you but for my good." "It is alright. Whatever given to coffer of Raghupathi will not be without fruit. The benefit to you will be many fold". So saying, swamiji blessed him.

After a brief stay there, the swamiji continued his tour. The swamiji was a great ascetic, an ocean of knowledge, a worshipper through his inner soul. His routine circumscribed the philosophy that "conduct itself is the divine pilgrimage, expression – the chant of Lord Hari's name, waters drunk – ablution, the daily feeding of the stomach – oblation". Wherever he saw groves verdant with fruits and flowers, he just used to dedicate them to the Almighty. So, in all moments he was in Divine rapture.

*. Mysore Arc.Report 144.p.92 - 103

A paragon of Madhwa philosophy Vyasaraaja, one among the triumvirate of Munis who knew the ascetic powers of swamiji was hearty and highly hospitable towards him.

Once a very astounding incident occurred. The disciples of Vyasaraaja brought Tulsi as usual. When Vyasayogi was about to begin his pooja, he sent for those who had brought the Tulsi.

“Why have you brought the Tulsi once used?” he asked.

“No your Holiness, we had gone to the outskirts to pluck them”, the reply came.

Vyasaraaja insisted that it was a used one. “Oh! Surendra who accomplishes the rarest divine feat of worshipping through his inner soul is very much here. He has already dedicated the entire garden of Tulsi to Lord Hari! Ah! Meeting such a divine soul itself is a great fortune!” so feeling, he hastened to finish his pooja. He set off with all regalia accompanied by a band of musicians¹ to the outskirts to meet Surendratheertha camping in the Tulsi garden and entreated him to visit his city. The noblest among the emperors of Karnataka Krishnadevaraya who was the main disciple of Vyasayogi awestruck by the way his esteem guru entreating, was filled with divine enthusiasm. Prostrating before Surendratheertha, he stood with his hands clasped and prayed – “It is the greatest fortune of my life to have had a darshan of your Holiness being revered by my guru. Please bless this mortal being with your visit. I am not that competent to persist”.

Surendratheertha also had the wish to seek the blessings of Virupaksha, Vijayavittala and meet Vyasaraaja at Vijayanagar where he had earlier celebrated the festivities of Ramanavami. Therefore, he readily and happily accepted the invitation and heartily embraced Vyasaraaja. It was a grand spectacle. The gathering which considered it the grand union of Lord Varaha and Lord Srinivasa was delighted. The swamiji entered the city in all processional gaiety.

The city of bounty that bewildered the foreigners! The emperor so unrivalled, who conquered the kings of Bahamani and Kalinga! The jagadguru Chandrikacharya, a treasure of knowledge infinitely

1 तुंगभद्रानदीतीरे दृष्ट्वोद्यानमनुत्तमम् ।
स्नात्वा नद्याम् वनेरामम् पूजयन्द्दक्षिणपूर्वकम् ।।

vast and profound who had established learning centres throughout India and had become at Vijanagar university a nucleus of all these, the chief mentor of ten thousand students, and a team of twenty four Madhwa saints beginning from Keshava, Narayana and others!! Sri Surendratheertha visiting to be honoured by the nobility of such a kind!! It is exciting to imagine such glory.

Sri Vyasaraaja had the swamiji stay in his Mutt. Then the king meeting Vyasaraaja in solitude prayed “Your Holiness, who this yogivarenya is? Please tell me about him. I look upon you as an ascetic extraordinaire. To have been treated so venerably by you yourself, I wonder who this great soul should be!!”.

Vyasayogi of charismatic personality smiled his reply. “King Krishnadeva, it is natural for you to be so curious. This sacred soul is the pontiff of the main Mutt of Sri Madhwacharya; one who worships the lotus feet of Moolarama; greatly learned; erudite scholar; ascetic of great attainment; one who worships through his inner soul, a manner so unique and sterling. One who has circumambulated the country thrice on a fasting vow. Through the fruits of your noble deeds you have had him come here. This brings about the well being of your state and its subjects. You are very fortunate”.

The king had boundless joy. “Isn’t this a rare opportunity of mine, the result of my surrendering at the feet of uniquely illumining Vyasayogi! Whenever one aspires to have a company, it should be of nobles. I am greatly ennobled as Lord Venkatesha has placed me in the midst of such very sacred souls” was how he exhilarated.¹

Rajaguru Vyasaraaja Jagadguru had the swamiji stay there for a long time as his honoured guest. The coming together of this duo of immense learning was a magnificent event. Vyasaraaja, after finishing morning Ahneeka would go to vidyapeetha to teach lessons from Sudha and other great books to Vadiraja, Vishnutheertha, Narayanatheertha and other yathis. Surendratheertha sitting in their company would enjoy listening to the discourse. The profound scholarship and the radiating countenance of Vishnutheertha from among the disciples aroused a kind of affinity for him in Surendratheertha. Further in the afternoon the pooja by the duo

1 विजयीन्द्रविजयम्

used to go on with pomp and devotion. The sea of devotees witnessing the rituals would remain immersed in bliss that is simply inexplicable. In the evening both the swamiji accompanied by the king would visit the temples of Virupaksha and Vijayavittala and return after performing Mangalarathi. Thus those days so fled there as the days would in heaven.

One day Vyasaraaja pleaded with Surendratheertha, "Today you should accept my offering".

The swamiji replied with a smile – "I have had your offer daily. What else! You are a king, king's mentor! , would a day pass without your patronage for me?"

"Not that, today my plea should be honoured".

"Alright, to see Gopalakrishna honouring Moolarama is my great fortune".

The preparations on the day went on under the stewardship of Vyasaraaja. The King Krishnadevaraya stood with his hands folded. Nobody knew the secret of this special occasion. Vyasaraaja had special affection for Vishnutheertha amongst his disciples. He treated him as his son. Little did Vishnutheertha know about the purpose of the occasion. He had the orders of his guru to stay prepared there and that his studies could be pursued the day after. Abiding by the instructions, Vishnutheertha remained with his guru.

Both the swamijis finished their pooja. As Surendratheertha was the guest on the occasion, Vyasaraaja before Hastodaka beckoned Vishnutheertha and placing his hands on those of Surendratheertha said '**Krishnarpana**' pouring the holy water symbolically. It all happened dramatically. Nobody could understand what it actually connoted. It was bewildering for all to see Vyasayogi thus gifting Vishnutheertha who was like his very soul to Surendratheertha. Though Vishnutheertha felt that the whole sky came crashing on his head when his guru estranged him in such a way, he was very much surprised unable to understand the secret behind it. Surendratheertha felt that as though he was in an incognitable world undergoing spiritual experience. It sent ripples of whispers in surprise amongst the gathering. As calm setting, Vyasaraaja smilingly said in his majestic voice – "Learned Surendratheertha, this may appear strange to you. But this is not that surprising. This belongs to you. He is fortunate to have been born to hold the reins of

Mahasamsthana. So far I have carefully fostered him. Among my disciples, nobody is so illumining, competent in debating, intelligent, scholarly and talented. He is my most favourite disciple. Such noble qualities conspicuous in him are not the mere results of his deeds in this birth. He is shining like this today as a result of being illustrious and the main force behind Mahasamsthana in his earlier birth also. It may not be exaggeration to say that he had to take birth now mainly for performing pooja of Moolarama. His disciple too was so learned. I too have great longing to worship Moolarama. Let me wait, if He so wills I may find myself in your tradition in my next birth. Please accept him".¹

The swamiji was immensely delighted. He had always great affection for Vishnutheertha. Particularly now he felt that he had had the best that he could ever.² Considering that it was the blessings of Lord Hari, he accepted Vishnutheertha. Seeing this strange gift, those who had gathered on the occasion were astounded. "The prophesiers have come together now. Who knows its secret! Today we are rid of the heap of our sins. To have had the darshan of such super human form is our fortune" was how they felt amidst shouts of joy.

On the one hand Vishnutheertha was sad that he had to part with the company of his guru. On the other he was happy that his guru had blessed him with the opportunity of ascending the throne of Mahasamsthana which paved way for his daily worship of Moolarama, a great fortune indeed! Yet on the other side great veneration for an ascetic soul like Surendratheertha for having him as his spiritual guide which all together choked his voice to dumbness. Shrugging that all had happened as ordained by Lord Hari, he silently obeyed the orders of Vyasaraaja.

1 विष्णुतीर्थकरम् गृह्यसुरेंद्रस्य करे ददौ ।
ददामि मत्सुतम् तुभ्यम् स्वीकुरुष्व यतिव्रत ।
परिपालयत्वम् हंस त्वदर्थम् स्थापितोमया ।
शिष्येत्वेतेषु सर्वेषु नानेन सद्रूपोमम ।
इत्युक्त्वाप्रददौव्यासः सुरेंद्राय सुतंमुदा । - श्रीवादिराजयतिविरशिश्य श्रीमञ्जकवि विरचितः विजयीद्र विजय
ವಿಜಯೇಂದ್ರನಕರುಣಿಸಿ ಮಠವನ್ನು ದ್ವರಿಸಿದಕಾರಣಾ । ಗುರುವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರೇ ಪಠಮ ಗುರುಗಳು ಪ್ರರಂದರ
ವಿಠಲನೇ ಪಠದೈವಕಾಣಿರೋ ।

2 विजयीद्रसुतीर्थे शिष्ये स्निग्धकरायच ।

-Mysore Archaeological Report 1944.P.79

Thereafter, the swamiji got his disciple Vishnutheertha change the holy sceptre in adherence to rituals, administered the Mantras and initiated him into his tradition. It was there where the swamiji coronated Vishnutheertha in his Samsthana and gave him the idol of Moolarama on the same day for his worship and renamed him 'Vijayeendra'.¹

It was a rare benefit for Surendra to have had Vijayeendra. It was like coming to possess the very Kamadhenu. He thought that it was the benign effects of the noble deeds of his guru, the fruits of his own good acts. Surendra felt that he had unburdened himself from an onerous responsibility. After placing Vijayeendra in charge of the affairs of the Mutt, he spent his time performing poojas, Ahneeka, Japa, teaching and holding discourses. Administration of the Mutt, successful debates with the rivals became the main tasks of Vijayeendra. The swamiji with his disciples went on a southern tour. Cholamandala and Tundeeramandala abounded in agraharas full of scholars engaged in imparting Vedas, students and in particular thickly inhabited by scholars in the four shastras. Debates were taking place wherever they went. Surendra was marvelled at Vijayeendra's debating style well in congruity with **Vyasathraya**. Nobody dared face the spate of words like that of the Ganges flooding from Vjayeendra. He was crowned with victory everywhere.

Surendratheertha got aged. He realised that his last days were nearing. In order to have his tradition continue unhindered after Vijayeendratheertha who was into his tradition from the other Mutt, he got sanyasa bestowed on one Narayanacharya, a very young bachelor in Shalivahana Samvatsara 1497 (A.D.1575), renamed him as **Sudheendratheertha** and entrusted him to Vijayeendra.²

1 गृहीत्वा तं मुनिम् हंसो विष्णुतीर्थम् सुरेंद्रकः ।
सुरेंद्रस्तस्य प्रददौ भिक्षोर्दंडकमंडलम् ।
दत्त्वा श्रीमूलरामार्चाम् विद्याराज्येभिषिच्यतम् ।
मंत्रम् दत्त्वा स्ववंशस्य कर्तारम् कृतवान् मुनिः ।
अथासौ विष्णुतीर्थश्च विजयीदिति विश्रुतः ।

- वि वि

व्यासदेशिकसंप्राप्त पारित्राज्य सदागमम् ।
स्वीचकार सुरेंद्रायो विजयीद्रम् ततःसुतम् ।

- अर्चागतिक्रमः

2 सुरेंद्रः संप्रदायाप्त न्यासविच्छेदभीरुतः ।
सुधीद्रम् न्यासयित्वातम् विजयीद्रं करेददौ ।

- अर्चागतिक्रमः

Afterwards he reached a village Perukonda on his tour. Jeevappanayaka of Tanjavor, a ruler under the Vijayanagar empire in whom the series of successful southern missions of Surendratheertha had aroused reverence for him implored Srirangaraya, the Vijayanagar king to give estates as gift to Surendratheertha. Acceding to the request of his Mandalika, Srirangaraya came to Perukonda where Surendratheertha had set his camp and gifted two villages – Navalur (Ramachandrapura) and Pudukudi comprising fifty vrithis - in Tanjavor region of Cholamandala on the twelfth day (Prathama Dwadashi) of Ashada Shuddha of Yuva Samvatsara in 1497¹. Accepting the gift, the swamiji retained only seven vrithis for his Mutt and distributed² the rest among his followers who were scholars of Vedantha.³

From there he went to Cholamandala and attained the heavenly abode on the twelfth day of Pushya Shuddha of the same year at Madurai on the banks of the Vaigha.

यश्चकारोपवासेन त्रिवारं भूपदक्षिणम् ।
तस्मै नमो यतीन्द्राय श्रीसुरेंद्रतपस्विने ॥

Surendratheertha's ceaseless reign in the spiritual and traditional empire that spanned a long epoch making period of seventy years is most memorable in the annals of the history of the Mutt. Not only was he a great scholar himself, mystic but also had earned honour from the king of Vijayanagar and from Vyasaraja, a paragon of knowledge. It was during his time that the Mutt had many villages and estates as gifts and its reputation enhanced. Topping all, he got Vijayeendra, a priceless gem as his disciple. There can be no better contribution to the Mutt than this. Surendratheertha an aficionado of tradition with the resolve to facilitate the great tradition of the Mutt to go on incessantly picked up Sudheendra of a rare class selectively and entrusted him to Vijayeendra. One can speak aloud in unequivocal terms that the Mutt has been able to hoist its flag of fame aloft only because of this divine soul.

1. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944.P.78

2. Copper inscription

3. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944.P.80

Great Saints Of Mahasamsthana

Vijayeendratheertha (1575 – 1614)

In the philosophical world of India, Vijayeendra occupies a unique place. There is not even a single Madhwa who is not familiar with his name. All the devotees of Raghavendra do not fail to remember Vijayeendra while reciting Gurustotra. Even today his name in Madhwa Samsthana is brilliantly blazing like an eternal flame.

Even as a small boy Vitthalacharya was a great intellect. His birth was as sacred as that of his guru. After his thread ceremony his splendence began acquiring more and more lustre day by day. Guru Vyasamuni was overwhelmed by joy to see Vitthalacharya who came to pursue his education at the university of Vijayanagar, the origin of learning. He had Vitthalacharya as his close disciple and groomed him into a master of Vedavedanga, Nyaya, Ithihasa, Meemamsa and all other shastras. In the study of Vedantha, Vitthalacharya was a student of the first water. Convinced of the fact that Vitthalacharya only would be the right disciple to cherish his renown, Vyasaraaja bestowed sanyasashrama and renamed him Vishnutheertha. After acquiring mastery over all shastras, Vishnutheertha did a comprehensive study of 'Vyasathraya' comprising Chandrika, Nyayamrutha, Tarkathandava of Vyasaraaja. It was Vishnutheertha who would humble the debators coming to the university and the royal court of Krishnadevaraya those days. The series of teachings full of novelty which Vyasathraya comprised would make even scholars remain bemused and totally dumbfounded. Vyasaraaja would become overjoyed at the scholarship of his beloved disciple.¹

If universally acclaimed Vyasaraaja himself was Vishnutheertha's guru, Vadiraja who was a great intellect was his fellow student. Between them were unmatched scholarship and fast friendship. If it was the magnificent Vadiraja who strove for the good of Udupi Mutts, the most revered soul who brought laurels to the

1 षड्वारम् व्यासराजेंदु मुख्याच्छ्रुत्वा विशेषतः।
मध्वशास्त्रार्थसारं तु व्याचक्षणम् निजानुप्रति ।
नवकृत्वोन्यायसुधाम् व्यासतीर्थपयोनिधेः ।
उद्धृत्य पीतवंतं च नाकैद्रमिव सञ्चुतम् ।

Mahasamsthana of Sri Acharya was Vijayeendra. While one worshipped the lotus feet of Udupi Lord Krishna, the other worshipped that of Moolarama. To just imagine what that atmosphere was like is bloating and electrifying. Tears of joy would course down. Vishnutheertha of such unique traits became the head of the Mahasamsthana. It is he who became **Vijayeendra**. His name, just meaningful. Even now it is his name which is inspiring. When he was about to leave along with Surendratheertha after having been taught all the sixty four arts by Surendratheertha¹, Vyasaraaja beckoned him and advised him in solitude.

“Dear son, you are fortunate. The results of your noble deeds in your previous birth are what have led you to the throne of this Mahasamsthana. You have also been taught about sixty four arts. Now you need not have to learn anything. It is time for you now to ennoble your life. People repent about having failed to do their duty in life despite propitious condition in which they find themselves. Better be cautious right from now. There must be a strong reason for the noblest qualities both Badarayana and Acharya have blessed you with. Duly realising that, try to accomplish the greatest task befitting your stature. Prajnatheertha cherished carefully the great tradition inherited from Sanakadis against odds. When the wise and the righteous without a foothold of their own and unaware of the goals were agape, Vayu incarnated and blessed them with the awakening about the appropriate Shastras. Teekakritpada who had the amsha of Indra in him etched an easier path towards it. The Lord saw to it that I also contributed a bit of my service. Whatever remains to be done is your task. As Kritha, Tretha and other yugas were witnessing the very incarnation of the God, it did not occasion for anybody to contemplate on the establishment of Dharma. In Kaliyuga the Lord sent Acharya as his representative (angel). As we have come in his tradition, it is unambiguous that the onerous responsibility of establishing Dharma has fallen on our shoulders. Everything is Hari and Hari everything; even the time, it is only He who seems to have stipulated the auspicious occasion for such resuscitation of Dharma. This time should be considered appropriate for the resuscitation of Dharma having regard to the atmosphere that has become conducive as a concomitant of royal patronage,

1 चतुःषष्टिकलाविद्याजुषे विद्वन्महोजुषे ।
जयीन्द्रज्योतिषेकुर्याम् वंदानानियशोजुषे ।।

pleasant successes our endeavours have seen only through His magnanimity. The future would scarcely offer us such an opportunity. Therefore the likes of Vadiraja, Purandaradasa are seized of their tasks in different spheres. From a particular point of view, it may be said that your task ahead is much more than that of others.

Right from the beginning in the history of our philosophy, our Dharma centres upon Vishnu Bhakti. Acharya's very life was that. Now it is in the throes of decadence. In South, Appayya Dixit has been aggressively spreading Shaivism. Another sanyasi is also toeing his line. You only are competent to take them on. Therefore let that South be your bastion of crusade. Accomplish this task in the manner time and situation enjoin on you and dedicate it to Lord Hari. This is what you owe me as gurudakshina. Only this is what pleases your guru Surendratheertha. The task you carry out should be the guiding spirit for your successors. With your unique discernment in executing the tasks with perfect bearing on time and situation, I hardly find any reason to dwell on the details for you. You have the perennial divine support of Lord Gopalakrishna and Lord Moolarama". Thus Vyasaraaja invoked all kinds of success and prosperity on Vijayeendratheertha.

A new vigour permeated through Vijayeendra's entire body as he received advice from his guru. Absorbed in deep devotion, he prostrated before his guru and proceeded with Surendratheertha.

Surendratheertha during his final days got Sudheendra sanyasa through Vijayeendra and reached heavenly abode. Then Sudheendratheertha set off towards Vijayanagar with the permission of his guru.

Vijayeendra on his part went to Kumbhakonam as ordained by his guru. Kumbhakonam ruled by Mandalika of Tanjavoor under the control of the emperor of Vijayanagar was wealthy and prosperous. It was the home of renowned scholars. It had the reputation as Dakshina Kashi for education. Appayya Dixit the founder of Shaivadwaitha philosophy had settled there. A Veerashaiva pontiff "Emme Basava" who had gained the respect of Vijayanagar rulers had not only stayed in Kumbhakonam inflicting barbarism but also usurped the administration of Kumbheswara and other temples.

Vijayeendra entered the town. As Vaishnavaites did not have any patronage there, it was extremely difficult for the swamiji to find a place for his camp. The swamiji camped at a small temple, finished his bath and poojas, had his lunch, sent message to the Shaiva pontiff that he had come for a debate and if the pontiff was game may come out with a condition for the debate or else should confess to his defeat. All the Brahmins there were scared of the Shaiva pontiff. Nobody ever dared face him. Those Brahmins were very delighted to know that the swamiji had thrown such a gauntlet. But everyone was assailed by the doubt whether the swamiji could emerge victorious against his show of pedantry. Exuding overconfidence the Shaiva pontiff thought that the challenge was too small to care for. "Who it could be that has the grit to face me" and "I would in no time silence the swamiji" was how he flaunted. It was decided to have the debate. The condition that the loser should become the disciple of the winner was accepted. All the scholars of the town gathered. The disputation took off.

The Shaiva pontiff too was a good scholar. He began to substantiate his philosophy basing his tactful delineation on several Puranas and Shastras. The swamiji argued refuting all his delineations. The debate lasted eleven days. In the end the Shavaite sanyasi's line of argument failed to hold water and he was totally nonplussed. In terms of the precondition, he should have become swamiji's disciple. But that sanyasi did a moonlight flit. All the treasure and honours came to the possession of the swamiji. He had the Shaiva Mutt as his own. He took over the reins of Kumbheswara temple. The document recording the gift made in 1542 by the Vijayanagar rulers to Shaiva sanyasi also came into his possession.¹ Thus it turned out into an unprecedented victory.² There is an inscription on the slab of the mantap in the temple about the swamiji taking over the administration of Kumbheswara temple consequent on his victory over Shaiva guru.

1. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944, No. 23.

2. सकोणनिलये ग्रावग्रीवम् शैवम् जिगायच्च ।
तन्मठे ग्रावनिचये वासम् तत्र चकारसः ।। - वि. वि.

Aravidu dynasty of Vijayanagara By Rev Heras. P.552
Epigraphica Indica Vol.XIII P.346

जित्वा वादे वीरशैवगुरुम् विसृत्य तन्मठम् ।
अपहृत्येह संवासम् कृतवतम् सतांहितम् ।। - वि. स्तोत्रम्

The Nayak of Tanjavoor heard of the glory of Vijayeendra's victory. It also came to the knowledge of Aliya Ramaraja of Vijayanagar through Vitthalaraya who started off from there to Kanyakumari with his army in 1544. Ramaraja sent his messengers to request Vijayeendra to visit Vijayanagar. On his part, the swamiji was longing to have a darshan of the Brindavan of his guru Chandrikacharya. Therefore, assenting to the king's request, he proceeded. All along the route he went on defeating his rivals in debates. Ramaraya who was waiting in the outskirts of the town with all royal paraphernalia extended a grand levee to the swamiji. As the king prostrated, the swamiji enquired about his welfare. From there the swamiji seated in a gold palanquin entered the town with all pomp and music. The king led the procession on foot. The unending line of spectators enjoyed this feast to their eyes. As they had the divine darshan, the reverberating ovation rent the air.¹ The swamiji camped at Vijayavitthala temple. It is where the poojas and daily offerings to Moolarama were made. The king accorded royal hospitality to the swamiji. Next day the king actively involved himself in making special arrangements for extending hospitality to the swamiji personally. By the time the swamiji could finish his morning Ahneeka, the king called on the swamiji personally and requested him to visit his palace for padapooja. The swamiji came to the palace seated in the silver howdah carried by the caparisoned pachyderm. In the palace, the king performed the padapooja of the swamiji seated on the royal throne. Further the king performed the ceremony of showering gems on the swamiji in a highly devotional and grandiose manner.² This impressive scene conjured of the similar honour done to Chandrikacharya by Krishnadevaraya in the bygone days and the whole gathering lavished their praise. Remembering his guru, the swamiji owed all these to the blessings of his guru. The entire capital of Vijayanagar greatly revelled in the festivities. Next day the swamiji had the darshan of his guru's Brindavan situated on an island of the Tungabhadra near Anegondi and offering his hastodaka and dedicating all the honours to his guru returned to Vijayanagar. Being there for some time as the

1 चतुःषष्टि कलाविद्या पूर्णोयमितिर्वदिभिः ।
राजमार्गे घोषमाणम् श्रीमध्वमतवर्धनम् ।।

- वि. स्तोत्रम्

2 विद्वद्रोस्माद्विजयीन्द्रयोगी विद्यामुद्दृद्यास्यतुलप्रतापः ।
रत्नभिषेकम् किलरामराजात् प्राप्यग्रलक्ष्मीनकृताग्रहारान्

-रा.वि. २२१

honoured guest of the king, he apprised the king of his intention to proceed to Kumbhakonam as he was impelled by the orders of his guru to pursue the task of achieving series of victories in disputations which he considered was quite stupendous. Hearing this news, the king felt very sad, but bid him farewell with all honours. Instead of setting off directly to Kumbhakonam, the swamiji proceeded to North to go round pilgrimage centres such as the Ganges and other holy places all over India. Proceeding further he toured all over South, Andhra and Karnataka. Wherever he went, he humbled the debators who were scholars in Meemamsa, Nyaya, Vyakarana, Jyothisha, Sahitya, Ayurveda and other subjects. Startled by the invincibility of the swamiji, the experts in witchcraft and sorcery stood baffled. Thus the swamiji established his ubiquitous pre eminence in the multitude of subjects.¹

The swamiji through series of successes in debates on his nationwide tour reached Kumbhakonam. By then the renown of Appayya Dixit had spread all over there. Not only had he attained mastery over all the Shastras, but also had authored excellent books. He had an extraordinary intellect. Through his unique scholarship, he had earned great honour from many kings such as Venkatapathiraya I of Vijayanagar, Chinnathimma, Chinnabomma the Nayak of Vellore, Shevappanayaka, Achyuthappanayaka. Under the patronage of these kings, he wrote books like Kunalayananda, Yadavabhyudaya Vyakhya, Shivarkamani Deepika.² Moreover he had expertise in sixty two arts. To top it all, he established Shaivadwaita, a new philosophy by itself. It is he who exhibited his genius in drawing an analogy between the Adwaita philosophy advocating Jeeva Brahma Aikya and Shivasarvothamatva. Vijayeendratheertha had to confront such a debator. One day, the swamiji invited Dixit to the Mutt for this purpose. Dixit had already heard of the swamiji's feat of outwitting the Veerashaiva guru and the honour the king did of showering gems on him. Readily

1 चचार पृथिवीम् सर्वाम् सिंहःशुद्धमृगेष्विव ।
शास्त्रज्ञा माकतांप्राप्ताः जयीन्द्रपुरतस्तदा ।
ब्राह्मणानजयत्सर्वास्तर्कमीमांसवादकान् ।
दिवज्ञान् भिषजोभट्टान् मायिनश्चास्त्रपारगान् ।
येये जना वेद्यविद्यास्तेते तेन विनिर्जिताः ।
सवान् विजित्य सर्वत्र चचार पवनोयथा ।

- वि.वि

2. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944. No. 26.

consenting to swamiji's invitation, Dixit came to the Mutt accompanied by his disciples. The swamiji welcomed him with due honours. The very exchange of pleasantries were studded with mutual epigrams as if to gauge their respective skills.

Dixit : (Smilingly) I am delighted to meet swamiji, I feel blinded by my meeting the Dhwanta (as the letter 'Dhwa' appears at the end of the word Madhwa).

Swamiji: For those Arthas (Sma + Artha) sweltering under 'Madhwa Surya', darkness only is the choice.

This paved way for some acquaintance between them. Realising that outwitting Dixit was not as easy as outwitting others, the swamiji forged friendship with him. They were meeting daily. Every word gave rise to debates. Well groomed by his guru Saint Vyasa, the swamiji was absolutely infallible. Mutual criticism went on in good humour. Earlier discard had developed in a disputation between Dixit and his contemporary Thathacharya, an eminent scholar in Visisthadwaitha. But the debate between the swamiji and Dixit was cordial and humorous. Once Dixit read before the swamiji the books "Madhwantra Mukha Mardana" and "Madhwamatha Vidhwamsana" he had written. The swamiji listened to the end silently nodding his head. Dixit reciting **तथाप्यानंदतीर्थीयं मतमग्राहमेवनः । यत्र वैदिकमर्यादा भूयास्याकुलुतां गता ॥** asked whether it was acceptable to him. Replying, the swamiji said "It would be acceptable if one 'Anuswara' is expurgated." Only Dixit understood the hidden meaning of this.¹ Dazed Dixit digressed from the topic unable to find a reply.

Thus debates persisted. Dixit was not acquainted with Akarshana, Uchatana – only the two of sixty four arts. The swamiji, expert in all the arts and who knew of this lacuna of Dixit, through his feat of Akarshana used to secure Dixit's critical works on Madhwa philosophy from his house, append his counter criticisms infra and again through the feat of Uchatana used to get them placed safely where they were. This would make Dixit wring his hands in desperation. In his desperate bid to have his way to victory he hit upon the venture of outperforming the swamiji at least in literature, if not in Vedantha. He apprised the swamiji of his intention through a rhyming hymn **अस्त्यरण्यं तरण्यंघ्नि सरण्यंतर्भिपादपं ॥** Swamiji's

1. If the Anuswara in the word **तीर्थीयं** is deleted, it means "As my Adwaitha philosophy does not conform to Shrutis, it is not acceptable to me".

repartee **दरीसुप्त झरीदत्त परीरंभ सरीसृपम् ॥** Was excellently resonant. The composition of swamiji with one more rhyming word excelled the composition of Dixit.

Dixit: "Your composition does contain one more rhyme than mine. I am delighted. It is really worth that you have your name as Vijayeendra. Anyhow you are a sanyasi. Let me pay you my obeisance".

Swamiji : "I do not accept your obeisance".

Dixit : "If so, would you return it?"

Swamiji : "Is it fair to take back a thing once given?"

Dixit remains silent. Bhattoji Dixit, an eminent grammarian was also a contemporary of the swamiji. Learning about swamiji's profound intellect from Appayya Dixit, he wrote "Tattvakousthubha", a critique on Madhwa philosophy and sent it to the swamiji. Immediately the swamiji sent his reply to it. On another occasion, Appayya Dixit, the founder of Shaivadwaitha philosophy vowing to demonstratively bring out the meaning 'Shiva' from any word whether in spiritual or material world, was almost on way to success when he was badgered with the word **Narayana** for which he could not thrash out the meaning 'Shiva'. Despaired of the evading success, he exclaimed **णत्वं परं बाधते । (णत्वं बाधिकिंरिदि)** meaning the letter **ण** in the word **नारायण** is very pestering. Ultimately he resorted to the syllogistic proposition that as Shiva is the husband of Narayani (Parvathi), Shiva is Narayana.

On hearing such a conclusion, the swamiji said in all witticism, "If that were so, a king who is the husband of Mahishi (Queen) should in perfect etymological parallel become Mahisha (He Buffalo)". Later he wrote a book titled "Narayana Shabdārtha Nirvachana".

The swamiji besides establishing his wins in series of debates, wrote one hundred and four books. Most of them are in the form of reply to the works of Dixit.¹

1 चकार बहुसंख्याकान् ग्रंथानप्ययदीक्षितः । तान्जिगाय यतिश्रेष्ठः स्वयम् ग्रंथान् चकारह । वादार्थभेद तत्त्वार्थ पूर्णान् सर्वत्र विश्रुतान् । विजयीन्द्रकृतैः ग्रंथैस्तत् ग्रंथास्ते निराकृताः । - वि.वि दुर्वाद्यप्ययचित ग्रंथारण्य विनष्टये । चतुस्संख्याधिकशतग्रंथादीनाम् प्रचोदकम् ।। -वि.स्तोत्रम् चातुर्यैकाकृतियश्चतुरधिकशतग्रंथरत्नप्रणेता- धूतारातिप्रबंधस्पुटविदित चतुष्पष्टि विद्या विशेषः । सोयम् नः श्रीसुरेंद्रव्रतिवर्तनयोद्वैतशैवासहिष्णुः पुष्पातु श्रीजयोद्वैतस्त्रिभुवनविदितस्सर्वतंत्रस्वतंत्रः ।। -गुस्तुणस्तवनम्

Among them, even the names of many books are not known. Lately some of the books are available through the pains taken by scholars. Appended below are a few known books among them.

1. Nyayamrutha Gurvamoda
2. Nyayadhwa Deepika
3. Nyayamrutha Nyayarathnamala
4. Nyayamoukthikamala
5. Nyayamala (Chandrikavyakhya)
6. Nyayachampakamala (Nayachampakamala)
7. Nyayamruthodahruitha Jaimineeya Nyayamala
8. Nayanamanjaree
9. Nayamukurah
10. Vaadamalika
11. Vagvaikharee
12. Shruthitaparya Koumudee
13. Shruthyarthasarah
14. Thureeya Shivakhandanam
15. Bhedavidyavilasah
16. Paratattvaparakashika
17. Upasamharavijayah
18. Madhwadhvakantakodddharah
19. Chakrameemamsa
20. Adhikaranamala
21. Shaivasarvasvakhandanam
22. Appayyakapolachapetika
23. Brahmasootra Nyayasangraha
24. Pramanapaddhathiviyakhya
25. Ramanujamathareethya Sootrartah
26. Pramanalakshanateekavyakhya
27. Kathalakshanateekavyakhya
28. Tattvasankhyanateekavyakhya
29. Tattvodyathagoodhabhavaprakashah
30. Vishnutattvanirnayateeka
31. Madhwasiddhanthasarodharah
32. Sarvasiddhanthasaraasaravivekah
33. Siddhanthasaraasaravivechanam
34. Yukthirathnakarah (Tarkathandavavyakhya)
35. Pranavadarpanakhandanam
36. Sanmargadeepika

37. Padarthasangraha
38. Chandrikodahrutha Nyayavivaranam
39. Narayanashabdārtha Nirvachanam
40. Pishtapashumeemamsa
41. Adwaitashiksha
42. Virodhodddharah

Following books are at other places

Stotragranthas

43. Narasimhastutih
44. Papavimochanastotram

Books on Kavyanataka (Poetrydrama)

45. Vyasara javijayah
46. Subhadra Dhananjayah

Books unavailable but only names are known

- 1-5. Commentary on the remaining five prakaranas
6. Tattvamanikyapetika*
7. Nyayavivaranatippini
8. Anubhashyatippini
9. Tattvaparakashikatippini
- 10-19. Dashopanishadvyakhyanas
20. Nyayadeepikatippini
21. Parameyadeepikatippini
22. Anandataratamyavadarthah
23. Meemasanyayakoumudee¹
24. Bhedachintamani (Bhedakalpataru)
25. Bhedakusumanjali
26. Bhedaprabha (Bhedarathnaprabha)
27. Bhedaagamasudhakarrah
28. Kuchodyakutharah
29. Lingamoolanveshanakhandanam²
30. Ubhayagrasta Rahodayah (Play)

The swamiji had extraordinary intellect. Inimitable versatility in narration, unusual cogence in corroboration, fascinating style are conspicuous by themselves in each of his works. Sri Raghavendra

* This book which has been found, is in the library of Parimala Vidyamandira now.

1. This book has been found
2. This book has been found

swamiji in his own works advises with all due reverence to refer to sri Vijayeendra's Nyayamoukthikamala and other books to get wider and more profound knowledge of certain important aspects

(विस्तरस्तु गुरुपादकृत न्यायमौक्तिकमालायां दृष्टव्यः ।)

The swamiji has greatly enriched Dasasahitya with his excellent compositions of Devaranamas in Kannada also.

The swamiji's expertise in all the sixty four arts is marvellous. Miracles such as Parakaya Pravesha, Akarshana, Uchatana, Jalastambha, Agnistambha, etc are included in the sixty four arts. These are not great accomplishments for such great souls who had manifestation of God through the bond of their deep devotion. For ordinary souls like us even a small feat of magic and simple pranks of a snake charmer may appear wonderful. The changes brought about by the cycle of time and decadence having taken its own course have made people not only incapable of such acts but also go to the extent of calling them far from true. This only vindicates their ignorance, but not culture, education.

It is not proper to dilate on their accomplishment in the eight vital areas such as Anima, etc and also sixty four arts while citing the example of erudite scholarship of extraordinary souls. But it becomes necessary to emphasise that who ever tried to test the swamiji in different arts with malicious intentions was miserably defeated and they prostrated before him in absolute surrender.

In South the number of technically skilled persons had swelled. Each of them began to test the swamiji. If not to prove his mettle, but to prove that the Madhwah had achieved expertise in all the Shastras, the swamiji displayed his versatility in arts. The potter, blacksmith, cobbler, weaver and others realising that the swamiji was familiar with the secret of their respective arts felt ashamed and begged his excuse prostrating before him. They were awarded with cash according to their merits. Musicians were bewildered at swamiji's excellence in music. Thus not one or two, but in all the fields of knowledge, the swamiji displayed his extraordinary scholarship. Once a debator came to the swamiji in a palanquin that had nobody to carry but flew in the air. In an act of rebuttal, the swamiji spreading his sash on a dwarf wall nearby sat on it. The wall moving on its own stood before the debator. The swamiji won in the debate that followed.

If it is ventured to go on writing about the plethora of such bewildering acts of swamiji, that itself will turn out to be a voluminous work. For those who had already acquainted with swamiji's erudite scholarship and his unique accomplishment in the form of knowledge of the present, past and the future, it is not proper to elaborate on such trivial aspects.

Thus Vijayeendratheertha's renown as a versatile scholar spread to every nook and corner of the country. In 1577, Jeevappanayaka gifted Aravilimangalam, a rich and prosperous village¹. Again in 1580, the same Jeevappanayaka with all due honours to the swamiji gifted Kokyuru, Gulluru, Pallam and Raghupakaple, the four villages of Sheerunadu in the state of Mayura on the day of Pournima of Karthika Shuddha in Chandroparaga Parvakala.² Apart from these, in the copper inscription gifted by him, it is recorded that the scholarly trio of Vijayeendratheertha, Appayya Dixit and Thathacharya adored his royal court as brilliantly shining pole stars.³

Chinnajevappa, younger brother of Jeevappanayaka also was an ardent devotee of the swamiji. He used to stay at Kumbhakonam as a disciple of the swamiji. He also gifted to Vijayeendratheertha some lands which yielded luxuriant crop of paddy at Tanjavoor and two Veli villages on the banks of the cauvery in Kumbhakonam on the day of Ramanavami in Anandanama Samvatsara during Mahabhisheka festivity of Moolarama.⁴

Thus besides excellent royal patronage to the swamiji, gifts of lands poured in to the benefit of the Mutt. As this Mutt was in the forefront of all other Mutts in the field of learning, it won the special status as "**Vidya Matha**". Even today in all the communique originating from Sri Mutt, the seal affixed carries the name "Vidya Matha". It may not be an exaggeration to say that there is no other sanyasi who has written so many books, illumined so brilliantly displaying unparalleled scholarship in all fields. It may be categorically stated that in the South, the very bastion of Adwaita

1. Epigraphica Indica XII Vol.

2. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944. Note 26.

3. त्रेताज्ञय इवस्पष्टम् विजयीन्द्रयतीश्वरः ॥१९॥

ताताचार्यो वैष्णवाग्रचः सर्वसास्त्रविशारदः शैवाद्वैतकसाम्राज्यम्

श्रीमानप्ययदीक्षितः ॥२०॥

यस्यभायाम् मतं स्वं स्वं स्थापयंतःस्तितास्त्रयः ।

4. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944. P. 116.

and Kumbhakonam in particular, Vaishnavas are not only dominant but also scholars even to date only through Vijayeendratheertha as a force.

Appayya Dixit who greatly admired the compositions and debates of Sri Vijayeendra chose to remain silent. The milestone achieved in both the tasks ordained by Vijayeendra's guru enabled the noble pursuit of the tradition of Vaishnava Dharma continue with a renewed vigour. Further the swamiji longed to visit Udipi for a darshan of Lord Krishna. He began his tour with his entourage and reached Udipi travelling through Srirangam, Nanjangud and the birth place of Cauvery. Vadiraja at Udipi was inexplicably pleased by the visit of his most affectionate soul. The happiness between them knew no bounds when they went nostalgic about their togetherness during the period of their learning under the Saint Vyasaraaja many years ago and about their coming together now after a long time. According a hearty welcome to the swamiji, Vadiraja had him stay in his Mutt for the darshan of Lord Krishna. The swamijis of different Mutts performed his padapooja. The swamiji offered priceless gems to Lord Krishna. He extended due honours to all other swamijis. He gave an immensely affectionate hug to Vadiraja. As a token of their friendship, Vadiraja had a Mutt built for Vijayeendra just opposite to the Idol of Lord Krishna. Madhwa Kavi, a disciple of Vadiraja has touchingly portrayed in his Vijayeendra Vijaya about the grand spectacle of felicitations that flowed between them. After his stay for a period there and visiting Pajaka and other pilgrim centres and being honoured by Vadiraja, the swamiji reached Kumbhakonam on his tour through Ananthashayana, Kanyakumari and Rameshwaram.

Entrusting the Mahasamsthana to Sudheendratheertha on whom his guru had bestowed sanyasa, Vijayeendratheertha who had taken the responsibility of imparting knowledge to Sudheendra at the behest of his guru reached the Lotus feet of the Lord at Kumbhakonam on the thirteenth day of Jyestha Bahula.

The dedicated and purposeful life of Vijayeendratheertha forms a significant phase in the tradition of the Mutt. In the all round development of the Mutt, the role played by Vijayeendratheertha is monumental. It was he who ushered in for the first time a bright era for Madhwas in the royal courts and in the circles of scholars in the South. The eternal glory the Mutt attained through Vijayeendra is

simply ineffable. Vijayeendra who attained excellence in learning under his great guru, who had great students, who wrote many books, who had the temples of Kumbhakonam in the jurisdiction of his administration, who for more than half a century ruled the Vaidika Samrajya shines like a star not only amongst his contemporaries but also in the Vedic world.¹

**भक्तानां मानसांभोजभानवे कामधेनवे ।
नमतां कल्पतरवे जयींद्रगुरवे नमः ॥**

Sudheendratheertha

Sudheendratheertha who took sanyasa at the instance of Surendratheertha had the rare privilege of learning under his guru Vijayeendratheertha. He studied all Shastras under his guru only. He has mentioned that he attained knowledge only through the blessings of his guru.²

It is needless to speak about the excellence of learning when it is Vijayeendratheertha under whose guidance Sudheendratheertha had his learning. He acquired the knowledge of sixty four arts imparted by his guru in the traditional system. In all respects he proved to be a perfect disciple. Just as done by his guru, Sudheendratheertha also wrote books on all Shastras. Above all the misconception that Madhwas did not have even a bit of literary ability was completely dispelled. In the world of literature, the works of Sudheendratheertha brought about a revolution. He wrote plays, proses, poems and books on Alankara.

- 1 ವಿಜಯೇಂದ್ರಮುನೀಂದ್ರರಂಜಾಶ್ಚರ್ಯದ | ಗಣೇಂದ್ರ ಬಂದಿದ ಸುಜನರು ನೋಡಬನ್ನಿ || ಪ ||
ಕಲುಷವೆಂಬ ಪಂಕವನೀಡಾಡಿ | ವಿಮಲ ಹರಿಪದ ತೀರಥವ ಜಲಪಾನಮಾಡಿ || ೧ ||
ಮಧ್ಯಮತಾಂಬುಧಿಯೊಳು ನಲಿದು ನಲಿದು ಕುಣಿದಾಡತಲಿ || ೨ ||
ರಮೇಶನ ಧ್ಯಾನವೆಂಬ ಮದವೇರಿ | ಮಮತೆ ಕದಳಿ ಕಿತ್ತಾಡಿ | ವಿಮಲ ಶ್ರೀಹರಿ || ೩ ||
ಪದರಜ ಶಿರದಿ ಧರಿಸಿ | ಕುಮತಗಳೆಂಬ ತರುಗಳ ಮುರಿಯುತಲಿ || ೪ ||
ಗುರುಸುರೇಂದ್ರತೀರಥರಂಬ | ವರಮಹತಿಗನಾಜ್ಞೆಯೊಳಿದ್ದು ಗುರುಮಧ್ಯಪತಿವಿಠಲನ || ೫ ||
ನವವಿಧಭಕ್ತಿ | ಸರಪಳಿಯೊಳು ನಲಿನಲಿದಾಡತಲಿ || ೬ ||
- 2 शिष्यः श्रीविजयींद्रसंयमिमणः षड्दर्शनीदर्शनः तत्कारुण्य समेधि-
काखिलकुलोत्कर्षः सुधींद्रोयतिः | निर्मात्सर्य गुणोल्लसत्सुमनसाम्
मोदाय लक्ष्मीपतेः प्रीत्यै मध्वमुनीशितुः वितनुते सद्युत्किरलाकरम् |

-सुधींद्रतीर्थविरचित तर्कतांडवन्याख्यान सद्युक्तिरलाकरः

The following are the books written by Sudheendratheertha so far available.

1. Sadyukthi Rathnakara (Tarkathandava Vyakhya)
2. Apastamba Shulbasootrapradepa
3. Commentary on second, eleventh Skandas of Bhagavatha

Literary Books

4. The play 'Subhadra Parinaya'
5. Vyasrajabhhyudaya
6. Amruthaharana
7. Dayalu Shathaka – Poetry -
8. Vairagyatharanga - Do -
9. Alankara Manjaree - Do -
10. Alankaranishaka
11. Sahitya Samrajya

(Commentary on Raghunatha Bhoopaleeya of Krishnadhvari)

The swamiji's logodaedaly is extremely pre-eminent. His words are meticulously woven to be very lucid and most intricate in perfect congruity with the context. Description, heart touching! It may be said that in the world of Sanskrit literature, his scholarship among great litterateurs has reached the tip of the spire. The swamiji's play 'Subhadra Parinaya' is most impressive and enjoyable. He has skilfully narrated the story giving a graceful go bye to the incident of Arjuna sanyasa so that the image of the sanyasis remained unsullied. Madhuravani is a friend of Subhadra. Her character has been portrayed more impressively than that of Priyamvada. There is a wonderful mix of humour and horror in the dialogue between the demon couple. This conjures up the portrayal of Dravida Dharmika and description of Durga temple in the play 'Kadambari'. The coyness and other niceties usual to woman, Subhadra displays when she realises that she is in the company of Arjuna, have a wonderful touch of charm. Thus it may be said that the play 'Subhadra Parinaya' is a feast to the lovers of literature.

The swamiji has shown his great scholarship through the words of Sootradhara when the Sootradhara speaks about him in the beginning of the play. That is not a mere muttering but this part extolling Vijayeendra, his guru is like a Dandaka. Though it is difficult to comprehend, it is delightful to read.

"अस्ति खलु जगति वंदनरति कंदलदति बंधुरमति सिंधुरपति मंथरगति सिंधुरधुरंधरगंधिलगंडस्थल निष्यंददमंद मदकबंध गुणबदितेदिंदिरसंदोह झंक्रियालंक्रिया जंजनदहंक्रियां... गणनातीतगंभीरगुण सांद्रः कुवलयचंद्रो विजयींद्रोनाम संयमींद्रः"

Without exactly naming the play, he has enveloped it in a Chakrabandha. Such is the literary prowess of Sudheendratheertha.

The swamiji had great reverence for his guru. It was his belief that he had achieved such great scholarship particularly through his blessings. Therefore whenever the occasion arose, he would not do without paying rich tributes to his guru. As does the king Prathaparudra become prominent in 'Prathaparudrayashobhushana', so only does the tributes to his guru Vijayeendra appear prominently in exemplifying each Alankara in Sudheendra's 'Alankara Manjaree'.

The king Raghunatha of Tanjavor was most predominant and a great scholar in the lineage of Nayakas. The poet Krishnayajva in his royal court composed a literary work 'Raghunatha Bhoopaleeya' on the king. Amazed by the unmatched scholarship in literature, eloquence, immense intellectual abilities of the swamiji, the poet Krishnayajva petitioned him to write a commentary on his book so that as does the maxim "the thread tastes the heaven through the flowers around" connote, so his book too can gain some prominence. Accedingly, did the swamiji write an elaborate commentary 'Sahitya Samrajya'. Though by name this is a mere commentary, it overshadows the original like the commentaries 'Kualayananda' and 'Dhwanyaloka'. A work superior to 'Lochana' and 'Rasagangadhara'. Besides dealing with the aspects of Alankara, he has deeply reviewed rhetorics, method, voice, satire, equivocation, aptness, etc. He has narrated in his own special style the manner in which that literary work has produced the effect. This is like an encyclopaedia for literature. Thus the benefit to the world of Sanskrit literature from the multifaceted intellect of the swamiji is unfathomable.

The swamiji how erudite a scholar he was in Shastras, how imperial he was as a poet, so equally was he versed in mundane aspects. Some days after he was blessed with sanyasa by his guru under the aegis of his parama guru, he was greatly honoured by Chevappanayaka, the popular nayak of Tanjavor. Chevappa after taking the permission of the swamiji and his guru had requested his king Srirangaraya of Vijayanagar to accord special felicitation

to Sudheendratheertha. In compliance, extending a royal welcome, Srirangaraya took the swamiji to his palace. Amidst special honours the king gifted the swamiji with the following villages on the auspicious day of Shivarathri corresponding to the thirteenth day of Magha Bahula in Yuva Samvatsara in the divine place of Pampavirupaksha.

1. Bacchanahalu in Tamaragere region
2. Khyada in Badami region
3. Yadwala on the banks of the Malaapaha in Manvi region
4. Chenchala down Sindhoosur
5. Aralihalli down Tavudugundi¹

Sudheendra's renown spread far and wide like that of his guru. Venkatapathiraya, the ruler of Vijayanagar became his disciple and honoured him with shower of gems at Penugonda.²

Venkatapathiraya did such honours to the swamiji on a number of occasions. Taking the cue king Raghunatha, the Nayak of Tanjavoor in all fervour had the swamiji visit his palace. He did special honours to the swamiji showering him with gold.³

Thus did the swamiji receive honours and tributes from host of kings. The Mutt reached the pinnacle of glory through persistent endeavours of his paramaguru, guru and himself. Everywhere honour from kings began pouring in. The Mutt became the nucleus of learning. Even the rulers of small provinces would volunteer to do special honours to the swamiji with liberal gifts to Raghupathi's coffer.

The research done on the basis of inscriptions reveals that the swamiji must have lived for a long time. All through his life as sanyasi, he held the flag of glory of the Mutt aloft everywhere. In 1620, a palegar by name Chenji Bhoopathi Vadiyaru gifted 'Nonmon

1. Mysore Archaeological Report 1944. Note 22.

2. व्याधुतावद्यहृद्यामित कृतीरचना चारुचानुर्या हृद्यत्
कर्णाटक्षेत्रोणिपालःप्रतिपदरचितानेकरत्नाभिषेकः ।
प्रतीशारूढलक्ष्मीपतिपदनलिनोदग्र लोलंबलीलो
विख्यातश्रीसुधीन्द्रततिपतिरतुलम् भद्रमुन्निद्रयेन्नः - गुरुगुणस्तवनम्

3. अनुल वितुलविद्वन्मंडलीलाल्यमानः प्रभुमणिरघुनाथ प्रौढभूपालकेन ।
निहितुनिखिल विद्वन् मौलिपादःसुधीन्द्रः परजन दुरुवापम् प्रापहेमाभिषेकम् - रा.वि

Deepanallur' and 'Kodikala' villages to the swamiji at the Mutt on the banks of the Nityapushkarini at Srimushnakshetra, the abode of Aswathanarayana on the Parvakala (Kapilashasthi) of the sixth day of Bhadrapada Bahula in Raudri Samvatsara.

During his long and momentous life the swamiji toured extensively. In the course of his one such tour, when he visited Bijapur it had been reeling under severe famine caused by drought for twelve years. A Smarta was the Dewan under the Nawab there. A Madhwa phobe, this Dewan hatched a conspiracy with malicious intentions to subject the swamiji to indignity and instigated the Nawab to urge him to invoke rain. The infatuated Nawab besides issuing such orders, sternly instructed the swamiji not to live the town. The swamiji caused the rainfall with his ascetic powers. The Dewan felt this to be a feat of magic. Throwing another gauntlet, he wanted the swamiji to convert the day into night. "This must be Sri Hari's will" was how the swamiji felt. Accepting the challenge the swamiji prayed to Lord Hari. Like Lord Krishna eclipsing the Sun with his divine wheel to rescue Arjuna, right at the moment when the Sun was in his full glow just overhead, the day turned a dark night through swamiji's mystic powers. The Sun turned invisible. Not only were the Nawab and Dewan astonished but also got frightened about the bravado of testing the swamiji without being aware of his prowess. The Nawab with all special felicitations to the swamiji gifted back 'Anehosur' a village which was earlier in the possession of the Mutt. Besides he conferred on the swamiji the title 'Jagadguru'. The Dewan after Mudhradharana from the swamiji, himself turned swamiji's close disciple. It was in his very same family that one Ghanashamaraya was born who earned a great fame.

The swamiji's superhuman power did not confine itself to manifestation of his greatness. Many had fulfilment of whatever they sought through the blessings of swamiji. Giriappa, the great grandson of Nagappa, a Shasthik Brahmin appointed as minister for Doddaballapura by Krishnadevaraya was suffering from the pangs of having no child for a very long time. When the swamiji in the course of his tour visited Doddaballapur, Giriappa paying homage prayed the swamiji to bless him with the fortune of begetting a male child. The swamiji blessed him heartily. As a result Giriappa begot seven children. One of them was Krishnaraya, a disciple of

Jagannathadas. He was the most ardent devotee of God who authored the books Krishnakarnamrutha, Stuthisara, Bhagavathadashamaskandha, Yakshagana, Harisarvottamasara¹

It was how, Sudheendratheertha spent many years worshipping Moolarama, teaching and holding discourses, writing books, propagating and uplifting 'Sanathana Dharma' and having had honours and felicitations done by kings of many states, he left for the heavenly abode on the second day of Phalguna Bahula. His Brindavan is near Vyasaraaja's Brindavan at Hampi.

कुशाग्रमतये भानुद्युतये वादिभीतये ।
आराधितश्रीपतये सुधीन्द्रयतये नमः ॥

¹ ಹರಿಸರ್ವೋತ್ತಮಸಾರದ ಒಂದು ಸೀಸಪದ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರು ಹೀಗೆ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ :

ಇರಲಾಗಿ ನರಸೌಖ್ಯಪೌತ್ರನಾತನ ಸುತನು ಗಿರಿಶರ್ಮ ಕೆಲಕಾಲ ಪುತ್ರರಿಂದೆ ಶ್ರೀಸುಧೀಂದ್ರರ ವರದಿ ಸಪ್ತಸುತರ ಪಡೆದ....

Part II

SAINT SRI GURUSARVABHOUMA

Earlier Incarnations

Sri Gururaja was originally a Devatha by name Shankukarna. Amongst the specific tasks ordained by the Lord to different Jeevas, Shankukarna had a very pious task. His was to facilitate the daily worship of the Lord by Brahmadeva. Grown up in a divine milieu where daily worship of the Lord was by Brahmadeva, this great soul had conquered Kama, Krodha and other weaknesses to absolute continence. The calm and collected Shankukarna who was always immersed in the theo-centric acts and thoughts had become Brahma's most favourite protégé. Vicious traits like ignorance, attachment, etc, which have their inescapable sway even over Rudradeva could do precious little about Shankukarna who distinctly enjoyed the blessings of Vayudeva. Lord Hari had willed that the whole universe should know the unique traits of this sacred soul and that this soul did some super human acts of revelation and demonstration. This entailed causing his birth as man and demon, the two forms of birth which are perfect havens for ignorance. Further he had to experience the trials and tribulations of earthly life. But Shankukarna, the epitome of sterling piety who always enjoyed close proximity to Brahmadeva was very frightened. Vayudeva assuredly blessed him with his continued support everywhere besides being invisibly present in him at all moments of his service to God. Shankukarna felt greatly delighted at this. A sense of great relief filled his mind. "That I have earned the blessings of Vayudeva surely means that my service has greatly pleased the supreme Lord" was how Shankukarna inferred. With all predilection he felt that he would not fear to have any low birth if destined to dedicate himself to the service of Lord Hari. His devotion to Hari became more intense. This divine feeling enabled him to accomplish unique tasks.

1. PRAHLADA

The Almighty told the Devathas that there needs to be a presupposition of a situation where Prahlada is made to pass

through gruelling moments of pain and suffering to put an end to Hiranyakashipu's barbarism against Dharma, and to eliminate him. The reason for this is that after Tattvesha, no other devotee is so ardent as Prahlada in his devotion to God.¹ What Shankukarna got was such a noble birth.²

Prahlada's stature was unique. He was the greatest amongst the devotees of God. His devotion was 'amaranthine'. It was ceaseless, ever fervent.³ Right from gestation in his mother's womb, he was a deep devotee of Lord Hari and ingrained Vaishnava.⁴ He entered his mother's womb the moment Lord's name Narayana came out from Hiranyakashipu's mouth. From beginning to end firm devotion to Hari permeated his most sacred life.

Only Haribhakthi flowed in his blood veins. All the playful acts of Achyutha remained deeply ingrained in his skeletal structure. His inspiration and expiration itself meant the chant of Lord's name 'Upendra'. Thus his entire body had such divine relationship.⁵

The biography of Prahlada is distinct in its own way. Each epithet it contains about Prahlada is quite appropriate. Extraordinary! He had no foes. Prolific in Shama-Dama; a great soul.⁶ His mind was always fixed in the thought of God, he was righteous, truthful, continent.⁷

He spent his childhood too always in the thought of God. He had interest neither in food nor in sleep. God was his only obsession always. He had absolutely no disposition towards playing games.⁸ Conjuring up different traits of the Almighty, he would cry, sometimes laugh, revel, and waltz. He was in total obsession with God. He was an innately avid devotee of God. His whole body and mind remained embalmed by the thought of God.

1 ऋते तु तालिकान् देवान्नारदादींस्तथैव च ।
प्रह्लादादुत्तमः कोनु विष्णुभक्तो जगत्रय इतिस्कादे । ।

- भा. ता

2 देवाश्यापाभिभूतास्तु प्रह्लादाद्याभभूविरे ।

- भा. ता

3 प्रह्लादो नित्यभक्तिमान् इति ब्रह्मांडे

-नृसिंहपुराणम् - ४१ अध्यायम्

4 प्रह्लादो जन्मवैष्णवः ।

5 वासुदेवे भगवति यस्व नैसर्गिकी रतिः ।

6 निर्द्वैराय प्रशांताय स्वसुताय महात्मने ।

7 ब्रह्मण्यः शीलसंपन्नः सत्यसंघो जितेंद्रियः ।

8 न्यस्तक्रीडनको बालः ।

Amongst all the living beings in the world, Deva and Asura are the only two groups. The Shastras opine that the devotees of Vishnu belong to Devagana and the rest to Asuragana. Devotion to Vishnu alone is the principle mantra of the universe. Anything other than this is a tinsel. For all thoughts, acts and deeds that alone is the yardstick. Anything sans devotion to Vishnu fails to fall within the ambit of Dharma. Anything thought or done in consonance with devotion alone is Dharma. Viewed from this perspective, Prahlada's place is pre-eminent. All that he has accomplished are peerless. Besides himself being haunted by the irrepressible fascination for Lord Krishna, he dedicated his life to the noble pursuit of imparting Haribhakthi to the deserving in this world. The task of propagating the supremacy of Lord Vishnu was unique. Though Prahlada was one among the Devathas who were destined to undergo a long ordeal towards achieving salvation, he had the benevolent blessings of Vayudeva.¹ With his invisible presence in Prahlada, Vayudeva got vital tasks done by Prahlada which were impossible for others to accomplish.² Such accomplishments were not seen in the lives of others in divine pursuit like Bali, Ambareesha. Prahlada's name is foremost amongst the devotees of God.

A foe less Prahlada had no reason to fear his father. His zeal and perseverance did not dwindle a wee bit so far as achieving his life's chief goal of propagating the supreme powers of God was concerned. He insistently advocated the true philosophy to his father. It was outstanding of him to have preached the Daithya Balakas. It was his greatness which showed the path towards achieving the goal by means of unravelling the secrets of life. Prahlada was quite exemplary as a friend.³ The contagion of revolution in their lives overtook the whole community of Daithya

1 कृष्णग्रहगृहीतात्मा नवेद जगदीदृशम् ।
क्वचिद्बुदति वैकुण्ठचिंताशबलचेतनः ।
क्वचिद्धसति तच्चिंताह्लाद उद्रायति क्वचित् ।
नदति क्वचिदुत्कंठो विलज्जो नृत्यति क्वचित् ।
क्वचित्तद्भावनायुक्तस्तन्मयोनुचकारह ।
क्वचिदुत्पलकस्तूष्णीमास्ते संस्पर्शनिर्वृतः ।
अस्पंदप्रणयानंजसलीलामीलितेक्षणः ।

2 वायुना च समाविष्टो महाबलसमन्वितः ।

-निर्णयम्

3 प्रियसुहृत्तमः ।

Balakas. The realisation of truth dawned on them. Thus they were greatly inspired and began working hard to achieve it. But the price that Prahlada had to pay for leading them to this divine path was too high. Anguished at this, his father subjected him to traumatic experiences. The merciful God appearing as his saviour now and then bestowed on him the fortitude with which he could brave all those trials easily in the course of accomplishing his task of propagating devotion for Vishnu.¹

The fatally poisonous drinks forced upon him did hardly have any effect on Prahlada. Absorbed in the thought of God, he shone unworped and uncontroverted like an entrenched rock in the midst of devastating floods. His father grew more ebullient. These oddities about his son evoked distressing fear in him. Ultimately he remained flabbergasted. There arose in him the vindictiveness characteristic of one's self annihilation. Driven by perversion born of acrimony against his son, rancour against Lord Hari, deep seated fear, he vehemently kicked the pillar. An awe striking colossal form emerged! It all culminated in the fulfilment of his role for Prahlada. All the preaching he did fructified. This satiated his hunger to have the manifestation of the Almighty. His constant yearning for God, perseverance in devotion, longing for God's manifestation, and travails of worries in life together came to have a very strange form of fulfilment. The incarnation of Lord Narasimha is simply unprecedented and unforeseen in that it is far too different from all other incarnations. It was meant only for Prahlada. Distinctly fortunate! This is achievement! This only is the fruit!! His name is synonymous with fulfilment!! His alone is the purposeful life!! This only is the manifestation of truth as such!! Prahlada's name is foremost amongst the noble souls that have made wonderful achievements in divinity through a perfect comprehension of the secrets of life!! Prahlada's successful odyssey beset with turmoils thwarting the pursuit of divine assignment by delving into the intricacies of Vedas and Shastras and the inmost truth that ennoble the purpose of life is simply impossible. In the natural course fruition of the finest kind followed. He did not rest on the immense fruits achieved but even in such a background persisted in his endeavour. As he experienced the intense bliss just by a fondling touch of his

1 स्वात्मानार्थमधिकाम् स्तुतिमेव कृत्वा विष्णोः
सदैत्यतनयो हरिणाविनोभूत् ।

head by the Lord, he had the enlightenment of his inner soul. His divine involvement, deep devotional feeling ascended the highest peak.¹ Hymns of extollation of Lord Narasimha flowed like a torrent in a manner he was himself unaware. For him it was a revelation of life's fulfilment.

Just a darshan of the spectacular form of Lord Narasimha enriched the prolificity of the fruits of Prahlada's unique acts of divinity. The divine accreditation showered on Prahlada by the God Infinite took him to the pinnacle of greatness. The voice of the Divine has categorically declared "He only is my devotee who worships Prahlada. If not, he is not my devotee at all."² It became more than demonstrated that constant chanting of the names of Prahlada and the Lord will result in the riddance of attachment.³ Prahlada became venerated through his companionship with the greatly worshipped Lord.

Thus Prahlada's life was full of divine events and its every moment blissful. The credit of demonstrating to the world the inmost secret of life that the essence of life is the friendship which unites all the beings, devotion to God is its whole and sole, and its achievement makes the life fruitful, goes to Prahlada. It is his example that the world needs.

When the king Prahlada was a worshipper of Lord Narasimha in Harivarshakhanda, his guru sage Narada gave him a description of the incarnation of Lord Krishna. He prayed to lord Narasimha with his divine intention of worshipping the Almighty in the form of Krishna. With the Divine permission, he incarnated on earth along with his guru sage Narada.

ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರ ಉತ್ಪತ್ತಿ ಸುಳಾದಿ

ಧೃವತಾಳ

ಒಂದು ದಿವಸ ನಾರದ ಮುನೀಶ್ವರ | ನಂದಗೋಪನಕಂದ ಇಂದಿರಾ

ರಮಣನ | ಸಂದರುಶನ ಮಾಡಿಬಂದ ಹರಿವರ್ಷ | ವಂದೆಂಬ ಖಂಡದೊಳು

- 1 सतत्करस्पर्शधृताखिलाशुभः सपद्यभिव्यक्तपरात्मदर्शनः ।
तत्पादपद्मम् हृदीनिर्वृतोदधौहृष्यत्तनुः क्लिन्नहृदश्चुलोचनः ।
अस्तौपीड्यरिमैकाग्रम् मनसा सुमाहितः ।
प्रेमगद्गदया वाचा तन्यस्तहृदयेक्षणः ।
- 2 भवन्ति पुरुषा लोके मद्भक्तास्त्वामनुव्रताः ।
- 3 यएतत्कीर्तयेन्मह्यम् त्वयागीतमिदम् नरः ।
त्वाम् च माम् च स्मरन् काले कर्मबंधात्प्रमुच्यते । ।

ಆನಂದ ಗಾಯನದಿಂದ | ನಿಂದು ನರವ್ಯುಗಗೆ ವಂದಿಸಿ ತೆರಳುತೀರೆ | ಅಂದು
ಪ್ರಹ್ಲಾದನು ದ್ವಂದ್ವಪಾದಕೆ ಎರಗಿ | ಇಂದು ದ್ವಾರಕಾಪುರದಿಂದ ಪೊರಟುನಡೆ |
ತಂದಾವಾರ್ತೆ ಎನಗೊಂದು ಸುರಲಿಲ್ಲಾದೀನ | ಬಂಧು ಎನಿಸಿಕೊಂಬ
ವೃಂದಾರಕಮನಿ | ಮುಂದುಗಾಣದಲೆ ಕಣ್ಣಿಂದ ಬಾಷ್ಪೋದಕೆ ಬಿಂದುಗಳು
ಧರಿಸುತ್ತ | ನಂದಚರಿತೆ ಒಂದೊಂದು ಪೇಳಲದರಿಂದ ಮೈಮರೆದು ಹಾ |
ಎಂದು ಶಿರದೂಗಿ ಮುನಿಗರೆಗಿ ಕಂಧರಬಾಗಿ ನಾ | ನಂದಿಗೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ವಂದಿಸುವೆ
ನೆನಸಲು | ಮಂದಹಾಸದಿಂದ ಮಂದರೋದ್ಧಾರ ವಿಜಯ ವಿಲನ ಯಶೋದೆ |
ನಂದನನ ಲೀಲೆಯಾ | ನಂದ ಪೇಳೆನ್ನೆ ಮುನಿಗಂದು ವಿರಚಿಸಿದ ನಂದವಾಗಿ
ಒಲಿದೂ || ೦ ||

ಮಟ್ಟತಾಳ

ಸಕಲದೇವರೊಳು ರುಗ್ಮಿಣಿಯರಸನ್ನ | ಸುಖಿಸಮುದಾಯಕೆ ಅಕಟನಾನೇನೆಂಬೆ |
ಸಕಲವರ್ಷಪ ಸುರನಿಕರ ಸಂದಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ | ಮುಕುತ ಮುಕುತ ಸೇವಕರ
ಕರದಿಂದ | ಅಕಳಂಕನಾಗಿ ಸಕಲ ಸೇವೆಯಗೊಂಬ | ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಮಾಣಿಕರಂಗ
ವಿಜಯ ವಿಲನ | ಭಕತರೊಳಗ್ರಣಿ ಯುಕುತೀಲಿ ಪೇಳಿದ || ೨ ||

ತ್ರಿಪುಟತಾಳ

ಹರಿಪಾದಕೈರದಿ ವರಪ್ರಹ್ಲಾದನು | ಎರಡೊಂದು ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಮೂರುತಿ
ಪರಪರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಜಿಸಿ ಧನ್ಯನಾಗುವೆನೆಂದು | ಸುರಮುನಿಗರೆಗಿ ನಿಂದಿರಲಾಗಿ
ನಾರದ | ಕರುಣದಿಂದಲಿ ಉತ್ತರ ಪೇಳಿದ | ಧರೆಯೊಳು ಜನಿಸುವ ವರವ
ಪಡೆದುಯಿಪ್ಪ | ಪರಮಭಾಗವತರ ಮಣಿಯನೀನು | ಧಾರಣಿಯೊಳಗವತರಿಸಿ
ಅಧಿಕವಾದ | ಮಾರುತ ಮತದೊಳಗೆ ಚರಿಸಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನಪೂಜೆ | ನಿರುತ
ಬಿಡದೆಮಾಡಿ ಹರುಷ ಬಡೋದನಲು | ಕರುಣವಾರಿಧಿ ನರಹರಿ ವಿಜಯ
ವಿಲನ | ಸ್ಮರಿಸಿ ಶೇಷಾಂಶಧರಿಸಿ ದೇಹವತಾಳ್ತು || ೩ ||

ಜತೆ

ಪ್ರಹ್ಲಾದದೇವನ ವ್ಯಾಸಮುನಿರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರರು | ಅಹುದೆಂದು ಭಜಿಸಿರೋ
ವಿಜಯವಿಲನಿಂದ || ೬ ||

2. Bahleeka

As ordained by the Lord, when all the Devathas incarnated in Dwaparayuga, Prahlada also incarnated. He was born as the elder brother of emperor Shanthanu famous in Kuru family. The Kuru king Pratheepa had three sons; Devapi, Bahleeka, Shanthanu. Among them it was Bahleeka who was Prahlada.¹ He was physically strong, a staunch devotee of God, great king. He displayed immense physical power as he had an avasha of Vayudeva in him. Eventual to his birth, the earth slit.

1 बाह्लीको राजसत्तमः ।

हिरण्यकशिपोः पुत्रः प्रह्लादो भगवत्परः ।

वायुनाच समाविष्टो महाबलसमन्वितः ।

-निर्णयम् ११. ८

So unusual was his muscle power. He least thought of using it as a means to earn fame. He invoked such powers just for lending a hand of help to the divine task of destroying the evil.¹ When he came of age, he ascended the throne of the kingdom of his maternal grandfather. As it was during the incarnation of the Almighty, Vayudeva, Tattvesha and others, Bahleeka being a singular devotee of the Lord was running the administration. During the period of Mahabharatha war, he was occasioned to participate in the war from Kauravas' side. With his sagacity to judge the propriety, and with his foreseeability he clearly knew that the victory was certain for the side which had Krishna and Partha.² He felt bitterly for having had the occasion to fight against the side supported by the Lord. However unwilling, war ethics of Kshatriyas did bind him. Duly considering all the pros and cons, Bahleeka respectfully appealed to Bheemasena, the son of Vayu - "You only should kill me. It will be my great salvation if my mortal form gets destroyed by you. This is the only great favour I seek from you".

"I do not slay anyone unless the wrong he does concerns me. Moreover I do not even touch the devotees of Lord Hari. Notwithstanding that I have granted your request" – thus did Bheemasena bless Bahleeka.³

Bahleeka was greatly delighted that spiritual ennoblement of his soul became certain. Quite similarly did he feel that he was the most fortunate to be enjoying constant support of Vayudeva. In anticipation of the kind of happy and satisfactory death he had chosen of dying at the impact of Bheemasena's mace, he was precipitating upon the early beginning of war.

Exhibiting great valour in Mahabharatha war, Bahleeka offered his service to God. On a night during the war there weren't much

1 ये नैव जायमानेन तरसाभूर्विदारिता ।

भूभारक्षपणेविष्णोरंगतामामुमेव सः ।

-निर्णयम्

2 यत्र योगीश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।

तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्भुवानीतिर्मतिर्मम ।

-गीता

3 बाह्लीकः प्रार्थयामास पूर्वम् स्नेहपुरस्सरम् ।

भीमत्वयैवहंतव्यो रणेहम् प्रितिमिच्छता ।

तदा यशश्च धर्मं च लोकम् च प्राप्नुयामहम् ।

इत्युक्त आहतम् भीमोन्नितराम् व्यथितस्तदा ।

हन्याम् नैवान्यथायुद्धे तत्ते शुश्रूवणम् भवेत् ।

- निर्णयम् २६. २७०-२७१

bellicocous activities as it was dark. Despite the situation was horrifying. The Moon appeared on the sky. Bahleeka became absorbed in the thought of God. With his thought fixed on Vayudeva, he went to the battlefield. First he was confronted by Sathyaki there. Fighting with him he wrecked Sathyaki's chariot. He shot an arrow to kill him. Bheemasena who was elsewhere suddenly emerged and smashed the arrow into pieces. The appearance of Bheemasena was delighting for Bahleeka. It occurred to him that he should hurt Bheemasena and he swished at Bheemasena the mace 'Shathaghnee', he had received as boon from Brahmadeva. The fuming Bheemasena swivelled at Bahleeka. Fear, humility, devotion were writ on Bahleeka's face. Bheemasena, a Sarvagna himself, immediately gave a sway to his mace which slayed Bahleeka instantly.

3. THE SAINT VYASARAJA

Thus came down the curtain on the incarnation of Bahleeka. At the time of his death, Bahleeka pleaded with Bheemasena that he should be blessed with another life in Kaliyuga as his ardent follower, dedicate himself to the worship of Lord Krishna. Pleased by Bahleeka's devotion, Bheemasena granted him his wish.¹ Just as He blessed Prahlada in Krithayuga, the Lord specially blessed Bahleeka with another life in Kaliyuga and had him carry out great divine tasks. In Kaliyuga which could not have the direct incarnation of God, Vayu himself incarnated as ordained by the Lord and protected Dharma. In the period after Acharya, it was Vyasaraaja who became the celebrity for taking Vaishnavism to the highest peak through the special blessings of Acharya. Vyasaraaja's multifaceted scholarship was instrumental in making Madhwa philosophy reach its zenith. Brahmanyatheertha had an Amsha of Surya in him. Through the benevolence of Surya, the benefactor of health, Vyasaraaja was born to the parents – quite aged. Strangely

1 ವ್ಯಕೋದರನಿಂದ ದೇಹವನ್ನು ಬಿಡುವಾಗ ಬಾ | ಹ್ಲೀಕ ರಾಯನಾಗಿ ಪುಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಪ್ರಹ್ಲಾದ ತಾ | ನುಕುತಿಯಂದಲಿ ಪೋಗಳಿ ವರವ ಬೇಡಿದನು ವೈದಿಕ ಮಾರ್ಗವನ್ನೆ ಪಿಡಿದು || ಉಕುತಿಯನು ಸಾಧಿಸುತ್ತಲಿ ಕಲಿಯೋಳಗೆ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಪೂ | ಜಕನಾಗಿ ಬಾಳುವೆನು ಎಂದು ತಲೆ ಬಾಗಿಡನು | ಭಕುತಿಗೆ ಮೆಚ್ಚುತ್ತೆಸಲೆ ಎಂದ ಮಾತಂದು ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಯಿತು ಧರೆಯೊಳು ||

the baby did not have any contact with the earth at the time of its birth. This certainly was not without significance. It all suggested that it was a baby of great wisdom. It was Brahmanyatheertha who nurtured the infant Yathiraja. He was just not more than a child when he exuded overwhelming resplendence. He was extremely intelligent and quite sharp. His magnificent dexterity of grasping the subject instantly through a mere glance, his eloquence, his legendary intellect were astounding to Brahmanyatheertha. After perfectly grooming him, Brahmanyatheertha granted sanyasa and renamed him **Vyasaraja**. The name Vyasaraja became a perfect cognomen for receiving the blessings of both Yogeeshwarakrishna and Krishnadwaipayana. His resplendence got greater as Vyasaraja did acts of piety like Japa, Tapa, Dhyanana conforming to sanyasashrama. In about 1467 after Brahmanyatheertha left for his heavenly abode, Vyasaraja undertook touring. All scholars bowed before Vyasaraja for his excellence in scholarship. Then he went on a tour of North India. Jayadhwaatheertha, the guru of his paramaguru had extensively propagated Vaishnavism all over Bengal. When Vyasaraja visited that place, the atmosphere there was very conducive to the propagation of Madhwa philosophy. Granting sanyasa to one Lakshmitheertha, Vyasaraja instructed him to stay there and pursue the tradition. It was in the tradition of Lakshmitheertha that Krishachaitanya took sanyasashrama and spread Chaitanya Bhakthi cult. Vyasaraja met Pakshadhara Mishra who was presiding over a seminar of scholars at Navadweepa there. A debate on Nyayashastra took place between them according to the principles of Manikara in which Pakshadhara Mishra had to concede his defeat at last. Amazed by the peerless scholarship of Vyasaraja, he showered praises on him and called him '**Naveenavyasa**'.¹ Thus completing his northern tour, Vyasaraja came to the South. He resolved the dispute between Vaishnavas and Shaivas at Srirangam, a pilgrim centre in the South. At the end of his tour to Chidambaram, he came down to Kancheepuram. He spent a long time having darshans of Varadaraja at Kancheepuram.

Then Sreepadaraja, completing his education under Vibudhendra adorned the throne of Saluva Narasimha, the king of Penugonda and had settled down at Mulbagal after being honoured by the king. A school which had then reputation of being a centre for excellence

1 यदधीतम् तदधीतम् यदनधीतम् तदयधीतम् |
पक्षधरविपक्षो नावेक्षित्विना नवीनव्यासेन ||

in learning was functioning under his stewardship there. Hundreds of students had their learning at the school. All the students had deep reverence for Sreepadaraja. He was of a high stature.¹

Vyasaraja who was aware of excellent scholarship of Sreepadaraja, came to him to know the secrets of the tradition of learning that flowed incessantly from Acharya. Sreepadaraja was extremely delighted to see the brilliantly looking Vyasaraja. He accorded special honours to him. Vyasaraja who had his studies under Sreepadaraja for substantially a long period acquired sublime knowledge of Madhwa philosophy.²

One day an amazing incident occurred there. In obedience of the order of his guru, the Saint Vyasaraja had the idols of the Mutt of his guru ready for his pooja. Among them two caskets were very ancient. There was an idol of Ranganatha in one of the caskets. As Sreepadaraja had become a protege, Ranganatha became his beloved Lord. His Ankita too became 'Rangavitthala'. Sreepadaraja had been worshipping the other casket itself as a whole for the casket had refused to open at all. But Vyasaraja opened this casket just as he did others. It was not a mere idol that the casket had! Lord Gopala with his flute began dancing before Vyasaraja in his visible form!! The greatest devotee of the Lord, Vyasayogi found himself in the ocean of bliss. He too began dancing with the Lord clashing the Saligramas as cymbals. It is not surprising that Lord Krishna danced out of great affinity for Prahlada who was the main cause for the incarnation of the Lord in the intensely awe inspiring form as Narasimha. Besides, the magnificent blessings of Vayu had forth come. It is this that had made him more distinct than the other devotees of the Lord.³ Words simply fail to describe the bliss Vyasaraja enjoyed. He lost himself in the divine milieu. Tears of joy coursed down his cheeks with the thought that even though he had

1 तत्र सततविहिताधिवासम् सनकमिव महर्षिभिः ब्रह्मवादिभिः अंतेवासिभिः
उपास्यमानम् प्रतिविबुधनितपिपाटन क्रीडन कठोर कुठार धारायमाण
वाग्भुम् हरिदंतर विसर्पियशः काशवनप्रवर्तित शास्वत शरत्समयावतारम्
निक्षेपभाजनमिव मध्वमुनिरहस्यस्य...

2 विदुषाम् गवेषणीयमशेषेण तस्मात्रयी शिखरतत्त्व रहस्यमसात्सीत् ।

3 The poet Somanatha describes the manifestation of Lord Krishna differently:
अस्य ननु त्रिवासरोपवासश्रान्तिजुषे भगवान् बालगोपालः वत्सलतया सुहृद्जनस्येव रहसि साक्षादागत्य
सुधामंडलनिर्विशेषम् नवनीतपिंडम् हस्तेदधानः मणीमंजीर झंझलित मनोहरम् तांडवविलासमदर्शयत् ।

to pass through the inevitability of his birth in the age of Kali, the Lord was extremely magnanimous to him even in this birth as a human. He had the unique and ultimate perception of the union of Balagopala with the Lord enshrined in his heart, rejoiced and danced in absolute rapture. He submitted everything as service to God. Sreepadaraja who felt that something curious was going on, came there. The dancing Lord Krishna stood still. The divine emotion that had overwhelmed Vyasaraja vanished instantly. Sreepadaraja came near his disciple and gave him an affectionate hug. "Dear son, today I feel greatly blessed. It is my great fortune to have had a disciple like you. I have done great justice to my duty by imparting knowledge to you. Acharya's main tradition of knowledge has become greatly patronised through your inheritance. You are extraordinarily competent. It is quite natural that everyone has a quality of his own. But what is very special about you is that you are charismatic, highly learned, पदनाख्यप्रमाण पारावारपारीण , the greatest devotee of God. Our philosophy expects a great accomplishment from you. Madhwa society is in need of proper encouragement. This necessitates royal patronage for you. Therefore you go to the king Saluva Narasimha and stay there to enlighten him about Dharma. He is a noble soul, you have the special divine blessings. I do not know why I am so impelled. Therefore, you meet the king" were the words of advice from Sreepadaraja to Vyasaraja.¹

As ordained by his guru, the Saint Vyasaraja along with his disciples came to the royal court of Saluva Narasimha at Chandragiri. The chief minister of the state Bhuvanabandhu apprised the king of the arrival of Vyasaraja. Immediately the king with all the royal paraphernalia took the swamiji to his palace in a procession. Extending all special honours, the king had him stay in the court. Vyasaraja daily used to preach Dharma to the king in seclusion.² Scholars from different parts had stayed there. Jealous of Vyasaraja's scholarly excellence, the glory and honour that came

1 अभूतपूर्वाभ्युदये त्रिलोके पटेकुटेभोभवदुच्च कीर्ते । समस्तमेतत्तु समेधमानम् त्वय्येकवास्तव्यतया समीधे । ...भवान्प्रतिबोधनकार्मडी भवति । तत्र सर्वेषामपि धर्माणाम् राजासेतुरीतिन्यायेन भवता सर्वदा तदातदास्थानी स्थेयुषा भवितव्यम् । पुराकिलयोगिनो निस्संगा अपि महांतो दत्तात्रेयादयः जगदुपकारणाय राजन्यसभालंकारा बभूवुः ।

2 भक्त्या संभावयंतंम् रहस्येनम् धर्मोपदेशेन प्रत्यहमनुगृह्यन् तपोनिधिस्तत्रैव चिरमवसत ।

all his way, they dared him to have a debate with them. One Basava Bhatta of Kalinga was a great scholar among them. In the debate that ensued, the swamiji humbled him.¹ The king was aghast at the erudition of Vyasaraaja. He thought that he was fortunate to have had such a great scholar stay in his court. He adored Vyasaraaja as an idol of Dharma. Afterwards in about 1485-86 the king pleaded with Vyasaraaja to take up the entire administration of the temple of Lord Venkatesha at Tirupathi. Acceding to his request, Vyasayogi held the reins of administration and earned the blessings of the Lord, worshipping him for twelve years. Further, he entrusted the administration to Srivaishnavas with his blessings. By then the king Narasimha had ascended the throne at Vijayanagar. His ministers requested the swamiji to pay a visit to the capital. It was in 1498 that Vyasaraaja entered Vijayanagar amidst royal reception. Since then he stayed at Vijayanagar for about four decades. During this period great milestones were achieved by him.

Narasimha II alias Thammaraya succeeded the king followed by Narasaraja, Veeranasimha, his younger brother Krishnadevaraya and Achyuthadevaraya. Thus Vyasaraaja was being revered by Vijayanagar kings of such high repute. Just a few days since he became '**Rajaguru**', Vyasaraaja started a vidyapeetha at Vijayanagar.

Earlier the university at Takshashila itself gradually embraced Buddhism. The only other Hindu institution after this, that was highly enduring and the one which shone with academic excellence was this university at Vijayanagar. This remained exceedingly glorious for over half a century. Vyasaraaja was the chancellor of this university. Under his brilliant stewardship great philosophers like Vijayeendra, Vadiraja had their studies pursued and occupied a memorable place

1 केचिदंगकळिग मूलवचोळकेरळादि विविध देशेभ्यः सरोपोद्वेगमापतित मात्रा एव विपश्चितः रोषानेशाः प्रवावदूकतातिरेकेण धिषणमपि तृणायमन्वानम् बसवाभट्टनामानम् कंचनकालीगमनीषिणम् पुरस्कृत्य पक्षद्वयस्थापनावतीम् कामपिकथाम् प्रारंभान् - अन्येद्युरेव विस्मयमानैस्सर्वैरपि सभ्यैरुपलाल्यमान वाग्देखरीप्रभावः सभगवान् झटति प्रयुक्तैरनभिहितग्राह्यैरजादाभिः कांश्चिद्विमत विबुधलोकान् सलीलमेव निराकुर्वन् निजयशः प्रपंच इव दिशामंडलम् महतीम् विजयलक्ष्मीम् समाश्लिषत् ।

—Even today the Pacchelilinga which Vyasaraaja got from Basava Bhatta as a mark of memory of his triumph is being worshipped on the day of Shivarathri in Vyasaraaja Mutt

in the world of Indian philosophy. Chandrika, Nyayamrutha, Tarkathandava called '**Vyasathraya**' indited by yogi Vyasaraaja shook the very foundations of Monoism. It revealed the defects of that philosophy. Vyasaraaja became instrumental in rejuvenating Chaithanya philosophy. The poet Karnapoorra in his work 'Gourangadeshadeepika' has reverentially called 'Vyasathraya' as 'Vishnusamhitha'. Among these, Nyayamrutha blazing a new trail for criticism and counter criticism established a new milestone in the path of Indian philosophy. Great works like Nyayamrutha, Advaitasiddhi, Tarangini, Brahmanandee, Kantakoddhara, Vanamalamishreeya, Aamoda emerged.¹ Madhusoodhana Saraswathi, Ramacharya, Brahmananda, Vanamala Mishra, Vijayeendratheertha and other great scholars have nurtured this literature. Particularly the book Tatparya Chandrika authored by Vyasaraaja has become celebrated as the ultimate work in Dwaitha philosophy. Vyasaraaja has written '**Chandrika**' with the bold avowal of logically proving the commentaries on Brahmasootras written by other Acharyas as wrong and that the one indited by Madhwacharya only as perfect.² Though this work is in the form of a commentary on Tattvapraakashika, it has just become an independent book. Vyasathraya is to Dwaitha philosophy what Prasthanathraya is to Brahma Meemamsa. Apart from these three books, Vyasayogi has written 'Mandaramanjari' as a commentary on the Khandanathrayas—Upadhikhandana, Mayavadakhandana, Mithyatvanumanakhandana and on Tattvaviveka and also the book Bhedojjeevana which demonstrates the tenets of difference. Scholars from different regions used to come in droves to the royal court of Vijayanagar just because an excellent scholar like Vyasaraaja headed the university as its president. Everyday was eventful marked by seminars, debates, compositions of works and arguments for and against them. Vidyadharapatra, the king of Kalinga who had entered into a treaty consequent on suffering defeat in the battle against Vijayanagar sent the book 'Vedanthasangraha'

1 निरवशेषित सकल दुर्वादि कुलगवनतया निराकुलमानसः सकल धर्म जीवातनेतत्त्वमतस्थापनाय तात्पर्यचंद्रिका तर्कतांडव न्यायामृत प्रमुखानि निधिनिकुंवाणीव महनीयार्थगर्भितानि नूपुराणीव दृढपदबंधनानि मुनिकुलानीव विबुधलोकसेव्यानि प्रमदाजनमानांसीव प्रौढतरमानानि गीर्वाणवृंदानीव धिषणाकारीणि तारीणिव शंसितविधुमुख्यभावानि राजकृत्यानीवालीकवादिमर्मभंजनानि महीयांसि भूयांसि क्रमेण व्यरीरचत् । ।

2 प्रतिसूत्रम् प्रकाश्येते घटनाघटने मया ।
स्वीन्यान्यपक्षयोस्सम्यग्निदाम् कुर्वतु सूरयः । ।

written by Sarvabhuma, an Adwaita scholar in his court to the emperor Krishnadevaraya. The emperor handed it over to his guru. Instantly Vyasaraja returned it with his criticism written.

Thus debates after debates were continuously taking place. Still the visiting eminent scholars did not return without being accorded proper honour. Vallabhacharya, a contemporary, founder of predominantly devotional Shuddhadwaita philosophy which advocated Monoism and who had heard of fadeless glory of Vyasaraja visited Vijayanagar and returned with special honours. Moreover, Sri Purandaradasa has said that guru Vyasaraja had established series of wins in debates against many scholars. He has declared in his vehement tone that what if the saints are in legion but it is only Saint Vyasa who espoused the excellence of Madhwa philosophy.¹

The University that Vyasaraja founded had its flag of fame fly at dizzy heights. The poet Somanatha has mentioned that scholars from all regions of India used to come here for learning.² It is no overemphasis to say that this university which had eminent scholars like Vijayeendra, Vadiraja, Narayanayathi, Govindatheertha, Ramacharya, Vanamala Mishra in its fold was a unique treasure of knowledge. Poet Somanatha like Bana, the inimitably competent and ideal of pre-eminence capable of supplying literary stuff to sixty four different pens simultaneously, gained proximity to Saint Vyasaraja through Saint Narayana. Getting permission from Vyasaraja, Somanatha had his wish fulfilled by writing Vyasaraja's biography and getting it sung by gamakis before the swamiji. What such a paragon of poets, Somanatha desired was neither money nor fame. He yearned for a nod from Saint Vyasaraja in appreciation

- 1 ಈಸುಮುನಿಗಳಿದ್ದೇನುಮಾಡಿದರು | ವ್ಯಾಸಮುನಿ ಮಧ್ಯಮತವನುದ್ದರಿಸಿದ |
ಕಾಶಿಗದಾಧರಮಿಶ್ರನನು ಸೋಲಿಸಿದ | ದಾಸನ್ನ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡ ಧರಣಿಯೊಳಗೆ |
ಕಾಶಿಪಕ್ಷಧರವವಾಜಿಪೇಯ ನಾರಸಿಂಹಯೋಗಿ ಲಿಂಗಣ್ಣಮಿಶ್ರ ಮೊದಲಾದ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರ
ನೂರೊಂಟುಮಂದಿಯ ಜಯಿಸಿ ಜಯಪ್ರತಿಷೆಯನ್ನು ವಾಸುದೇವಗೋಪಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣಗೆ ಭೂಷಣ
ಮಾಡಿ ಹಾಕಿಸಿದ ಶ್ರೀಶ ಪುರಂದರವಿಠಲ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಈಶಯಂದ್ರಾದಿಗಳಿಗೆಲ್ಲ | ಈಶನಂದು
ಡಂಗುರವ ಪೊಯಿಸಿ ಮೆರೆದೆ ಜಗವರಿಯೆ |
- 2 तस्माद्यतेस्समुपसृज्य दिगंतरेभ्यस्तानिश्रुतानि मुहुरादधिरैबुधेन्द्राः |
अश्रांतविष्णुपदसेवन जागरूकावारीणि सागरपतेरिव वारिवाहाः ।।

of his poetry which for him was as immense as the heap of large mountains.¹ In this biography, Somanatha has so fascinatingly portrayed how the scholars of all Shastras were shining in the company of Vyasaraja as witnessed by him.²

This detailed account elucidates the transcendancy of Vyasaraja's scholarship and the uniqueness of that university. Establishing universities in different parts of India on the lines of the one at Vijayanagar, Vyasaraja appointed great scholars as their heads.

In North India*

University	President
1. Haridwar	Sathyanatha
2. Gaya	Hari Mishra
3. Kashi	Jayadeva
4. Bengal	Ishwarasoori

In South India*

5. Kumbhakonam	Vijayeendratheertha
6. Udipi	Vadirajatheertha
7. Mulbagal	Prajnanidhitheertha
8. Kanchi	Srinivasatheertha

1 श्लाघाकंपनमेकमेव शिरसः श्रीव्यासयोगिशितुः मेरुणाम्
शतमर्हतिक्षितितले विद्यासु विद्यावताम् ।

2 अथजातुचित्रेसुरभिलमंडले गगनपथचक्रमणलीलया पंचषागपनीत घटिका विभागानखिल मेघसंविधिमशेषे
इति महतीमाख्यानिकामधिरूढस्यागणनीयानुभवेयोगि भिरतेव सिद्धिस्सनकादिभिस्सरसिजासनस्येव संसेवमानस्य...
अलंकारिकैश्च ... वाणी निराकृत पतंजलि प्रायैः पाणिनीयैश्च, विवाद विनोदवशं वदता चंडिमकंडूल
जिह्वाप्रद्वीकारमात्र शिक्षिक विपक्षयातिकेनैयायिकैश्च ... धन्वंतरि ज्ञानेयभाग्भि षड्भिश्व... कालतित्रय
विज्ञानावज्ञात सुरासुरगुरु... ज्योतिषकैश्च...

पुरस्कृतयतिकुलानाम् पुस्तकविभागालंकृत पाणितलानाम् वाग्वैखरी निराकृततया उत्तुंगामिव
सरस्वतीसुरसरित्पराणाम् संख्यावतामप्य गणनामंतेवासिनाम् वेदशिखारार्थं तत्त्वमर्थम् व्याकुर्वन्तम् मध्वमतविजय
शंखायमानेनकठनालघमघमितेन कालमेघमिव गर्जितेन गगनकटाहमापूरयंतम् ... जानुभागानि
यंत्रितयोगपट्टितयाब्यत्यस्त चरणतया तपनीय वेणुकांड घटितमिव सरस्वतीपीठम् तम् भगवतम् व्यासयोगिनम्...

* ಗುರುವರರು ಶ್ರೀ ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರು ಪರಂಧಾಮಕ್ಕೆ ತೆರಳುವ ಮುನ್ನ ತಮ್ಮಯ ಘನತರದ ವಿದ್ಯಾಪೀಠದಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆಯ
ಭಾರವನ್ನು | ಹಲವು ಶಿಷ್ಯರಿಗೊಲಿದು ವಿಂಗಡಗೈದುಕೊಟ್ಟರು | ಮುಂದೆ ಬಹುಕಾಲದೊಳಗೆ ಈ ರೀತಿಯಲೆ ನಡೆಯಲದೆಂಬ
ಭರವಸದಿ | |

ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದೊಳನುದಿನ ಓದುತ್ತಿರ್ಪರು ಹತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರದೇಶಿಕೆಯುಳ್ಳ ದ್ವೀಪದ್ವೀಪಾಂತರದ
ಭಾರತದ ಹಲವು ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳ ತಂಡವು ಅವರವರ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕಸ್ಥಳದೊಳಗೆಏತೆನಿಸಿ ಅನುಕೂಲಗೈವೈದಿರ್ಪರು ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರು
ತಾವೆ ಪ್ರತಿಬಿಂದು | |

ಸತ್ಯನಾಥಗೆ ಆ ಹರಿದ್ವಾರದ ಸುವಿದ್ಯಾಪೀಠದಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆಯು ಗಯೆಗೆ ಹರಿಮಿಶ್ರ ಜಯದೇವಾಖ್ಯೆ ಕಾಶಿಕಾಪುರಕೆ |
ಈಶ್ವರಸೂರಿಯೆಂಬರು ಪಂಗಡೇಶಕೆ ನೀವಿಹುದು ಪೋಗೊಂದು ನಿರೂಪ ಕೊಟ್ಟರು ಬರೆದು ಕೈಯೊಳಗೆ | |

ಕುಂಭಕಾಪುರವರಕೆ ವಿಜಯೇಂದ್ರರು ಉಡುಪಿಗೆ ವಾದಿರಾಜರು | ಮುಳುಬಾಗಿಲಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾನಿದಿಗಳೆಂಬವರು | ಉಳಿದ
ವಿದ್ಯಾನಗರದಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆಯು ತಿರುಪತಿಕೈಶ್ವ ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆಯು ಶಿಷ್ಯರಾಗಿಹ ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸರಿಗೆ | |

-ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ ಕವಿ.

The language of Sanskrit found great patronage in Vyasaraja. His espousal of the cause of Madhwa philosophy and learning in Sanskrit is simply inimitable.

While the great service done by Saint Vyasaraja to Sanskrit has become etched in permanent memory, no less is his contribution to Kannada literature. For a long time since its beginning, Karnataka Haridasa Sahitya was nurtured by saints like Naraharitheertha and others. In the coming days it got further fillip from Sreepadaraja. But it was Vyasaraja who enriched it greatly. The cult of devotion propogated by Prahlada, Vaishnava by birth, through his preachings to Daithya Balakas again assumed newer and wider dimensions and eminence through the Kannada compositions chiefly of Vyasaraja; Vijayeendra, Vadiraja as well as stalwarts of Dasas like Purandra and Kanaka predominantly centred upon devotion to Lord Hari. Just as the great Sanskrit works he has done in conformity with Shruthis and Smrithis, Vyasaraja has composed equally great Devaranamas in Kannada. He has exhilaratingly portrayed the meaning of the Sootra **अथातो ब्रह्म जिज्ञासा** in his Suladi ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸುವಿಗೆ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಕಾರಣ ಜ್ಞಾನಿಗೆ ಅಪರೋಕ್ಷ ಕಾರಣ, ಅಪರೋಕ್ಷಿಗೆ ಅಧಿಕಾನಂದ ಕಾರಣ, ಮುಕ್ತಗೆ ತಾನೆ ಫಲರೂಪೆ | ಸಿರಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾದಸೇವೆ | ಇದರ ತೂಕಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಕೆ ಕೈವಲ್ಯ || Similarly he has lucidly described the meaning of the Sootra **ॐ आनंदादयः प्रधानस्य ॐ** in his Suladi ಶೋಕಾದಿ ದೋಷಾತಿದೂರನೆಂಬ ಜ್ಞಾನೈಕರಸ ದಿವ್ಯಮೂರುತಿಯೆಂಬ ಅಲೌಕಿಕಾಮಂದಾನಂದಸಾಂದ್ರನೆಂಬ ಸಾಕುವ ತನ್ನ ನಿಜಸ್ವಾಮಿಯೆಂಬ ನಾಲ್ಕು ಬಗೆಯ ಉಪಾಸನವಿಲ್ಲದವಗೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ತನ್ನ ಮೂರುತಿಯ ತೋರಗಡ || He has written the entire gist of Geetha in his Devaranama ಕೇಳಯ್ಯ ವಿನಮಾತ ಪಾರ್ಥನೇ ಗೀತದರ್ಥನೇ in a manner most entertaining. Thus Vyasaraja who was widely known as the gem in the crown of Haridasa literature of Karnataka besides creating many marvellous compositions became instrumental in the glorious continuance of Dasa Sahitya tradition by blessing Purandaradasa, pre-eminent among Haridasas, with Ankita **“Purandara Vitthala”**. Vijayadasa, Gopaladasa, Jagannathadasa and the likes endowed with clairvoyance were born in such a tradition of Dasas who fostered Haridasa literature with their excellent compositions. This is monumental to Vyasaraja’s multifaceted intellectual prowess.

Royal Honour

The Saint Vyasaraja was an emperor. Prahlada had to hold the reins of monarchy for long reluctantly even after the manifestation of Lord Narasimha. The disguise of royal pleasure haunted him forever. The emperor Bahleeka too was a grand fatherly figure of Kuru family. Though Vyasaraja was a sanyasi since his boyhood, his mentor was Sreepadaraja. He knew how great Vyasaraja was. It was he who instructed his disciple to go to royal court. Further, Vyasaraja was greatly venerated by as many as six rulers. When Saluva Narasimha was at Chandragiri, he, besides worshipping and according special honours to Vyasaraja, entrusted him the overall administration of the temple at Tirupathi. In the coming days on becoming the ruler of Vijayanagar, he extended a special invitation and had Vyasaraja visit Vijayanagar. The poet Somanatha has impressively portrayed the visit of Vyasaraja and his passing along the royal thoroughfares in processional pomp and gaiety.

Saluva Narasimha adored Vyasaraja as Karthaveerya did Dattatreya. Vyasaraja used to preach Dharma to the king daily in seclusion.¹ Moreover, he would adorn the royal court in his Mudrasana.² As Indra venerated Bruhaspathyacharya, Saluva Narasimha II alias Thamaraya venerated Vyasaraja. The Saint Vyasaraja was the Kulaguru of the king Narasa just as Lord Badarayana and Sri Krishna were to Pandavas.³ Veeranarasimha respected him more than he did his father.⁴ The devotion Krishnadevaraya had towards his guru was unmatched. He used to dedicate all his wealth in the worship of his guru.⁵ Vyasaraja was like his family deity. Krishnadevaraya was always disposed to perform acts of veneration for his guru.⁶

1 रहस्येनम् धर्मोपदेशेन प्रत्यहमनुगृह्यन् ।

2 तत्रभूपशरत्काले राजहंसमिवांभुजे । स्वर्णपीठे स्वयंदत्ते व्यासभिक्षुम् न्यवेशयत् । । -पु. ७२

3 अर्चयंतमिममर्च्यपूर्वया भागधेय परिणाममात्मनः ।
पार्थिवस्सपदि पर्यपूजयत् पांडुसूनुरिव बादरायणम् । ।
आसनाद्युपचितम् महीभुजा व्यासयोगिनममुम्
विरोधिनः । नासहंतदमघोषजादयो वासुदेवमिव पार्थपूजितम् । ।

4 अजादिव दशरथो वसिष्ठम् पितुरधिकमेव भक्तिभारेण तं यतिवरिष्ठ-भ्यर्चयामास । ।
वसुधाधिपेन हंसनेव कमलाकरः प्रत्यहमुपसेव्यमानः । ।

5 यावंतो विषयाहृता भुजबलम् यावत्सपत्नाजिता यावंतश्च वदान्यता करसरोजातश्रया यावती ।
यावत्यो धनसंपदो गुणगणा यावांश्चयावद्यशस्त्रावत्कर्तुमियेष पूजनमसौ श्रीव्यासभिक्षोर्नृपः । ।

6 चित्तानुवर्तकेन भागवतमूर्धन्येन तेन कृष्णमहीपालेन त्रिसंध्यम् कुलदेवतेव मुकुटतटमालती
कुसुमशेखरीक्रियामाणनख मयूखजातेमहानुभावे... भगवति तस्मिन् व्यासयोगिनि... । । -पु ६८-८

Everyday Krishnadevaraya used to engage in the worship of Vyasaraaja in the morning, afternoon and in the evening. He would visit the Mutt daily for a darshan of his guru and himself stand at the entrance and send word in all humility to his guru for permission to enter.¹ On permission he would enter the Mutt and prostrate before Vyasaraaja.² The king still remained unsatiated. Consequent on his victory in the Raichur war, he realised how sovereign the blessings of his guru was. This intensified his devotion. With due permission from his guru, he took his guru to his palace with all regal resplendence and conducted him to the golden throne. There was flourish of musical instruments on one side and the wafting chant of Vedas on the other. On such a sacred occasion, the king showered in great veneration, gems, pearls and such other priceless things on his guru all of which he had carried himself in a gold pot.³ The divine brilliance of Vyasaraaja showed itself spectacularly. It was a magnificently divine occurrence. Whoever witnessed it was really fortunate, blessed.⁴ Vyasaraaja, illustrious among the saints blessed with gems, not only the scholars but also all others present there. The respect and authority that Vyasaraaja had were not ornamental. The Saint Vyasaraaja who was the reincarnation of great emperors Prahlada and Bahleeka ran the administration of the empire with astute statesmanship. He rescued the king from a great danger. During the Raichur war in the ominous evening of Thursday on the day of Amavasya of Magha Bahula in Swabhanu Samvatsara in A.D.1524, 'Kuhayoga' befell Krishnadevaraya.⁵ When his very life was at stake on such an inauspicious occasion, the king in great respect and humility sought refuge under his guru. Invoking Lord Srinivasa, Vyasaraaja through his mystic powers averted the impending danger. Treating Vyasaraaja as his ennobler, the king gifted many villages and estates to his guru. By building a huge tank

1 द्वारि कृष्णनृपतिस्समेत्य सस्वामिनः सह पुरोहितादिभिः।

दर्शनावसरमीक्षतेधुना पाकशासन इवाब्ज जन्मनः।।

2 भक्त्या नृपो भगवतः पदपद्मयुग्मे सहस्वमौलिमवनौ नमयांचकार।।

3 स्वयमेव करकमलेनादाय कनककुंभमिमं भगवंतम्
व्यासतापसमादरात्मणिभिरभिषेक्तुमारभत।।

4 तं व्यासभिक्षुम् सकलेस्सरत्नेभूपोभिषिच्युरतोबुधानाम्। वाराशिपुत्री मकुटाग्रभागामाशाम् निशानाथ
इवावभासे। ऊर्जस्वलेर्बहुविधैर्मणिभिर्व्यं राजीत् प्राकारितस्सभगवान् प्रमुखो यतीनाम्। लोकाभिमोदन विचक्षण
वर्षशंसी नानारुचापरिधिनेव नवांशु माली।।

5 When Ravi, Mangala, Shani and Rahu Grahas are in the twelfth place from Lagna and the Moon is invisible, that inauspicious day is known as Kuhayoga.

called Vyasasamudra in one of his villages, Vyasaraaja greatly helped the villagers. He blessed prince Veerabhadra, son of the enemy king Prataparudra by getting him freed from prison.¹ He built Agraharas for Brahmins.² Thus the administration of Vyasaraaja became momentous. Witnessing all these, the subjects were all praise for Vyasaraaja. Even the foreigners admired him wholeheartedly. They accorded him felicitations in a manner unprecedented.³ A foreign ambassador namely Nuniz cites in appreciation the honour Krishnadevaraya showered on Vyasaraaja.⁴

Thus Vyasaraaja spending his life in all glory, dedicating everything to Lord Hari, holding aloft the flag of excellence of Madhwa philosophy to fly eternally, lighting the eternal flame of Hinduism, immersed in the meditation of Lord Krishna reached his eternal abode on the island of the river Tungabhadra.

The divine influence of Vyasaraaja stood eternally in political as well as religious world. Hinduism which successfully withstood the onslaught of Muslims spread far and wide under the patronage of Sri Vyasaraaja and in spite of the end of Vijayanagar empire, Shivaji successfully strove for its rejuvenation in Maharashtra. Again it was nurtured by the rulers of Mysore. Vijayeendra, Vadiraja inter alios brought about a revolution in the history of Madhwa philosophy treading the path shown by Vyasaraaja in the religious world. The Haridasa literature nurtured by the great Purandaradasa reached its pinnacle through the rich contributions of Vijayadasa, Gopaladasa and Jagannathadasa. It was Vyasaraaja who added new vigour to all these. In the multifaceted history of India, Vyasaraaja has occupied a pre-eminent position.

1. Eighth volume of Madwasiddhantha Prakashinee.

2 लक्ष्मीवक्षोज इवाच्युत प्रतिष्ठापित पृथुलाग्रहारः।।

3 द्वीपांतर भूपाल संप्रेषित प्रधानपुरैरसकृत् समर्थमाणानि बहुविधोपहार पूजनानिच।।

4. Everyday he (the king of Bisnaga) hears the preaching of a learned brahmin who never married nor touched a woman.

4. SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMIJI

1. Situation

There is a principle in the universe. A discipline. Everything happens systematically. Nothing takes shape unexpectedly and absurdly. Even the events most surprising to us happen within the confines of the system. For one who is in a forlorn corner of the state, all the important events happening in that state appear only surprising. For those accustomed only to the affairs of their state, appear equally surprising the affairs of other regions. It is quite natural that the happenings in the vast universe look unusual for the ill informed who stay in a far flung corner of the world. Therefore, every incident of incarnation of great souls and saints is bound to appear strange for the ordinary. But even such apparently strange things happen in the background of time, place and Divine wish.

The incarnation of Saint Raghavendra who has become a household deity has served the divine purpose greatly. The tradition initiated by Sanakadis and the philosophy founded by Acharya both having united together were patronised by great souls like Vibudhendra, Surendra, Vijayeendra and Sudheendra. To complement this while a number of kings and emperors did great honour in absolute reverence, they extended every kind of encouragement for its propagation and growth. These were a wonderful revelation for the ordinary people. But these people did not have the ability in keeping with their respective status to comprehend and adopt the principles of this philosophy and the secrets of Dharma enlivened by the pontiffs of the Mutt. There had been a need for a proper guiding spirit. It was exactly in such a situation, Saint Raghavendra incarnated. There was no other soul better suited for the purpose than him. Even in his earlier incarnations, similar tasks of wonderful divinity were accomplished. Now also he had to reappear for such great accomplishments. As preponderance of the coming age over the past was desirable, the purpose of Raghavendra Swamiji's incarnation did surpass those of his earlier incarnations. Thus he received the absolute grace of Lord Hari.

2. Lineage Of The Guru

Brahmins belonging to sixty families were serving as officers in the royal court of Kadamba king Mayura Verma. When the patronage of Kadamba and Chalukya kings came to an end, the Vijayanagar rulers extended their patronage to these Brahmins. There were fourteen gothras among them. Of them, the 'Beegamudre' family of Gouthama gothra was famous. One Krishna Bhatta in this family was of very high intellect, a scholar of Vedas in addition to being doyen of music. He had great expertise in playing the veena. Music favoured him with precocity. In great admiration of his legendary expertise, people used to call him as Veena Krishna Bhatta only. His fame cruised even to the royal court of Vijayanagar. Then Krishnadevaraya was its emperor. As he himself was a connoisseur of art, he invited Bhatta to his court. Impressed by Bhatta's erudite scholarship, Krishnadevaraya became his student and learnt the art of playing the veena exhaustively. No doubt this meant that Krishna Bhatta was graced by Goddess Lakshmi. He adorned the royal court. His son Kanakachala Bhatta proved to be a perfect son to his father. Thimmanna Bhatta was the son of Kanakachala Bhatta. Thimmanna Bhatta became a child prodigy by not only acquiring scholarship in traditional education but also gaining expertise in playing the veena which had lately become the family inheritance. But by then as a consequence of Rakkasathangadi war, the Vijayanagar kingdom drifted towards South.

Thimmanna Bhatta who had been the recipient of royal patronage left the palace for the Mutt. For Surendratheertha who was the pontiff of the Mutt then, Thimmanna Bhatta was a favourite scholar. Having had Bhatta stay with him, the swamiji would give him the respect he deserved. When Srirangaraya gifted a village to the swamiji in A.D.1575, the swamiji bequeathed a part of it to Thimmanna Bhatta among those under his patronage.¹ Gopamma, the wife of Thimmanna Bhatta was quite complaisant. The nomenclature 'Dharma Patni' well suited her. As Gopamma who spent her days happily with Bhatta did not conceive even after sometime, she suggested to her husband why they should not worship and seek the blessings of their family deity Lord

¹ वृत्तिमंत्रोत्र लिख्यंते विप्रा वेदांतपारगाः... याजुषो गौतमगोत्रो वीणे तिमप्ययोपिच...

Venkateshwara. In appreciation of her noble suggestion, Bhatta readily consented. With the blessings of the swamiji, the couple went to Tirupathi where they worshipped the Lord with singleminded devotion. As they had the premonition of the fruition of their wish, they returned home.

In the changed situation when the Vijayanagar kingdom was at Penugonda, Bhatta had some predicament about where to settle down. Those days making a living was not as arduous as it is now. Since the kings had been patronising the learned Brahmins, they did not have to pursue the usual path of earning for existence, but concentrated only on earnestly carrying out daily rituals enjoined by their religion. Such pious Brahmins were in large numbers in Tamilnadu then popularly known as Thundeeramandala. The Agraharas of those Brahmins there were sacred. In every household, discussions on Vedantha, yagnas and yagas were specially taking place.¹

That apart, by then after Surendratheertha passed away, the Maha Samsthana under the stewardship of Vijayeendratheertha and Sudheendratheertha was functioning at Kumbhakonam in Thundeeramandala. By the time the Vijayanagar empire grew weaker, Chevappanayaka who was a mandaleeka of Tanjore province of that state was a powerful ruler of that province. He too with the noble intention of being a protector of Dharama like his masters, the kings of Vijayanagar, gave special patronage in his court to many great scholars like Vijayeendratheertha, Appayya Dixit and Thathacharya.

With all these in view, Thimmanna Bhatta settled down with his wife at Kaveripatna in Thundeeramandala.² A few years later he had two issues – one female and the other male – with the blessings of Lord Srinivasa. After observing the post natal rituals, they were named 'Venkamma' and 'Gururaja' respectively. These two children grew up hale and healthy. Though they attained the age of six to

1 वेदवेदांतविद्या प्रद्युद्या तशेषुषीपद्यैः दैत्यारिस्तुतिप्रस्तावविस्तारित
हृद्यानवद्यार्थविद्योतमान गद्यपद्यैः विध्यारचितसकलातिथिसत्कारान्वितथीकृततिथिभिः
सौजन्यसीमावधिभिः अनितरतत्त्वज्ञानोपज्ञ प्रज्ञैः निगमागमनिदर्शनायित
निर्मलनिजकर्मभिः द्विजमणिभिः अलंकृतमहाग्रहारान्... तुंडीरानतीत्य ।। -वरदांविकापरिणयम्

2 अथ तुंडिलमंडलेऽग्रहारे लसिते पट्टणि नाम्नि वासयोग्ये ।
कमलारमणम् प्रसाद्य कांतामिलितःकानपि वत्सराननैषीत् ।। -राघवेंद्रविजयम् ३१७

seven years, there were no signs of Bhatta begetting another child. This became a source of worry for him. The maxim **एकपुत्रो ह्यपुत्रकः** sounds apt and meaningful. Father of a single son as he was, he was afraid "how far he could rest assured of happiness and guarantee against dereliction of duties cast on his son by the filial bond. Further even if that lone son becomes uneducated, what would be the fate of the reputation of our family? I have done my best to cherish and always striven to enhance the reputation of my family. Still I should beget a son sure to earn a high reputation. If Lord Srinivasa who has made Tirupathi, the Vaikunta of the earth, so wills, it is sure to happen.¹ Such a son is the real treasure which no thief can ever steal. Such a noble son is sure to get me the Divine proximity" was all how Bhatta thought and apprised his wife. His compliant wife was always ready to do things in the service of Lord Srinivasa. The couple and their children went to Venkatachala to offer their worship with a great desire to have a worthy son. Having braved all the odds and ends that beset a family, the Bhatta couple had become mellow, had had detachment, and their minds were greatly imbued with devotion. At Tirupathi they served the Lord strictly adhering to the very exacting vows like abstinence, etc. These made their souls more and more sanctified.

It would be a grand convergence of wonderful situations when most eventful incidents occur. Crowning all these God's will follows. As a uniquely devoted soul like Prahlada had to incarnate on the earth for a noble cause and just as the place of his birth also became sacred, the mortal abodes of the Bhatta souls too got consecrated. "A unique soul of very immense devotion who ennoble the whole universe would be born to you soon", thus saying the greatly pleased Lord Venkatesha blessed the couple.

3. Birth And Childhood

The happiness of the couple knew no bounds. They returned home with the Lord's grace. On an auspicious occasion, Bhatta's wife conceived. Gopamma began to exude greater vim as the days passed. Her face began to reflect the superhuman resplendence of the foetus in her womb. Her desires as a pregnant woman were also divine. A feeling of detachment overwhelmed her. Gopamma

1 किमलभ्यम् भगवतिप्रसन्ने श्रीनिकेतने ।

who bore the greatest responsibility of spiritual upliftment of the world in her advanced pregnancy experienced mixed bouts of pain and comfort. On a day in an auspicious moment when all the planets were in their respective benefic positions, Gopamma delivered a unique male child.*

On hearing the happiest news of arrival of his son, Bhatta tossed himself into the waters in great exhilaration and had his holy bath observing all the rituals. He was highly elated that the souls of his ancestors attained greater sanctity. The divine lustre writ on the child's face left everybody entranced and mute. The post natal rituals ensued. In the customary ceremony, Bhatta named the child '**Venkatanatha**'. This name suited the child best who was destined to receive universal veneration in the coming days.¹ The name that Bhatta gave to the child for it was born with the blessings of Lord Venkatesha signified His extraordinary grace on the child. The most winsome child gradually began to crawl. Would suck his thumb. The pranks of the child drew everyone's attention. Though they were merely of a child, they did connote great meaning. Though the child had its natural innocence, the intellectuals inferred from its divine brilliance that it must be an enlightened soul. When the child was six months old, Bhatta held the rituals of having the child taste rice.

Bhatta performing Choodakarma (partial tonsuring of the head) initiated the child into learning the alphabets in its third year. The loss of royal patronage drove Bhatta's family to penury. As his daughter had come of age, the condition became graver with worry of her marriage added. Nevertheless, no sooner did Bhatta see the innocent face of his beloved son than all his worries disappeared. Not out of sheer love for his child. But out of confidence that all round amelioration that he would get from his son.

Initiating the learning of letters, the father wrote 'Omkaara' on sand and taught Venkatanatha to read it as 'ॐ'. The child immediately asked the father in surprise: "Father, God is very great;

* असविष्ट सुतम् द्विजेंद्रपत्नी शुभलग्ने परिपूर्णं दृष्टिभाजि
अखिलद्विजराजवंदनीयम् द्विजराजम् दिगिनामराधिपस्य । ।

-रा.वि

1 उदयास्त पटीरहेम पृथ्वीधरपर्यंतधराचरैर्जनौषैः। अभिवंद्य
इतीव बालकस्य व्यतनोद्रेकटनाथ नाम तातम् । ।

-रा.वि ३-४८

present everywhere. How to express Him with such a small letter?"¹ Bhatta sat agape! Bhatta's attachment to his son waning, he began to ponder. This reminded him of the Lord blessing him in his dream: "You will beget a noble son excellent in his divine pursuits". He became highly emotional. Immediately he felt like prostrating before the child. But he was reminded of the experience of Madhyageha Bhatta as described in Madhwavijaya and got frightened within himself. "Why did I entertain such a thought? It may be true that my son is an intellectual. Yet isn't such a child mine? Do others too have a claim over him!! Let this be my fortune for ever" was how he felt relieved. Marvelled at the intellect of his son, Bhatta drew his son closer and gave him an emotional hug. Others around were greatly amazed at this. "This boy must be an ardent devotee of God like Prahlada" was how they reacted. The lessons for the child went on quite alike.

As Thimmanna Bhatta had the greatest grace of God, the family odds could hardly daunt him. A compliant wife, noble children; added to these the fortune of having an excellent match for his daughter in Lakshminarasimhacharya, a great scholar from Kashyapa gothra, meant a smooth way for both mundane and spiritual happiness for Bhatta. He celebrated his daughter's marriage at the very age of eight years. The education of his first son Gururaja was being prosecuted. His Upanayanam too was conducted. Now Bhatta felt relieved of the colossal responsibility. He thought that from now on his family could lead a happy life.

By then, Sudheendratheertha had adorned the peetha of Maha Samsthana after Vijayeendratheertha. As Thimmanna Bhatta was a habitué of the Mutt during Sri Surendratheertha's period, he received an invitation from Sudheendratheertha to visit the Mutt. Thimmanna Bhatta went to the Mutt at Kumbhakonam with his family. The scholarly Bhatta received special honours at the Mutt which was popular as 'Vidya Mutt'. Sri Sudheendratheertha was extremely happy to see the boy Venkanna. What was bewildering for the swamiji was the boy's prodigious devotion in God, intellect and eloquence. The swamiji drew the conclusion that this boy would become a celebrity in the Divine and spiritual worlds. He paid rich

1 विलिख्यभूमौ प्रथमंकुमारम् रेखामिमाम् ॐ इति संपठेति ।
पित्रानियुक्तः पुनरब्रवीत्तामत्येकथम् सा गुणपूर्णसंज्ञा ।

- रा. वि ३-५५

compliments to Bhatta on his being the father of such a worthy son. Bhatta returned home after receiving special felicitations.

While the inevitable ageing did not except Bhatta, the malady of poverty plagued him. Yet the undaunted Bhatta had little to lament. "Be that as it may, it is enough if my children get proper education" was how convincingly he evinced a special interest in it. But he did not have the fortune of watching the growth and progress of his children. What was a mere indisposition turned to severe illness. Eventually Bhatta breathed his last meditating on Lord Hari. Bhatta's funeral took place as did the custom prescribed under the stewardship of Lakshminarasimhacharya himself. He shouldered the responsibility of Gururaja's education too. Gururaja's marriage also took place.

4. Marriage and Education

Venkanna by then had completed learning Amara, Shabda, Poems. His disposition underwent a lot of transformation particularly after his return from the Mutt which looked strange. He always let his mind dwell on the Divine thought as a daily routine. He wished that he too performed poojas like swamiji did. He had special devotion for the idol of Lord Moolarama placed in the middle and being worshipped at the Mutt. Having learnt about the Lord's powers and having heard about the story of the idol, he used to believe that the idol too had such powers.

Gururaja celebrated the Upanayanam of his younger brother Venkanna. After his Upanayanam, Venkanna too went along with his elder brother for studies under his brother-in-law Lakshminarasimhacharya. His studies began just as the Lord Krishna was studying under Sandeepanyacharya. Besides the endearing Venkanna used to play with other boys in close association. He used to be the first among all the boys in every game. His dexterity was quite conspicuous in the particular game of touching his fellow players, with his breath on hold. Even the elders were getting surprised noticing the fine coordination he displayed in his inspiration and expiration. After the study of literature in histrionics, grammar, logic and philosophy also were studied. Venkanna expertised in study of the Vedas too. Finally, he acquired proficiency even in music.

His journey from boyhood to youth being on the verge of completion, Venkannacharya wore greater brilliance. The charisma unique only to a Brahmin was ostensible. As he grew more and more learned, humility, courtesy, courage were visible. Venkanna was most handsome. His physique was ideal. His face perfectly reflected his scholarship. Whoever beheld such an august personality believed that he would be a universally noble soul.

Gururajacharya had to take up the responsibility of the marriage of his younger brother already in his proper age. He celebrated Venkanna's marriage on a grand scale with one Saraswathi, a girl from a pious Brahmin family in an Agrahara near his village. Saraswathi Bai who was very beautiful had all the natural qualities of a housewife such as wisdom, faithfulness, cleverness, politeness, shyness.¹ A perfect wife for Venkannacharya.

5. Family Life, Penury

Venkannacharya lived happily with his wife for sometime in his village. But the financial embarrassment got severe. When the royal patronage seized, his father himself had suffered from extreme poverty in his last days. After the demise of his father, his elder brother Gururajacharya was hardly managing the affairs of the family with the help of his brother-in-law. Venkata Bhatta's worry became two fold particularly after his marriage. While the woes of looking after himself were difficult to sustain, there came another to depend on him. With sufficient knowledge he had acquired having studied under his brother-in-law; carving a niche for him as a scholar in the eyes of the society, taking recourse to teaching and seeking support from families to earn a living would have been the natural course for Venkata Bhatta. But the run-of-the-mill kind of life little suited a unique soul like him. He developed great penchant for acquiring a still higher level of scholarship. That apart there arose in him intense desire to universally propagate the intricacies of Madhwa philosophy, the eloquence of Teekakritpada and the powers of the Lord. Further yearning to constantly worship the Lord, God of all the worlds, deeply entrenched in his heart. But his poverty became

1 विवेकनैपुण्यविनीतिदाक्षिणी पतीशभावप्रमुखा निजागुणाः। सुजात
मात्रा अपि शोभनाकृतेः समेतरास्ते सफला इवासने ।।

a great impediment for his divine pursuits. This greatly worried Venkata Bhatta. Each of these evaded solution. He spent some days in such a predicament. He had to shun the thought of going again to his brother-in-law Lakshminarasimhacharya to prosecute his studies bogged down by the trammels of married life with Saraswathi Devi. Thus he stayed resigned.

Saraswathamma too on her part was an ideal wife. She used to duly understand what Venkata Bhatta had in his mind. She would always revel in the thought that she had the fortune of being the wife of the noblest. Yet on no occasion did she slip into inattention in being helpful to him. It did not take much time for the wise Saraswathamma who had understood the poignancy of their poverty, to apprehend that a great longing had pent up in her husband's mind. The couple's mind was as pure as the beauty of Lotus. The feeling of sadness in one was quickly understood and a suitable solution was offered by the other.

However Venkata Bhatta was managing his family with great difficulty. Eventually Saraswathamma conceived. After nine months, she gave birth to a male child. Performing post natal rituals, Venkata Bhatta named the child 'Lakshminarayana'.

As their family grew bigger, so did their poverty grow severer. How can Venkannacharya absolutely dedicated to the devotion of God, find wealth? यस्यानुग्रहमिच्छामि तस्य वित्तं हराम्यहम् । For this Divine saying, Venkata Bhatta stands out as the best example. But the grind of poverty he suffered was beyond measure. It may be said that if anyone suffered again the penury that Kuchela reeled under in Dwaparayuga, it was Venkata Bhatta.

Afraid of facing the moments of hardship that invariably trail behind each day, Saraswathamma often wondered "Why the Sun should rise!" She was never off the threshold of the house being a tower among most faithful wives. She always wore the only old saree. Even that had got torn. Not to talk of the child Lakshmi narayana totally unclad. The husband carried on wearing a short dhoti tattered and torn. All that Venkata Bhatta's family had to make do with was very thick new and particularly cheap clothes; grandly once a year!¹

Provisions insufficient for even a day's requirement was all the

1 अद्भस्वैकम् वत्स्यतो नास्य नव्यम् स्थूलम् वस्त्रम् संततम् चाल्पमौल्यम् ।
नव्यम् वस्त्रम् नैवसूक्ष्मम् कदापि क्षौमे तस्मिन् काकथा किञ्चिनस्य ।

- रा. वि ६-१९

family had. It would be a great feast if vegetables could sparsely find their place in their mere homely meals. The family could hardly think of an oil bath even on an important annual festival like Deepavali. Not to speak of ghee. Of course they had tasted it on the day of their marriage.¹ On many a day, when they could not afford even a single leaf, they had to have their food served on the bare floor.²

None the less not a jot of difference ever surfaced in the family. Saraswathamma had no disgruntle. Venkata Bhatta was never disposed to fuming. The more intense the ordeal of the family grew, the greater did Saraswathamma's devotion to her husband become. Venkata Bhatta's devotion to God grew many times.³

This being the condition, one day after finishing his bath and Ahneeka, Venkata Bhatta peeped into the kitchen. There was no sign of any fire for cooking. There sat Saraswathi Devi in a corner overwhelmed by sadness.

Ven: Why? What are you worried about?

Sar: Today I haven't had the fortune of preparing for oblation.

Ven: Why so much worry over this? Is it not enough if we offer leaves, flowers, fruits, water with devotion. But what we don't have is devotion only. Now we need to worry about that.

Sar: Then, Vaishwadeva?

Ven: It suffices to do it through inner soul.

Saraswathamma could not suppress her feeling of sadness. With the natural feminine instincts, tears welled up in her eyes. Hiding her emotions, she composedly said with her head bent down "At least a little for you to be able to carry on your activities in learning, etc....."

Venkatabhatta appreciated the predicament of his wife. He felt how strong the family bond was. "What a great hindrance on our path to the service of God? What a pity! For a body in pursuit of Divine goals, mere corporal requisites like food and clothing have

1 तैलाभ्यंगम् वत्सरस्यैकवारम् नैतस्यास्ति प्राज्य माज्यम् कथंस्यात् । -रा.वि
2 कालेकाले लभ्यते नास्य भक्तम् लब्धम् चेत्तद्भुज्यतेहंतभूमौ । पात्रा
भावादेकदा नार्थितेऽपि श्रुद्धाधायः शान्तिमेवालभिष्ट । । - रा. वि
3 विद्योद्योगाद्वासरान् थापयंतम् प्रासौन्नत्यम् पातुकम् निर्धनत्वम् ।
अत्यासन्न श्रीनिदानेदिरेशश्च्यानोपाये बुद्धिवार्धिसिषेवे । - रा. वि ६-१८

become so much prominent!" So regretting for a moment and meditating on God, he smiled a reply to Saraswathamma's helplessness in all composure.

Ven: Divine meditation itself is real nurturing. I have perfectly understood your feelings. You are greatly sour over our child Lakshminarayana save our having to go without food. It is but natural. It is too much to think of looking to others for our trivial needs. The Lord of Lords, all powerful and most merciful Srinivasa should grace us. We should be contended with what he blesses us. The Upanishads say that one should not seek anything from the absolutely dependent and insignificant beings*. "But should be in constant meditation of the Almighty and a pursuer of noble deeds. What Lord Hari blesses us with is the greatest boon, that which we most deserve". This is how Sri Madhwacharya has ordained us to look upon.¹ It is doubly certain that the Lord specially blesses those who beseech Him for even the mundane happiness. The famish Kuchela offered beaten rice to the Lord, in worship. Dhruvaraja appeased God through penance for the throne. When his life was in danger, Gajendra looked to the protector of the universe. The threesome had the special divine blessings. Not to speak of Kuchela whom the Lord graced with his divine embrace. Even the Goddess Rukmini played host. All through, his impecuniousness never occurred to Kuchela and while on his way back home he pondered that "the Lord of such unique divinity was so condescending! It must be to shower on me His greatest grace only that He did not bless me with wealth".² Just as his journey back home terminated, the magnanimous Lord had already put in place all the wealth for his family. In his hymn praising our family deity Lord Srinivasa, Devasharma, a great devotee of the Lord had averred that one receives His grace if one merely utters His name

* तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः मागुधः कस्यस्वित्धनम् । ईशादन्यस्यास्वतंत्र्येण तस्यदाने सामर्थ्याभावादीशदत्तैर्नैव यद्वृच्छालब्धिनैव वर्तेत । ।

- राघवेन्द्र गुरुचरणकृतः ईशोपनिषत्खंडार्थ

- 1 कुरु भुंक्ष्व च कर्म निजम् नियतम् हरिपाद विनम्रधिया सततम् - द्वादशस्तोत्रम्
- 2 अहो ब्रह्मण्यदेवस्य दृष्टा ब्रह्मण्यता माया । क्वाहम् द्रिद्रः पापीयान् क्व कृष्णः श्रीनिकेतनः । । ब्रह्मबंधुरितिस्माहंबाहुभ्याम् परिरंभितः ।अधनोयाधनम् प्राप्यमाद्यन्नुचैर्नमाम् स्मरेत् । इति कारुणिकोन्नम् धनम् मे भूरि नाददात् । - भा. द. उ. ८१

out of ignorance, insincerety, hunger, sorrow.¹

So simple are the ways to please Him. Yet we keep committing the sin. Not a moment do we devote to the thought of God. Nobody to compare to our ingratitude if we even for a moment do not turn our minds towards the Lord on whom we conveniently depend. What a great pity that we hold Him responsible for the moments of distress and failure which arise from the past evil deeds of ours! We are really the sinners. They are the real beasts who do not think of Him who has in His fold the noblest of the qualities in the universe. How much has Brahma, the Jeevottama undermined himself while in the thought of the Lord! But this undermining applies better to insignificant beings like us.² How a great soul like Sri Vijayeendra has prayed to the Lord in total surrender "grant me the fortune of the Divine thought at least for a day!"³ This being so, we swagger in worldly infatuation.

As he went on to say like this, Venkannacharya plunged himself into oblivion. Addressing the Lord vociferously, he entreated:-

ಪತಿತರೋಳು ಎನ್ನಂಥ ಪತಿತರೊಬ್ಬರ ಕಾಣೆ
ಗತಿಯು ನೀನಲ್ಲದೇ ಅನ್ನರಿಲ್ಲ |
ಪತಿತಪಾವನನೆಂಬೋ ಬಿರುದುಂಟುಮಾಡುವ
ಕ್ಷಿತಿಪತಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣರಾಯ ನೀನಹುದೋ ||

Saraswathamma was deeply exhilarated by the ecstatic divine absorption of her husband. She cursed herself for having complained of starvation to an ascetic like him. Prostrating at the feet of her husband, she apologised for her dwelling on the trifles of family life.

On such days the entire family had to be without food. Thus on many a day the kitchen fire remained unlit in Venkatacharya's house. As is widely known, abstinence from food (Ekadasi) is observed

- 1 अज्ञानादथवाडंभात् पुण्यश्लोकस्य नाम ते यो वदेत्तानि नश्यन्ति तूलराशिर्यथानलात् । क्षुब्दीतो दुःखितः श्रान्तस्ते नाम यदि संस्मरेत् । तस्य दुःखानि सर्वाणि नश्यन्ति क्षणमात्रतः । - आदित्यपुराणम्
- 2 कृष्णम् कृतघ्नम् दुष्कर्मकारिणम् पापभाजनम् । अपराधसहस्राणामाकरम् करुणाकर । कृपया माम् केवलया गृहाण मधुराधिप । विषयार्णवमग्नं मामुद्धर्तुं त्वामिहाहंसि । । - जितंतेस्तोत्रम्
- 3 इह भारतभूतलेतिपुण्ये द्रविणस्वीसुतपूर्वकेषु मायाम् । अलमेकदिनम् विमुच्य वा मे तवपादाब्जरतिम् प्रदेहि देव । । - दुरितापहारस्तोत्रम् २१

as a custom on every fortnight. But at Venkatacharya's, five to six such days were usual.¹

Fate had Venkatabhatta pause through a train of more agonising moments as if to put his austerity to test. On a day early in the morning when Saraswathamma was about to attend to her usual chores, she was in for a shock. Only few cracked and broken vessels, tattered clothes and little rags they possessed were missing. Breaking open the door in midnight, the thieves had looted even them.² Dismayed Saraswathamma stood silently by her husband's feet. Venkatabhatta rose from his sleep reciting the name of Lord Hari. Paying her obeisance at the feet of her husband, Saraswathamma stood sad with her head bowed.

Unaware of the theft, Venkatabhatta with the impression that his wife might be sour about the usual state of affairs, and essaying to console her, asked:-

Ven: A partner in the life of poverty as you are, not a little happiness have you enjoyed! Have you?

Thinking that it would be improper to apprise him of the incident of theft, Saraswathamma lost no time in replying to him.

Sar: Never in my life have I had such times of happiness.

Ven: What! Does poverty make anyone happy?

Sar: Poverty? How fortune I am! Who else has had such happiness? But I am constantly pestered by the thought whether I deserve to be the wife of a highly pious soul like you!

Ven: It is just the simplicity of a woman.

Sar: What does it mean? Ever since I stepped into this house I have been noticing your novel and noble qualities as each day passes. How could an ordinary woman like me understand the greatness of an inestimable soul like you?

Ven: Leave it there.

Sar: Even to speak from my heart is hesitating for me. To think that a great soul which has in it a profound knowledge, intense

1 विष्णोरेको वासरो वर्धमाने लोकेकलुषः पंचपस्तस्य गेहे ।

- रा. वि ६-२३

2 छिन्ने वस्त्रे भिन्नपानीयपात्रे जीर्णस्थाल्याम् दस्युभिर्नीयमाने ।

-रा. वि ६-२४

devotion to God, great wisdom, true commitment to Dharma, is my husband, my master and this priceless asset is mine only, appears too narrow for me. But with the liberty of being your wife, I had to say all these. That is all. I beseech your pardon. It is not proper to drag one who is always absorbed in Divine thoughts into conversation on trivial matters. But it is difficult to discipline the mind.

Ven: What is that so great about my knowledge? Only He should grace. There are many who have outreached even the horizon of devotion. It is impudent even to contemplate a semblance of comparison. What a wonderful grace they have! What a peerless fixity of thought on the Divine they shine with!! After all I have been whiling away my time. Fathoming deeper into the Shastras to know more and more about the infiniteness of the Lord, is what really my soul gravitates towards. But the path to this still evades me.

Sar: I am not competent to give suggestions to a paragon. But the little I know, I present in all humility.

Ven: Go ahead. Why hesitate?

Sar: The swamiji is in close vicinity. In such a place.....

Ven: How wonderful your suggestion is! You are really sagacious, it is exactly this which has made perfect coordination between us possible.

Sar: "I am really blessed. Heartened to hear him speak so admiringly of me. How merciful is the God to have blessed me with such great treasure!" was how she soliloquised.

Sar: It seems that He is testing us. At dawn the house wore an empty look. Thieves have made away with whatever we had.

Ven: What a surprise! (Being silent for a moment) It is alright. So must be His will. There is absolutely no room for apprehension when we are under the protection of the master of the universe. Be there nothing, it is enough to have His grace.

Sar: Alas! This goodliest physique with an aura of brilliance suffers deterioration from malnourishment? Know not what to do.

By then it was two to three days since Venkatabhatta couple

had had their food. Worse the theft that ensued was like adding insult to injury. Something occurred to Venkatacharya who pondered over this for a while.

Ven: (Smilingly) Nothing to worry. However you have given a good suggestion. He only knows why He has so inspired you. My only solicitude is about you.

Sar: Having always been in close association with you, I even shun to think of a moment's separation. How can I carry on without taking a darshan at you, without my listening to your mellifluous discourse on Shastras? I cannot think of estrangement even in my wildest dreams. I beg you to take this servant with you.

6. Education

Appreciating her acceptable proposition Venkatabhatta went to Kumbhakonam with his family and met Sri Sudheendratheertha. The swamiji enquired about his welfare. Venkatacharya disclosed his great yearning to the swamiji in solitude. Immensely pleased swamiji had proper arrangements made for his family to stay comfortably and began to specially honour Venkatacharya.

Appreciating his enthusiasm, the very next day in an auspicious moment, the swamiji began teaching Venkatacharya. The swamiji well groomed by Vijayeendratheertha who had come in the tradition of erudite scholars like Teekakritpada, Vibudhendratheertha, Chandrikacharya, is the teacher on one side! The student on the other side is a highly learned Venkatabhatta! This being so, how fine the standard could be!! Everyday lessons on every Shastra were being taught. Lessons from all books including Vyakarana Mahabhashya, Jayadeva Teeka, Bhaatta Meemamsa, Bhaamathi, Gourava Meemamsa, Tatparya Chandrika were in the routine¹.

It is most thrilling to just imagine the method and excellence of teaching. Those days nobody had stipulated a definite duration as do the schools and colleges these days. Nevertheless the commitment to learning evident those days cannot be seen even in the field of research in the present day. Besides bringing about evolution in each learner, the sterling system of education of those

1 शाब्दम् भाष्यम् जायदेवीच टीकाम् भाट्टतंत्रम् भामतिम् गौरवंच ।
व्यासार्थोक्तम् चंद्रिकाम् वेकटार्यो यद्यद्वेद्यम् तत्तदभ्यस्यति स्म । ।

-रा. वि ६-७

days made him bequeath the light of knowledge to the posterity; On the contrary today's dispensation promoting egoism, ignorance, greed, selfishness in the guise of education, is detrimental to the community.

After Venkatacharya finishes his morning bath and Ahneeka, students would assemble for classes. Different students would study different Shastras at different periods. Venkatacharya besides studying all Shastras under the swamiji would himself teach the subjects to others proficiently. Venkatacharya's assiduous involvement in noble deeds was marvellous. Teaching was a great pleasure for him.

In the morning Bhatta would teach from Sootra Bhashya and other books on philosophy. Classes on grammar would follow. Later classes on logic would go. In the afternoon he would teach Poorva Meemamsa. Thus he spent many days at Kumbhakonam.¹

7. Debate

The swamiji left that place on a tour. Venkatacharya also accompanied.

The swamiji during the course of his tour cruised through the surrounding region. That region was known as Chola State. It had become sanctimonious through the most sacred river Cauvery. Its climate was quite salubrious. The soothing breeze would disseminate the fragrance of fruits and flowers all over. The fertile land with its sylvan milieu had gifted an enchanting spectacle of verdant growth. The Chola State was full of Agraharas inhabited by pious Brahmins. Though Dharma was on the brink of deterioration all over the country owing to anarchy and foreign invasion that had saddened the people, the ancient culture taking deep roots still reverberated with great lustre in Chola State. Such was its glory. Each Agrahara had thousands of Brahmin households. Everyone was a scholar in each house. Those days the need for establishing big universities spending huge sums of money as is the trend now did not exist at all. It is also not possible to get education in the real sense from such universities. Skill, art, knowledge, Dharma,

1 प्रातःस्नात्वा साधुवेदांतभाष्यम् शाब्दम् पश्चात्तर्कशास्त्रम् ततः सः ।
पूर्वम् तंत्रम् चावदन्वेकटार्यो तुर्ये यामे कांश्चिदब्दाननैषीत् ।

-रा. वि ६-८

culture cannot be imparted through compulsion. Making education compulsory, mere spread of literacy, mushrooming educational institutions, all spell an economic doom. Successful dissemination of knowledge among people cannot become a reality through external compulsion or persuasion unless there occurs transformation of their minds and they acquaint themselves with the fundamentals of education like “casuistry with which nature has provided man, demands that he stay free from being bestial. Once a man, one cannot think of anything insulated from treading the sacred path of education regardless of his profession. Equally essential is our imparting the knowledge, we have acquired, to the younger generation”. It is needless to emphasise that the ideal system of education of the bygone days had been more fruitful. When each household in Chola State comprised scholars, each must have been a centre of learning itself. There were learned teachers everywhere. Mere knowledge does serve no purpose. It should be a perfect blend of character and strict adherence. Accordingly daily rituals like Oupasana and Homas were going on in each house there. That part of the sky is described to have turned blue ensconced by the fumes rising from the Homakundas.¹

The swamiji had a rousing welcome in a place of such sacredness. Touring many places there, he reached Rajamannaragudi. There he met an Adwaitha saint who was with his disciples. It was usual for the scholars meeting each other to discuss various subjects on Shastras. Unwanted gossiping, deliberation on worldly matters and other platitudes were not the order. This is the reason why our knowledge so delicately honed grew through quick comprehension. As he met that Adwaitha saint, Venkatabhatta broached the discussion with a question on the concept of Monoism itself. Only those who had the knowledge of Sanskrit and Shastras could well relish the debate that transpired in Sanskrit.

Ven : What is the proof that Jeeva is not different from Brahma?

Ad St : As the universe itself except Brahma is an illusion,

1 ग्रामेग्रामे तद्दृष्ट्याणाम् सहस्रम् गेहेगेहे पंडिता एव सर्वे । -रा. वि ६-३
ग्रामे ग्रामेऽध्यापका जातमात्रा गेहेगेहे सर्वशास्त्रागमानाम् ।
सायंप्रातर्होमधूमातिनीलम् रूपोपेतम् यत्र नीरूपमभ्रम् ।। -रा. वि ६-४

there is bound to be absence of difference between Brahma and Jeeva.

Ven: This does not corroborate (किंचित्योस्मिन्नात्रमानम् त्वयौक्तम्)

Ad St: What? You do not know how to use correct words. Where is the word किंचितः found? It is not quoted in any lexicon, none has heard of it, it appears to be a product of your figment.

Ven: In that case it becomes evident that you have not read Mahabhashya.

This counter salvo of Venkatabhatta enraged the entire team. One of the disciples of that Adwaitha saint who got very irate said:- “Venkatabhatta, it is enough. Keep quite. Mahabhashya is so profound! You are unequal. You are so impudent! Stop your rant. You have cleverly chosen to parry simple questions, where did it originate from? What does it connote?, and to talk digressively without answering these”.

Venkatacharya was about to reply.

Another disciple:- (Fumingly) “Dear scholar, you a master of Mahabhashya! Could you throw light on यङ्लुगंत form of प्सा dhatu in शत्रंत ?¹. All before he could finish this derisive question, Venkatabhatta shot back.

Ven: That is पाप्सत् . Leave it. What is the यजंत form of this dhatu?

The questioner had scarcely expected this counter question. He was not even competent to understand whether what Venkatacharya said was right or wrong. Having so severely being tackled with a question, he felt rumbles in his stomach. Eventually he sat quietly in abasement. Even his saint guru who sat ruminating

1. The world of Sanskrit is the richest. It has different forms of words for different shades of meaning. As there are different forms of verbs signifying the three tenses appertinent to the past, the present and the future, the form of the verb containing श्रुतप्रत्यय meaning ‘Is doing’, ‘Is going’ has become widely known. So also the forms of verbs containing प्रत्यय called यङ्लुक् are used when there is special emphasis on action and a situation requiring an emphatic statement.

The Dhatu प्सा has the meanings रक्षण (protection) and भक्षण (eating). This ‘Dhatu’ belongs to the second ‘Gana’. These Dhatus are a little cryptic. यङ्लुगन्त is very difficult and unfamiliar in it. Even scholars of great erudition need to study the books and think deeply before telling the यङ्लुहन्त form in शत्रन्त. Assuming that flashing a retort to this question would be quite impossible, the point was raised.

for over an hour failed to hit upon the correct answer. The assembly stood amazed.

The swamiji presiding over the debate was astonished at the extraordinary intellect of Venkatabhatta. What all he had thought of Venkatabhatta was that he was a good student and had quick comprehension at best. But now having witnessed his eloquence in debate, mastery over Shastras, speech intercepted by smiles on his face, the swamiji was awe struck. Though Venkatabhatta was studying Mahabhashya under him, little did the swamiji know that Venkatabhatta had assimilated Mahabhashya to a degree one would shudder to imagine. Immensely delighted swamiji nodded his head in great commendation and addressed Venkatabhatta in the presence of all the scholars thus:

“Venkatacharya, I am very much impressed by your mastery over grammar. Your expertise in Mahabhashya is extraordinary. You have had the greatest blessings of Acharya, a master extraordinaire whose knowledge has exceeded the unfathomable depths of the greatest ocean of Sanskrit grammar. It is very pertinent to call you **Mahabhashyacharya**”.

Ven: All your blessings.

From then on Venkatabhatta became known as “**Mahabhashya Venkatabhatta**”.¹

Venkatacharya’s fame spread far and wide. The swamiji on his part ascribed to him all great laurels the Mutt won. The swamiji after a darshan of Lord Krishna returned to Kumbhakonam. It marked a great milestone. Mahasamsthana enjoying a glorious synonymity with ‘**VIDYA MATHA**’ conjures up the vision of a perfect centre of learning! There in the Mutt is Venkatabhatta, a titan in the reservoir of scholars!! What more to vouchsafe? The Mutt received an invitation from the royal court of Tanjore. The swamiji visited the court. One Yajnanarayana Dixit adorned the royal court of Tanjore as its chief scholar. His was an excellent scholarship. A paragon of Vedas. He had written commentaries on Shulba Sootras. Dixit, who had come with his eager desire to meet the swamiji noticed Venkatabhatta just as the exchange of pleasantries were coming

1 दृष्ट्वासर्वम् देशिकः श्री सुधीन्द्रः प्रागज्ञातम् कौशलम् शब्दभाष्ये ।
प्राचिनाख्याम् ताम् महाभाष्यपूर्वाम् प्रादादस्मै पश्यताम् पंडितानाम् । ।

to an end. Addressing Venkatabhatta, he said “Oh! I am delighted to meet you incidentally (**काकतालीय**) whose name has reached the pinnacle of fame”.

The explanations offered by Dixit about the word **काकतालीय** in reply to the query of Venkatabhatta were ingenuously repudiated by the latter. Great scholars and poets assembled there were petrified with Venkatabhatta’s stunning revelation of the defects in the meaning, the different authors of Lakshanagrantha had given.

Again in the afternoon, the scholars assembled. The subject of discussion was ‘Tapta Mudradharana’. Dixit argued that ‘Tapta Mudrankana’ is incompatible with Shastras and futile. Venkatabhatta giving convincing explanations said that without ‘Tapta Mudrankana’ one cannot even think of salvation and further argued that it is the very sign of ‘Mumukshu’ with appropriate proofs from the book ‘Chakrameemamsa’ authored by Sri Vijayeendratheertha. Dixit commended Bhatta’s scholarship by nodding his head. Considering his scholarship to be unique, the gratified Dixit accorded Venkatabhatta great honours.

8. Literary Work

Thus establishing his supremacy in debates all over, Venkatabhatta earned the sobriquet as a lion among debaters. These changing times had a soothing effect on his life riddled with strife. He did not feel the burden of maintaining his family particularly after he came to receive Mutt’s patronage. Daily discourses on Shastras were also being held. His laudable desire of championing betterment of the world by propagating Madhwa philosophy among the virtuous was considerably accomplished through debates. He thought that by mere debating and winning in debates, which for the moment gets the plaudits from the audience, cannot serve the cardinal purpose of arriving at the conclusion about the real philosophy. “If its effects on the people need to be enduring, the task I take up in this direction must also be of a permanent nature. Towards achieving this, writing books is the only way”. Thus he decided. He made an auspicious beginning, by writing a commentary on ‘Anu Madhwavijaya’ or ‘Prameyanavamalika’, a small book written by Narayanapandithacharya. The author has portrayed the meaning of each canto of Madhwavijaya in two hymns each in his book Anu Madhwavijaya. Venkatabhatta has fascinatingly

enunciated how the comprehensive meaning of Madhwavijaya emanate from so compendious hymns. It was this commentary, a debut of Venkatabhatta on the sacred biography of Acharya, which became instrumental in securing him a pre-eminent place in the world of literature. This is the only work of Raghavendrathiertha prior to his sanyasa. All others were written by him in his post sanyasa period. In his 'Gurugunastavana', Sri Vadeendrathiertha has exclaimed "pleased by Venkatabhatta's commentary on his (Madhwa's) Vijaya, Acharya blessed him with ascension of the throne of his Mahasamsthana. Vagdevi also delighted by the extolment of her husband coronated him in Vidyasamrajya too".¹ Therefore it becomes evident that this is the only book written by Guru Raghavendra before his sanyasa. This establishes beyond doubt any assumption that he wrote 'Parimala' before his sanyasa is far from truth.*

9. Call For Sanyasa

His commentary on Anu Madhwavijaya served as a perfect preface to the literary life of Venkatabhatta. Above all he had the ambition to write commentaries on the Veda triad in accordance with Rigbhashya of Acharya. But it had no chances of translating into reality under the circumstances prevailing then. The guru Sudheendrathiertha swamiji was also in know of this. But for no good reason he did not evince any interest. "Well, let it happen when Lord Hari wills" was how Venkatabhatta quietly accepted the reality.

Venkatabhatta became the most beloved and endearing to the swamiji. Considering Venkatabhatta richly deserving to be his successor in Mahasamsthana, the swamiji was anticipating a conducive occasion to confabulate about the matter with him. In

1 धीरश्रीराघवेन्द्रम् कृतनिजविजयस्तग्धरार्थप्रकाशम्
दृष्ट्वा संतुष्ट चेता दशमतिरचिरादभ्यर्षिचत् पदे स्वे ।
नूनम् वाणी तदीयानननलिनगता तत्कृतस्व प्रियैक
प्रत्यासंगप्रहृष्टा स्वयमपि तदनु स्वे पदेचाभ्यर्षिचत् । ।

* That he wrote 'Parimala' before sanyasa can be categorically denied. Because manifesting before Venkatacharya, Vagdevi herself ordained him "to become sanyasi and take up writing. Otherwise the formidable task of writing commentary on 'Nyaya Sudha' would have to be addressed by those only drilled in grammar. This concoction which goes against 'Raghavendra Vijaya' is simply unsustainable.
- Publisher

the meantime, one of the disciples of swamiji disgusted with the inclement extremes of family life and driven by a sense of detachment, entreated the swamiji to bless him with sanyasa. Acceding to his request, the swamiji conferred sanyasa on him and named him 'Yadavendra'. He also gifted him for his daily worship an idol from among many in the Mutt. Greatly pleased with what he got from the swamiji, Yadavendra left on a tour. Sudheendrathiertha did not have any intention at all to entrust Mahasamsthana to Yadavendra.

The earlier wish of the great soul Sudheendrathiertha must surely be a divine wish. On a night, Lord Moolarama appearing in his dream ordained the swamiji to entrust the Mahasamsthana to Venkatacharya because it is only he who deserves to succeed. Therefore the swamiji decided that Venkatacharya deserved to head the Mahasamsthana as well the Vidya Samrajya and had him come to the Mutt on a day.

After exchange of usual enquiries, the swamiji spoke out his mind.

Swam: Venkatacharya, it should be said that you have the complete blessings of the Almighty. For an intellect like you, the Mutt has become an abode to be in. If it were not so, there would have been no room for your series of triumphs in debates. Lord Hari is greatly pleased by your commentary on Anu Madhwavijaya.

Ven: All because of your blessings. If I am anything today, I owe it to the ocean of patronage that your Holiness have graced me with.

Swam: But I do not feel contended with all these. It is my desire that you get more and more opportunities.

Ven: I have the apprehension that the depth of gratitude I have for the swamiji is quite insufficient for the blessings I often receive.

Swam: When Moolarama, the Almighty himself has graced you, why mention mine?

Ven: (Astoundingly) What is that your Holiness saying? Looks strange!

Swam: Nothing strange. So am I ordained!

Ven: I beg your pardon for my audacity. What an unthinkable proposition! Am I not too small to accede to Mahasamsthana adorned by the souls which have attained the divinity of supreme kind like Teekakritpada, Vibhuhendra, Vijayeendra and your Holiness? How odd it is for me to head the Vidya Matha of Vedantha Samrajya coming in the tradition of Sanakadis! I just shun the very thought. This is quite analogous with the foolish adventure of one who dares crossing a sea with a load on his bag when he has not even seen a sea.¹ None will call him a wise person.

Swam: The means are many to cross this great ocean. "Tranquillity, equipoise, courage, generosity" are the ships. But quite aloft above these do my blessings guard and guide you to the goal. Still why the apprehension about crossing the sea?²

Viewing this as a problem extremely difficult to resolve, the swamiji began advising Venkatacharya in seclusion. Venkatacharya thought that there was no alternative but to speak through his heart before the swamiji. The swamiji knew that the Venkatacharya couple had perfect compliance, harmony and love between them. It is for this reason, the swamiji had dexterously mooted the proposition.

Venkatacharya prostrating before the swamiji submitted.

Ven: Your Holiness, kindly grant me your audience. I have something to plead. I am afraid, I do not deserve to plead much with your Holiness. Isn't renunciation the main criterion for sanyasa?³ How can one bound by the shackles of family life entertain such a thought? My wife is still young. I haven't had thread ceremony celebrated for my son yet. All the more, have I attained such an age to take up the onerous responsibility of heading the Mutt? Under these circumstances I do not have the least inclination to take sanyasa. In spite of these if the fiat of your Holiness becomes too compelling, the only course available for

1 क्वाहं न्यासः कुत्र वा वेदविद्यासाम्राज्यम् ते क्वापि विद्याहमार्य ।
पारम् सिंधोर्भारमूढा विवेकी गंतुंयत्नः कोजनः संतनोति । ।

-रा. वि ६

2 इत्युक्तस्तम् प्राहनावो हि बह्व्यः शान्तिर्दातिर्धीरतोदारता च ।
केतुस्तासाम् मत्प्रसादो गरीयान् विद्यंते किम् दुर्घटम् सिंधुयाने । ।

-रा. वि ६-२८

3 यदा विरक्तः पुरुषः प्रजायते तदैव सन्यासनिधिः श्रुतौ श्रुतः ।

me is to think that I don't deserve the proximity to the swamiji, the greatest fortune I have had so far.¹

The Swamiji perfectly knew that Venkatacharya was most deserving. With the view that "it was quite natural for Venkatacharya to have deep love for his compliant wife. But it would well serve the purpose if in a cordial and persuasive atmosphere, the futility of family attachment is impressed upon him convincingly", the swamiji very affectionately spoke in amiable term to Venkatacharya who had sat very close to him.

"Venkatacharya, you are a great scholar, learned, conversant with the secrets of Madhwa philosophy, and it is needless for me to tell you about renunciation. Nevertheless as your well wisher, I would like to dilate; listen. Everyone wishes to be happy. He thinks that wife and children, kith and kin, house and comfort, position, respect, and others bring him happiness. Therefore everyone craves for the right choice. Truly it is not wrong. When can a real happiness arrive if we busy ourselves in squandering the whole of our precious life on setting right these things which we believe to be the tools of happiness? A wise person would definitely not fail to realise this. What is true of an individual's family is certainly true of a state and of a nation. The desultory tendency becoming overwhelming lures us to shifting from system to system, method to method on the conjuncture that they became obsolete and meaningless and that if a new approach is forged, things would take the expected shape. Thus centuries trundle in the pursuit towards a perfect transformation and that again ends in obsolescence. Leave that matter there. Let us advert to an individual's life. His efforts do not terminate at having just wife and children, house and hearth, respect, honours and awards. He tries to enter the realm of non-material aspects. Seeks to have ethereal experience in music, art and literature. With the ecstasies he has been thrown into, he derives ethereal happiness. Here signs of another world beyond this material happiness present themselves to our eyes. The severer the pangs, the clearer do the signs get. A being soaked in deep sorrow importunes the Divine Force beyond him for his rescue. Though different philosophers have laid discreet paths to gain proximity to

1 एकांते तैर्बोधितः प्रत्यवादीत् बाला भार्या बालको नोपनीतः ।
बालश्चाहंनान्त्रमेऽस्ति वांछा निर्बंधश्चेत् निर्गमिष्यामि नूनम् । ।

-रा. वि ६-२९

such Divine power 'Para Brahma', the truth that the one which our Acharya has shown only is the right path, may not be unknown to the critic. Acharya has clearly demonstrated what we should value among other things. He has described the method of worshipping that Divine Force amidst worldly life. There lies the real happiness. Every path other than this leads us nowhere. Now if you wish to continue your family life, you may have to persist in getting the support from the prominent persons in this material world. You may have to eulogize scoundrels, men indulged in profanity – as noble and sacred, flatter the most greedy as a magnanimous Karna, rate the ugliest as most handsome, praise the angriest as the meekest, call the most dullard a great scholar.¹

What all these are for! Is it not for some pittance he doles out? Now understand how trivial money is.²

With the object of earning money we pursue paths persistently without minding to mortgage our self esteem. Yet we see no end to our greed. What then are the sensual pleasures? The charm of companionship between husband and wife is after all transient. But culminates in sadness. The examples of Vali and Dharmaraja are quite ostensible.³ Therefore these fascinating means though appear to abound in happiness, in times to come are sure to send a pall of gloom. Therefore it does not behove a righteous soul with such merits as unmatched like you to be so disposed. You must seek the path that leads you to real happiness, engage in tasks that take you there. That alone is the path to fulfilment. The Vedas that guide us to the glorious path of happiness are your obsession. Had you not expressed before me your desire to expound the meaning of the Vedas? Accomplishment of such a sacred task

- 1 अक्षणा काणम् कर्णपर्यन्तनेत्रम् लोभागारम् संततौदार्यभाजम् ।
संध्योपासावर्जितम् यायजूकम् दुष्टाचारम् साधु कर्माचरन्तम् । ।
क्रूरम् शांतम् रागशीलम् विरक्तम् मत्तम् मुग्धम् वृद्धिमंतम् युवानम् ।
दुष्टम् साधुम् दुर्विनीतम् विनीतम् लक्ष्मातीतम् लक्षणौघैरुपेतम् । ।
ःकाराजम् साङ्गसर्वागमज्जम् वैरागारम् वर्धितस्निग्धभावम् अज्ञोत्सम्
ज्ञानिनामग्रगण्यम् व्यक्ताकृतम् लब्धगंभीरभावम् । -रा. वि ६-३१, ३२, ३३
- 2 गत्वागम्यम् पूजयित्वाप्यपूज्यम् सोढ्यामानम् तेनचादायकिंचित् ।
नालंबुद्धिर्दीयमानेऽपितासाम् जातात्मानम् क्लेशयित्वापि नूनम् । । -रा. वि ६-३४
- 3 श्रेयोतीते किदृशोऽत्रानुरागः का वा भार्या जानतो नंदनः कः ।
स्त्रीसंपर्को दुःखदाय्येव नूनम् दृष्टान्तोस्मिन् बालिधर्मात्मजाद्याः । । -रा. वि ६-३०

does not brook the confines of family life. What exactly suits it is your attaining sanyasa. Therefore pondering over all these, you discard all your interest in family life. Perform your son's Upanayanam; Prepare the ground for taking sanyasa".

Swamiji's words of advice aroused a kind of revolution in Venkatabhatta's mind. He fell into the vortex of opposing thoughts. He cogitated thus:

"Is sanyasa the only means to attain fulfilment for a man? Can't a man accomplish fulfilment confining himself to the family ambience as such? Why not? Particularly by God's grace I have an extremely compliant wife..... well. Then what about livelihood? Again the helpless dependence.....horrifying! Not in the wildest of my imaginations. Earlier, He delivered me from such a morass of penury. Why resort to dependence now? Then which is the right course? Should I tread the path of sanyasa?.....No. What would be the fate of Saraswathi? Who is there to take care of her and child Lakshminarayana who depend on me?.....Does it concern me? When I am in Lord Hari's refuge is there any need to let such trivial thoughts bother me?.....Do my wants and desires reach fulfilment in my family life? It is now the age of atheism. The future may be beset with still more horrible situations. Having had this noble birth will it not be the real service to God to demonstrate His existence to the world? Is it not the divine call to strive towards expurgating improper description and misinterpretation done to Vedas? Then which is the best choice?¹.....Is it the family?.....No not! For one determined to achieve, sanyasa is better. What pleases Lord Hari is sanyasa. I have to insulate myself from the family life, a colossal silo of ignorance and get into the company of virtuous men. Surrender to Lord Hari leading a life of seclusion. That is the best choice indeed.².....I know not why I fail to make a choice. If I think of escaping from here, there is the wrath of guru lurking, if I choose to stay on, there stares sanyasa.....³ It looks as if Lord Hari has

- 1 श्रुत्वाश्रुण्वन्नेव मुक्तम् गुरुणाम् गत्वायासि देपेचिताम् दुरन्ताम् । । -रा. वि ६-३६
- 2 तत्साधु मन्ये असुरवर्यं देहिनाम् सदा समुद्विग्न धियामसत् शहात् ।
हित्वात्मपातं गृहमंधकूपम् वनंगतो यद्धरिमाश्रयेत् । -भागवत सप्तमस्कंधम् ५-५
- 3 स्थास्यामश्चेत्लभ्यते संयमित्वम् गच्छामश्चेत्तेधुना माम् शपेरन् ।
स्थानुम् शक्यम् नैव गंतुम् न शक्यम् कुर्मः किंवेत्यात्मनाध्यायदित्यम् -रा. वि ६-३७

ordained that I face these tests.” Venkatacharya thought it best to leave things to His will.

That her beloved husband Venkatabhatta was distraught with perplexity had become well known to Saraswathamma. By the time he returned home, someone had already given this information to her. This was quite heart rending for her. She immediately swooned. But who else was there to attend to her! After a while she herself got up. Listless with inexplicable and agonising grief she felt breathlessness – she even forgot why she experienced such deep sorrow.

A little later she gradually recollected everything. She realised what had kindled such sorrow was her apprehension about estrangement from her husband. “Why has the fate inflicted such agony? Ironically it was only I who suggested to my husband that we moved to the Mutt so that all his wishes would find fulfilment there. Now can the very same thing stalk to rob me of my happiness? That.....Ashrama.....

What a frightening word it is!.....Should I refrain from having a look at his face forever? Is it that I am deprived of the fortune of listening to him? Is this ever possible? How greatly agitated my mind used to become whenever my beloved husband did not return home at his usual time! How perturbed I used to get whenever he wore a worried face! How delighted I get whenever I hear of his fame and scholarship! How can I think of my existence in separation? Whenever I sat gazing at his serene face, I used to get the heavenly pleasure. Shyness used to prevent me from beholding his brilliant face during day time. Whenever I sit beholding his charming face in his sleep during night, the flight of hours and hours my mind fails to notice. The euphony of his words is music to my ears. Why has the fate catapulted me into such catastrophe? Who have I sinned against? In whose family had I sown the seed of animosity? Had I committed such a sin, could I have got such a virtuous husband? Is this all the reward for adoring my husband as the greatest wealth which even the Providence could not have thought of a superior one; without desiring for a house and hearth, jewellery the material possessions the lure of which a women cannot resist? How profuse is the warmth with which he speaks to me as soon as he returns home?”.....The train of events that had happened till then began

to criss-cross her mind in their order from the beginning. Their marriage, throwing a stealthy glance at him in great coyness, how proud she felt then, later when she moved into her husband's house, how he used to console her whenever she felt afraid of the new atmosphere!, the birth of Lakshminarayana, the penury they went through, the advice he gave then, buoyed happiness her sincere prayers to God to bless her with a hundred years of life in the company of such a virtuous husband, and so on.....Nothing further flashed to her mind. Who should I confide my feelings in? With nobody in the house the loneliness became gruelling for her. Tears welled in her eyes as she felt herself alone in a forest. As her sorrow became uncontrollable, flood of tears gushed as if from a breached tank. She knew not how long she wept.¹ However quite a long after tired of the sorrow she sat totally exhausted. It was then Venkatacharya came home. Saraswathamma could not muster any courage to talk to him when she saw his face writ with worry. He too simply headed towards his library and sat instead of first talking to his wife as he would do everyday. His ambivalent mind, Saraswathamma's sorrow beyond description together rendered the uneasy calm more horrifying. One's silence provided answer to another's. Both of them went to sleep without uttering a single word.

Venkatacharya's ambivalence gradually fused into the stream of thought about the fundamental problems of life. Lying on his bed he began to ponder – “Really perplexing? What is that so secret in life? Why did the advice of my guru with my well being uppermost in his mind not interest me! Why such a befogging attachment for me? Isn't this what keeps the world going? How can the world get on if everyone does not harbour attachment towards his wife and children? If this attachment, the natural bond is the linchpin of the wheel of life, why should it arouse so much sorrow? Then is this a thing which brings sorrow? Is there an alternative course? There is an unequivocal accentuation in the Geetha that one being very much within its bounds should still remain insulated. The natural tools need to be dedicated to the worship of the Supernatural. One should behold its perspective and muse unperturbed like a rock standing still in spite of being amidst deluge. Is this not what exactly

1 कर्णाकर्णी प्राप्य हृत्कर्णशल्यम् कांतोदंतम् सा सरस्वत्युदस्यैः।
अश्रुव्यूहैः प्रोक्षतीवात्महव्यम् पूतम् दातुम् तद्वियोगानलाय।।

the Lord preached Arjuna? It is debasing for one to plunge into the sea of mundane matters. It is still more demeaning to run away from it like a coward. Being in the centre of all these, one should guard his sole against them. Can a mere fixity of thought about one's wife bring solace to his soul? The amity implanted by the Saviour of the souls is such that even a shadow of decadence has never dared go near; come ages! That only is the essence of our life, breath, the truth, the very truth....." Slips into a doze. In that half sleep, he had a dream; It is a big royal assembly. There in the assembly, he is engaged in an argument against the king. All those present were watching mutely out of fear for the king. But on his part he is courageously condemning the acts of the king. He is demanding the king's abdication of the throne. He is not the real king. Over there is the real king above. Not a mere king of a state He is. He who resides in the hearts of all, He who is Dhanwanthri , immortalises the lives of all. The enraged king fumes. But the Super power for whom he was arguing appeared in a frightening form and killed the king. It could not altogether be construed as dream, but something like reminiscence. It was like fusing the snapped link of life. His vital veins resounded with the chant of the Lord's name. With a reflex of understanding himself, he awoke in great bliss. It was then early morning 4 O' Clock. Though it was still pre-dawn, the room where he had slept was flush with refulgence much more than that of the Sun. With an air of surprise he rose from his bed and sat. A magnificently brilliant women he saw sitting by the pillow. The profuse resplendence was dazzling to the eyes. Venkatacharya was nonplussed to see her. The experience he had was a grand synchrony of joy, astonishment and fright simply unprecedented. He remained dumbfound. He sat still and agape gazing at the Goddess.¹ Who this women can be? Surely not a human. Superhuman signs all over to behold. "How magnificently beautiful! Is she a Yakshi? Kinnari? Nagakannike? Bhashadevi? Who she might be? No matter. Whoever it be?... But why she chose to sit by me?....." Thus pondering sat Venkatabhata speechless.

The beauty of that women was matchless. Though the shine on her face was brighter than the sunlight, it was as cool as moonlight. Her broad forehead, wide eyes, bee like eyeballs, nose resembling

1 तस्याम् रात्र्यामंतयामेर्धऽभागे कांचिदेविम् कांचिकालक्ष नीवीम् ।
शय्योपांते शारदांभोजनेत्रा मध्यासीनाम् विस्मितः पश्यति स्म ।

- रा. वि ६-३९

the Champak flower, tiny mouth, large breasts, robust build though tenuous and wavy, yellow complexion like the colour of the lemon, plait hanging down like a snake, priceless jewels on her, eyebrows wearing an expression of rejection of the whole world, unsteady eyes, attractive smile on her face, above all the divine lustre were beyond even the imagination of a romantic poet. She began to talk to Venkatacharya who had remained still, thoughtfully staring at her.

10. Advice Of The Goddess

"Oh great scholar! I am the Goddess Vidyalakshmi. Sri Vedavyasa created me for carrying out the assignment of fostering the scholars. I am the most favourite of Sri Anandatheertha.¹ Besides redefining the real meaning of the Vedas, my treasure, which was tarnished by others, he nourished me with the milk of his 'Bhashyas' from the Kamadhenu of 'Brahma Sootra'. I attained my youth with the assistance rendered by Jayatheertha. Then.....it should be said that I was greatly fortunate. Sri Vyasaraja.....he was really the king of kings! Powerful kings were waiting at his doorsteps to get his blessings. He took me under his care.² With his Nyayamrutha, Chandrika and Tarkatandava he provided me a palatial house to live in permanently and a stage for performing my dance. It can be said that you are his replica. Such is the resemblance! I felt the need for a companion when I attained youth. Even that wish of mine was fulfilled. Sri Vijayeendra.....Astounding! How majestic he was to behold!! It was his unblemished fame which became my companion.³ He provided puddle of 'Amoda' to 'Nyayamrutha', my favourite creeper. I am ever grateful to Vijayeendra for his great service. He presented me a very good thin saree pleasantly coloured in the form of 'Kantakodhdhara'. What better necklace can one wish to have than 'Nyayamukthavali'. I was in need of a casket to preserve it. It was gifted to me in the form of 'Tattvamanikyapeti'. See here, he

- 1 कानीनोऽसौ कन्यकाभावमादाद्भोग्याया मे संततम् पंडितानाम् ।
तस्माज्जातानंदतीर्थप्रीयाहम् विद्यालक्ष्मीम् विद्विसाम् विद्वदाद्य । -रा. वि ६-४२
- 2 उर्वी सर्वा येन राजन्वतीत्वम् राज्ञा हंत प्राप यत्यादभाजा ।
तेषाम् व्यासाचार्यराजेश्वराणाम् संगृह्याहम् पाणिमध्या समिद्धा । । -रा. वि ६-४४
- 3 विख्यातो यः श्रीजयींद्रव्रतींद्रस्सख्या लब्धा साधु कीर्तिर्मयोर्व्याम् । -रा. वि ६-४६

decorated me with these jewels with each of his books.¹ It was Sudheendratheertha, your guru, who provided me the stage for the performance of my 'Tarkanatya'. His commentary on Bhagavatha added to the shine. Still without an ornament to adorn my forehead, I had a feeling of missing something. It is only the ornament that decorates the forehead which adds beauty to all the ornaments. Sudheendratheertha befittingly decorated my forehead with his jewel 'Subhadraparinaya'.

Happen whatever may. It is the creeper 'Chandrika' which is the elixir of life. If that very creeper withers it is like my vital nerve snapping. What has now befallen me is nothing but that.² It is only with my survival the ornaments serve to add lustre to me. My survival itself is already at stake. That is the reason why I have come to you. It is better for a woman to seek protection from her husband. Otherwise she would be termed as flirt! A woman does well to be in somebody's care, or else her life gets sullied. Therefore it is only you who should once again provide me protection. Your commentary on 'Chandrika' would save my honour. Now my very survival rests in your hands. I would be with your guru only for two more years.³ Then there would be none to take care of me. None other than you is there to take care of me."

Venkatabhatta sat entranced by her mellifluous voice. Vidyadevi continued:- "Further my father Vyasadeva has laid down a principle that I should always be with the person who worships Moolarama. Therefore it is there where I permanently reside.⁴ Hence you cannot refuse to take care of me. Therefore your consent for sanyasa is most essential. Venkatarya, do not think that you would lose everything by accepting sanyasa. I promise you that I, Vidya Rajya Lakshmi, would be always with you, the emperor of Vedantha Samrajya. You should not have a feeling of hesitation because the danger of extinction is lurking over this great Sadvaishnava tradition⁵

- 1 भूषा पेटीम् तत्त्वमाणिक्यपेट्या मुक्ताभूषाम् न्यायमुक्ता सजा मे।
यद्यत् क्लुप्तम् भूषणत्वेन वध्वास्तत्तत् ग्रंथैरातनिष्टातुलश्रीः।। - रा. वि ६-४८
- 2 सर्वम् व्यर्थम् भाति मे जीवनाड्याश्छिन्ने मूले चंद्रिकासौधवल्याः। - रा. वि ६-५१
- 3 जानीहि त्वम् वैकटार्यं त्वदार्ये वासोयन्मे वत्सरद्वंद्वमेव।
तद्व्याख्याने लब्धवर्णो न चास्ते विद्वत्संघे नैव भावी त्वदन्यः।। - रा. वि ६-५२
- 4 श्रिरामार्चा पूज्यते येन तस्मिन् वासोयन्मे कल्पयद्व्यासदेवः।
कर्मदीद्विरेव पूजपि क्लुप्ता तस्मात्साहम् तेषु नित्यं वसामि।। - रा. वि ६-५३
- 5 तस्मादंगीकृत्य कर्मदिभावम् राजा वीद्याराज्यलक्ष्म्या भवत्वम्।
नोचेत्पुंभित्यवाचाम् विचारैः साकम् लोके वैष्णवः संप्रदायः।। - रा. वि ६-५४

The exponents of tradition like you have had the manifestation of God himself in previous Yugas. This tradition which has continued uninterrupted for long was in jeopardy during the time of Sri Prajnatheertha. He protected it handling the situation bravely. It reached its peak with the efforts of Anandatheertha and remained there until the time of your guru. It would be exposed to peril if you do not strive to uphold it. Whatever said becomes debate. Not only that, the ancient books on Shastras become extinct and rats would relish them as their food. The same fate awaits Meemamsa. It may not be an exaggeration to say that a day may come when the dry grammarians may take up to write commentaries on Nyaya Sudha of Jayatheertha.¹

Above all these, let me unveil a secret. There is none who can uphold the supremacy of Vishnu in royal courts. Then there are Shaivas, Skandas, devotees of Ganapathi, worshippers of Shakthi who are striving to pollute the minds of the people by advocating the supremacy of their Devathas.² Atheists would rule the roost in the coming days. This is the age when the people believe the existence of only the visible things. Now the time has come to inculcate faith in their minds by conclusively proving that an invisible thing which possesses Divine powers exists in non-physical form. As a result of your noble deeds, you are the only person who can do it. No other task is as great as this. It paves the way in future for propagation of Madhwa philosophy by Vishnutheertha again. It saves the seeds for reincarnation of Durga for accomplishing the task of destruction of the evil and establishment of Dharma. It creates an atmosphere conducive to reincarnation of God as Kalki. Only you as the most favourably blessed by the guru Madhwa can accomplish this major task.

In this Kaliyuga which is devoid of the incarnation of the Lord, to be a source of support for the virtuous and to be instrumental in their accomplishments is possible only for you. The God has bestowed you with powers to get rid these people of their sufferings. Immersed in the affairs of your family, you have forgotten all these.

- 1 किम् चात्रैव न्यायपूर्वाम् सुधाख्याम् भाष्यारंभम् शाब्दिका एव कुर्युः। - रा. वि ६-५६
- 2 वक्ता विष्णोरुत्तमत्वम् कथाया भूपालनाम् भाति विद्वत्सभायाम्।
शक्तेर्भानोः शक्तिपाणेरगणेशः शक्रादीनाम् धूर्जटिर्वा तदा स्यात्।। - रा. वि ६-५७

No, this is not the path you should follow. Wake up, understand yourself. Then only you would find how childish your predicament is. As the tradition of Dharma is still in existence, you are unaware of the darkness ahead. But its very thought is startling. A day would come when chanting of the Vedas by Brahmins in Mutts and other places meets its end by giving way to barking of dogs. Pathetic sight of torn out pages of sacred books of Shastras belonging to the libraries of scholars littering all over the streets becomes the order of the day. The doctrine of 'Mithya' spreads rapidly everywhere. Oil lamps would cease to glow in sacred temples ruined and destroyed by the heat of the Sun converting them into abode for owls. Dust emanating from streets replaces the smoke of fragrance offered to God.¹ People would become arrogant and lead their lives like animals. Only food and materialistic pleasures would get priority in the lives of these people and they would be put into lot of distress by wrangling with each other. As the only solution for all these, you should ascend the throne of Vedantha Samrajya and engage these people in the acts of Dharma by preaching Dharma and Shastras to them, writing books and exhibiting your divine powers. Anything done by you in your Grihasthashrama would remain insignificant, but every task performed by you in sanyasashrama would result in fruition thousand times your efforts. Its benevolent effects are countless. I have come to you seeking only your protection. I would not think of any other sanyasi even in my dream.²

Finally I would like to shed light on the fact that sanyasashrama is inevitable for you. None can prevent it. It is also inevitable for me to surrender before you.³ Therefore it is sure that your consent for sanyasa results in your ennoblement." Thus advising Venkatacharya, the Goddess Vidyalakshmi disappeared from his sight.

The emotions of Venkatacharya knew no bounds. Pondering over for so many days he could clearly identify the path lying ahead of him. The oratory of the Goddess, the sacred charm on her face left an unforgettable imprint on his mind. Her advice washed away all his doubts. The four forms – Narasimha, Rama, Krishna and Vedavyasa – of Lord Narayana appeared in his mind when he sat

1 छत्रागारम् शश्वदेकप्रकारम् वेदोद्धोषैर्वैदिकानामुदारम् ।

गोमायूनाम् जल्पकानामजस्रम् कारागारम् सर्वदेशे तदानीम् । ।

-रा. वि ६-५८

2 संप्राप्ता त्वाम् नत्यजामि क्षणं वा स्वप्ने बाहम् नस्मराम्यन्यभिक्षुम् ।

-रा. वि ६-६४

3 विध्यायत्तम् ते यतित्वम् न शक्यम् त्यक्तुम् प्राप्तम् त्वद्रशत्वम् ममापि ।

-रा. वि ६-६५

for a while with his eyes closed recollecting the wonderful experience he has had. He was assailed with not even a scintilla of doubt. He realised the purpose of his birth. Just as he sat in his bed, he began his prayer to God in total submission. He began to retrospect the advice Prahlada gave to Daithya Balakas, the comforting words of Chandrikacharya to Vijayeendra. Ultimately he decided that it was his sacred duty to obey the ordinance of swamiji. He just looked at the face of his wife who still laid on bed. He noticed signs of tiredness in her face wrought by continuous weeping out of sorrow on the previous night. The mute pain was still apparent on her face. This aroused compassion for her in Venkatabhatta. His mind remained shut towards it.

By the time he rose from bed and finished his morning rituals, his wife Saraswathamma also finished her household chores. At that moment also she didn't feel like enquiring about his sanyasa. But the worry her husband had the previous night wasn't evident in his face. She noticed inception of an unusual refulgence on his face. Not only did he look calm and pleased, but also his face exuded a kind of resolution and contentment. She could not understand why she felt afraid of her husband that day. A feeling that he had transcended all the worldly yardsticks, an apprehension that their companionship would soon cease assailed her.

The usual exchange of endearing words did not transpire between the couple. If Venkatacharya was reticent as bound by the divine incumbency on one side, the bewildered Saraswathamma remained dispassionate on the other. After finishing his bath and Ahneeka, Venkatacharya went to the Mutt. Swamiji was still engaged in performing Ahneeka. Venkatabhatta prostrated before the swamiji and sat. Presuming that Venkatacharya had something to say, the swamiji asked, "what is this? Venkatacharya, today you have come a bit early. Did you think over what I had told you?"

Ven: (Looking around, making sure that there was none) that is what I have come here to submit before your Holiness.

Swam: Come on, tell me.

Ven: "I did not heed much to your advice, swamiji. I returned home in an indifferent mood. But with your blessings, a few hours before dawn I had the manifestation of Vidyalakshmi", thus saying, he briefly apprised the swamiji of the advice of the Goddess.

The swamiji was astonished to hear this. He construed it to be a very good omen that Venkatacharya had the dream as swamiji wished and further had the manifestation of the Goddess. As it was in consonance with the will of the Lord Hari, the swamiji deemed it not proper to delay further and in the same afternoon ordained Venkatacharya to perform his son's Upanayanam by blessing him with Mantrakshata.

Chi.Lakshminarayana's Upanayanam was celebrated with all fanfare. Swamiji himself administered to the Vatu. Even then, as this symbolised the end of Venkatacharya's family life, melancholy was latent in it. Now the only impediment to Venkatacharya's sanyasa was Saraswathamma. The swamiji knew very well that she looked upon her husband as her very life. Therefore afraid of the possibility of Saraswathamma's resistance if it is planned to confer sanyasa on Venkatacharya at Kumbhakonam itself, the swamiji quietly took Venkatacharya with his entourage to Tanjore. As king Raghunatha was an ardent devotee of the swamiji, he thought it fit that Venkatacharya had his sanyasa in his royal court.

11. Sanyasa

The swamiji was greeted warmly and led to the palace by the king with all pomp and geity. In the glorious celebration that ensued, the swamiji performed the pooja at the palace and the king hosted them a banquet. The news of Venkatacharya's sanyasa having spread all over, scholars from different places thronged the palace. The swamiji decided that the second day of Phalguna Shuddha in Durmathi Samvathsara of Shalivahana Shaka 1543 corresponding to A.D.1621 was most auspicious day for conferring sanyasa on Venkatacharya.

That morning after the pre-sanyasa solemnities, the swamiji bestowed sanyasa on Venkatacharya in the most auspicious Muhurta in the august presence of the king Raghunatha and other respected men and scholars. As had been ordained beforehand in his dream, the swamiji named him '**RAGHAVENDRA**' and administered to him Pranava and other Mantras also, besides sixty

four arts.¹ Afterwards the swamiji poured the water consecrated by the Mantras from the conch on Venkatacharya and coronated him as the 'Emperor of 'Vidya Samrajya'.² "Dear Venkatacharya, today you became **Raghavendra**. All this has happened according to the divine will of Lord Hari. Your new name too is the Divine endowment. Be affluent like Kubera. Be a benefactor like Lord Rama. More so always be championing the general good of the universe with His blessings. Become an ascetic like my Paramaguru; celebrated like my guru; always be triumphant in debates like me.³ Let you lead our Samsthana to the greatest glory and let your name remain etched permanently in the annals of the Mutt. Since you are noble, there is no doubt in your becoming reverential in the world. Therefore it is you only who can do good to the world. May God Sri Moola Raghupathi worshipped by me bestow all His grace on you". Thus Sri Sudheendratheertha concluded his advice to Sri Raghavendra. Tears of joy welled in the eyes of guru. The disciple's face illumined with gratitude. The whole audience was thrilled. The king expressed his immense delight by repeatedly prostrating before the guru and his disciple. It was rejoicing for the entire nation.

Entrusting Sri Raghavendra with the responsibility of administration of the Mutt, Sri Sudheendratheertha handed over to him among others mainly the idols of Moolarama, Digvijayarama, Jayarama, the symbols of the Mutt, two of the Vyasamustikas which were gifted to Acharya by Lord Vedavyasa, books on Shastras, a pair of Chamaras, Swethachatra, Percussions and other instruments, gold palanquin.⁴ Guru Sri Raghavendra, amidst all these regalia, shown as the emperor of Vedantha Samrajya.

- 1 आलोक्योपदिदेश दैशिकवरस्तस्मै सतारम् पुरा स्वप्रेस्वप्रदुराप
वैभवंनिधिर्लब्ध्याम् ददौ चाभिदाम् । । -रा. वि ६-७०
- 2 मंत्रैः पूतैर्वारिजाद्यैः प्रसूनैर्मुक्तामुख्यै रत्नजालैरुपेतैः ।
वार्भिः शंकापूरितैः सोभिषिच्य प्राज्यम् विद्याराज्यं राजम् वितेने । -रा. वि ६-७३
- 3 तस्य नाम स ददे सदाशिषा रा॥जराज इव राजितः श्रिया ।
रामभद्र इव भद्रभाजनम् तत्कृपेव जगताम् हिते रतः ।
श्रीसुरेंद्रवदयम् तपस्यया श्रीजयींद्र इव कीर्तिसंपदा ।
विश्रुतोहमिव वादसंगरे राघवेंद्र यतीराट् समेघताम् । । -रा. वि ६-७१७२
- 4 श्रीरामार्चाः व्यासदेवोपलौढौ शास्त्राधानाम् पुस्कम् चामरेच ।
स्वेतच्छत्रम् स्वर्णयानम् सवाद्यम् प्रादादस्मै राजचिन्हं स सर्वम् । -रा. वि ६-७४

Sri Sudheendratheertha who blissfully watched his beloved disciple perform the pooja of Lord Moolarama, hold discourses and conduct classes, once again heartily blessed him with an element of great fulfilment. He set off on a journey towards north and on the second day of Phalguna Bahula in Rudhirodgari Samvatsara corresponding to A.D.1623 attained the Lotus feet of Lord Krishna near the Brindavan of Chandrikacharya, the Vidyaguru of his guru on the banks of the Tungabhadra.

It was shocking and exasperating for Saraswathamma to hear the news of her husband Venkatacharya attaining sanyasa. She fainted instantly. After a while she got up and kept consoling herself for long. Herself being wise and an ardent devotee of God, she had had all the secrets of Shastras imparted by her husband. She recalled to her mind many aspects of Shastras. She deemed it to be indeed a matter of pride for her too that her beloved husband now held a position of pre-eminence. She contemplated on achieving fulfilment by observing Krichhra Chandrayana and such other sacred vows and doing acts of generosity and piety. However she couldn't rid her mind of the turmoil. The future of her life hinged on her husband; when all else is gone and she is left only with the throes of deprivation, how could she think of living further? Life sans even a darshan of the beloved husband was purposeless for her. She found it impossible to live a minute longer. In that state of puzzlement she could not decide what was right or what was wrong. Didn't a faithful wife fling herself into the act of ending her life through her mystic powers as soon as she heard abuses about her husband? This is what began to constantly hum in her ears. She felt that she too should take the cue. But what was the course open? Resorting to any course amounts to suicide. All are sinful. She felt that committing suicide was better than living a life of estrangement. Convinced that this alone was the right course of action, she instantly jumped into the well and died.

It was her Karma which wove this destiny for her. But for her who had the fortune of being the wife of such an ascetic par excellence, could there be a spec of doubt about achieving salvation? As a consequence of suicide, she appeared before Raghavendra swami as a spirit. The swamiji who understood this through his mystic powers sprinkled on her the water consecrated by the typical chanting of Mantra once in order and again in reverse order.

Immediately the cosequence of the misdeeds of her past coming to an end, Saraswathamma attained salvation. Even today in her commemoration during ceremonies and festivities, Sumangalees are being treated with reverence in the households of the descendants.

12. Yadavendra

The news of his guru Sudheendratheertha conferring sanyasa on Venkatacharya and naming him 'Raghavendra' reached Yadavendra who was on his tour. Greatly delighted Yadavendra came to Kumbhakonam to meet the new pontiff. Yadavendra who was senior to him in sanyasa was feted by the swamiji. The swamiji also offered to hand over the idols of presiding deity of the Mutt to Yadavendra. Re-entrusting these symbols of the Mutt to the swamiji after worshipping Moolarama for some days, Yadavendra returned to his native state and in about a few days reached the heavenly abode at a place 'Mudamalu' on the banks of the river Krishna.

13. Swamiji's Daily Routine

The name 'Raghavendra' carries a very significant meaning. That was the reason for the suggestion of that name in Sudheendratheertha's dream. Sri Sudheendratheertha renamed his disciple as 'Raghavendra', the holy appellation of Sri Moolarama which is the emblem of the Mutt, and informed him that the name was as holy as that of Ramabhadra and as beneficent to the world as that of Sri Rama **रामभद्र इव भद्रभाजनं तत्कृपेव जगतां हितेरतः**. He also knew that Sri Raghavendra swamiji had set the welfare of mankind as his aim. The name itself suggests that noble people who follow evil path without the knowledge of what was good for their well being need the spiritual guidance of such gurus in getting themselves rid of their sins and get solace. **अघ** means sin **व्यति** means destroys **वै** means the desired object **रति** means blesses with. Thus getting ourselves rid of all our sins leads us to the accomplishment of our desires is the meaning of the name 'Raghavendra'.

The shloka

अघं द्रावयते यस्मात् वेंकारो वाञ्छितप्रदः।

राघवेन्द्रयतिस्तस्माल्लोके ख्यातो भविष्यति ।।

composed in the praise of the swamiji conveys the same meaning.

Sri Gopaladasa has interpreted each letter in the name 'Raghavendra' who destroys all our sins and blesses us as

“रा ಎನ್ನ ರಾಶಿದೋಷಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ದಹಿಸುವ
ಘ ಎನ್ನ ಘನಜ್ಞಾನಭಕ್ತಿಯಿರುವ
ವೇಂ ಎನ್ನ ವೇಗದಿ ಜನನಮರಣ ದೂರ
ದ್ರ ಎನ್ನ ದ್ರವಿಕಾರ್ಥ ಶ್ರುತಿಪಾದ್ಯನ ಕಾಂಬ”.

The Shloka

श्रीराघवेन्द्रः सकलप्रदाता स्वपादकजद्वयभक्तिमद्भ्यः।

अघाद्रिसंभेदन दृष्टिवज्रः क्षमासुरेंद्रोवतु मां सदायं ।।

– २१

in Appannacharya's Gurustotra elucidates the same meaning.

The physique, deeds, scholarship, the very name 'Raghavendra', any thing and everything of the swamiji, a sinless embodiment, were sacred. His very appearance suggested that he was a **दैवांश संभूत** । His complexion matched exactly with the colour of pure gold. His face was filled with uniquely serene effulgence streaming out incessantly. It also exuded a kind of divine contentment arising from his having pleased the God. His eyes always reflected the brightness of the Sun. Green Tulsi petals adorned his ears. His face right from his nose to the forehead was decorated with sandal paste. His face had the resemblance of the stage which the Goddess Saraswathi used for her dancing. The broadness of his shoulders and chest indicated his unflinching courage and kindness of his heart. He had long arms which signified his greatness. His feet had become sacred by pilgrimage. The very sight of his face created a sense of devotion. People firmly believed that they could achieve salvation by relying on him.

Sri Raghavendra swamiji performed his daily routine as service to God. Lord Narasimha had blessed his supreme devotee Prahlada with sovereignty for a long time though his desire was only service to God. The 'Mahapunya' earned by Prahlada by his devotion and service to God followed him even in his birth as Raghavendra. He had suffered the misery he was destined to in the form of extreme poverty in his poorvashrama. All he was left with now was only the heap of punya.

Sri Raghavendra swamiji used to begin his day waking up chanting the name of Lord Hari as his bards kept extolling him.¹ Then he would give darshan to the devotees gathered outside eagerly waiting to hear his discourse on Dwadashastotra and Puranas. After prostrating before Tulsi Brindavan and Pranadevaru, the swamiji goes to the river Cauvery for his morning bath sitting in a sedan and chanting Gajendra Moksha and other hymns. After alighting from the sedan at the river site where the atmosphere was very pleasant, he attends to nature's call and clean his teeth. After Achamana he plunges into the river where he chants **अष्टाक्षर, शडक्षर, द्वादशाक्षर** and have **मृतिकास्नान** . Then he takes the purifying bath accompanied with chanting of Pranava and Purushasookta. He then takes the holy theertha of Sri Vishnu after offering Arghya to Devathas. Afterwards he enclothes himself with Kashayavastra and wear "Urdhvapundhra Mudra" (signs of Sri Vishnu), when he looks like the bright Sun. After finishing Gayathri and Pranava Japas he goes to Tapovana, where he worships Vyasamusti and listens to the discourses of Puranas by Brahmins. Then he would have the darshan of his paramaguru Sri Vijayeendratheertha's Brindavan where he would offer his respects by going round the Brindavan. Afterwards he returns on foot to the Mutt paying his obeisance to Kumbheswara on his way.

After reaching the Mutt, the swamiji conducts classes of Bhashyashanthi lessons for his disciples. While teaching, he makes references to other systems of Indian philosophy for comparison and contrast. He finishes his teaching by concluding that the Sootras propounded that Sri Narayana whom the learned men worshipped had unlimited qualities and free from defects (**अनन्तकल्याण गुणपरिपूर्ण, दोषदूर**) and bestowed salvation. This has been found as the essence of Sootras by Sri Anandatheertha. Sri Teekacharya has elaborated this in his commentaries and Sri Vyasaraja has convincingly confirmed this.

A scholar once questioned the swamiji ²– "I am not convinced of your explanation. Who is Narayana? 'I' is the only thing known by

1 मागधा मधुभिर्दग्निपंकजे जागरूकमपि संयमीश्वरम् ।
बोधयति वचनेर्बुधोत्तमं काव्यवर्णनविधौ कृतादरेः ।

–रा. वि ९–१

2 ब्रह्मसद्गुणमदोषमीक्षितम् गम्यमाहुरिदं लक्षणैः क्रमात् ।
सूत्रभाष्य इति तेरभाषिते तत्र कश्चन सुधीरचोदयत् ।।

–रा. वि ९–४१

experience. It is very difficult to accept any other thing without evidence. Perception or interference does not admit any other thing as real. According to Shrutis, 'Parabrahma' as described in the Vedas is not different from the 'Jeeva' or 'I'. When it is established that both 'Brahma' and 'Jeeva' are same, where is the need for the Shastras teaching about Brahma? Then if we talk about difference, high and low ranks are false. Only the experience of 'I' by the 'Jeeva' is true. Even the 'I' disappears as and when it grows further and the experience of intelligence which alone is true remains. If so, where is the question of 'Narayana', the 'Parabrahma' having attributes? It is impossible to worship such a thing. As Maya from which stems the attitude to consider that two things are different vanishes, one attains salvation. Therefore the belief that one could attain salvation with the aid of other things is an illusion. It is enough if we perform Karma to attain Swargaloka. Therefore this 'Brahma Meemamsa' is meaningless.¹

The swamiji found a great opportunity to preach the real Tattva to his pious disciples when this scholar put forth his queries before him.

Then he began replying the scholar. "Your objection has no validity, because it does not mean that only the things experienced or seen by man in his daily life are true. There are many true things which are beyond his ken. It is only for realising this truth, man is gifted with intelligence which is superior to that of animals. One would be experiencing in his daily life an intuition about the existence of this invisible truth. Things which are invisible to defective eyes could be seen with healthy eyes. Many things which are invisible to the naked eyes could be seen with the help of accessories. A poet or an artist would be immersed in emotions which are beyond the imagination of an ordinary man. Everybody cannot realise that many surprising things in the world are controlled and guided by a power beyond their imagination. It is beyond the abilities of our faculties of understanding to understand such things. It is the nature of man to approach the source in which he has confidence to understand the things beyond his imagination. The Vedas are such a source. The intellectuals can realise that the Vedas are Sadagamas. This source is not the creation of modern times. It must have been in existence since eternity. It must be as eternal

1 र. वि ४२-४५

as eternity itself. At the same time it must have been uncreated. To know its real meaning, a proper reasoning is essential. Then only one can understand clearly the real meaning of the contradictions in these Shastras. One would not have been yearning to understand such contradictions if they were as clear as the visible things. That must emerge from cohesive churning of thoughts.

These Sadagamas mainly deal with the subject related to Brahman. Some thoughts propounding the identity of 'Brahma' and the individual soul referred to as 'I' could also be found here and there. But such thoughts should be interpreted by proper reasoning. If the meaning is accepted as it is, then the need of studying the Vedic lore does not arise. If it is accepted that the 'Jeeva' who undergoes misery everyday is 'Brahma' himself, then all the activities of this world would come to standstill. Rather than getting convinced by such vague interpretations, it would be most acceptable and honest if the thoughts that treat the identity are discussed thoroughly taking into consideration the context of the beginning and the end of the passage, the rules of grammar adopted in arriving at their meaning, helpful arguments, etc and analysing whether such thoughts could be interpreted differently leading to a conclusion which is not detrimental to the supremacy of 'Brahma'. This is the main task of the Brahma Sootras. These Sootras would not have advocated the necessity of the study of the nature of 'Brahma' by the 'Sadhaka', had the identity been the ultimate meaning of the Vedas. Therefore there is no need to declare that 'Brahma Meemamsa Shastra' is most essential for the aspirant of 'Adhayatma Tattva'. Sri Anandatheertha has convincingly proved that this is the real meaning of the Sootras. Only Lord Narayana, the abode of infinite qualities and who is absolutely flawless is 'Parabrahma'. To be always meditating on him is the secret of life. To realise him is the fulfilment of life. Life is full of love, not hollow but tested and found pure on the touchstone of joys and sorrows. The God is the source of such love which results in bliss. This is the essence of Shastras. This is the principle of life". The swamiji thus concluded his argument. All the disciple of the swamiji were overwhelmed with joy. The scholar who raised the query prostrated before the swamiji with a sense of shame about his ignorance.

Such discussions would continue till noon everyday. Then the swamiji takes bath¹ in the lake and begins his pooja of Sri Moolarama, the Chatryugamoorthi (the idol worshipped in all the four yugas) which would be feast for the eyes of those who witness the pooja. Sri Moolarama appears like Swethadweepa on the upper stage of the gem studded mantap in the form of Lakshminarayana along with the inseperable Lakshmidēvi sitting on the Garuda. He shines as Moolarama worshipped by Brahma as in Ananthasana on the centre stage of the mantap in the midst of his own forms Sri Digvijayarama and Sri Jayarama whose noble demeanour adds to the freshness on his face. Sri Vaikunthavasudeva and the gold idol of Sri Krishna made by the swamiji himself adorned the bottom stage of the mantap. The swamiji performs Abhisheka for Vyasamustika daily. After worshipping the Kalasha, Peetha and Avarana, the swamiji offers prayers to the Lord invoking his presence in the idols. The swamiji after completing the pooja would have lunch. After resting for a while, the swamiji teaches Vyakarana and Nyaya Shastras to his disciples. Afterwards he discusses Vedantha with the scholars in a spirit of entertainment and enlightenment which he ultimately dedicates as a peace of worship to Lord Purushothama.

In the evening the swamiji takes his bath in the lake.² After finishing his Ahneeka, he performs the night pooja by offering flowers, fruits and milk and concludes the pooja with Arathi in a gold plate.³ Then he meditates for a while closing his eyes and offering prayers to God.⁴ He falls into a trance while doing so. His voice gets choked emotionally with deep devotion with his mind firmly fixed in the thought of God. Tears rolled down from his eyes at the reminiscence of different forms of God.⁵

- 1 व्याख्याय शिष्यनिवहाय चिराय सोयमाम्नायमौलिवचनानि मनोहराणि ।
माध्याह्निकानि विविधावि विधातुकामः कर्माणि मंदमुदतिष्ठदुदगकीर्तिः । -रा. वि ९-५५
- 2 विष्टपे विधुरुचा विधदाने क्षीरसागरनिमज्जन केलिम् ।
पाठकर्म स समास्य सरस्याम् मंत्रतुमंत उदयुक्त यतींद्रः । -रा. वि १०-३१
- 3 अर्पयन् भगवते सुममात्यम् प्रीणयन् स पयसा च फलेन ।
हेमपात्रविलसद्भनसारारार्तिकेण कलयन् स्तमहृष्यन् । । -रा. वि १०-३९
- 4 मंत्रपुष्पमधिमौलि दधानो यं त्रितान्यविषयो रघुनेतुः ।
सादरम् दरनिमीलितनेत्रः स्तोनुमारभत संयमिधुर्यः । । -रा. वि १०-४०
- 5 अस्तौपीडरिमेकाग्रमनसा सुसमाहितः प्रेम गद्गदया वाचातव्यस्तहृदयेऽक्षणः ।
तत्पादपद्मम् हृदिनिर्वृतो दधौ हृष्यत्तनुःकिलन्न हृदश्रुलोचनः । । - भागवतम् ७-९-७

14. Hymn

ब्रह्मादायः सुरगणा मुनयोऽथसिद्धाः सत्त्वैकतानमतयो वचसां प्रवाहैः
नाराधितुं पुरुगुणैरधुनापि पिप्रुः किंतोऽमुमर्हति स मे हरिरुग्रजातेः
मन्येजनाभिजनरूपतपःश्रुतीजस्तेजः प्रभावबलपीरुषबुद्धियोगाः
नाराधनाय हि भवन्ति परस्य पुंसो भक्त्या तुतोष भगवान् गजयूथपाय
त्रस्तोऽस्यहं कृपणवत्सम दुस्सहोऽग्र संसारचक्रकदनात्प्रतां प्रणीतः
बद्धः स्वकर्णभिरुत्तमत्तैः प्रिमूलम् प्रितोऽपवर्ग मरणम् ह्वयसे कदानु
यस्मात्प्रियाप्रियवियोगसयोग जन्मशोकाग्निना सकलयोनिषु दह्यमानः
दुःखौषधं तदपि दुःखमतद्वियाहम् भूमन् भ्रमामि वद मे तव दास्ययोगम्

मत्स्यकरूप लयोदिविहारिन् वेदविनेतृचतुर्मुखबंध्य ।
कूर्मस्वरूपकमंदरधारिन् लोकविधारकदेववरण्य ।
सूकररूपकदानवशत्रो भूमिविधारक यज्ञवरांग ।
देवनृसिंह हिरण्यकशत्रो सर्वभयांतक दैवतबंधो ।
वामन वामन वामनवेष दैत्यवरांतर कारणरूप ।
रामभृगूद्रह सूर्जितदीप्ते क्षत्रकुलांतकशंभुवरेण्य ।
राघव राघव राक्षसशत्रो मारुतिवल्लभ जानकीकांत ।
देवकीनंदन सुंदररूप रुक्मिणीवल्लभ पांडवबंधो ।
देवकीनंदन नंदकुमार वृंदावनांचन गोकुलचंद्र ।
कंदफलाशन सुंदररूप नंदितगोकुल वंदितपाद ।
इंद्रसुतावकनंदक हस्त चंदनचर्चित सुंदरीनाथ ।
इंदीवरोदरदलनयन मंदरधारिन् गोविंद वंदे ।
चंद्रशतानन कुंदसुहास संदितदैवतानंद संपूर्ण ।
दैत्यविमोहक नित्यसुखादे देवसुबोधक बुद्धस्वरूप ।
दुष्टकुलांतक कल्किस्वरूप धर्मविवर्धन मूलयुगादे ।
नारायणामलकारणमूर्ते पूर्णगुणार्णव नित्यविबोध ।
एवमादिविविधैरवतारैः पालिताखिलजनौघममाधम् ।
सन्निरस्य कमलास्यनमस्याम् स्वीकुरुष्व रघुवंशवतंस ।

ಶಂಕರಾಭರಣ ಅಷ್ಟತಾಳ

ಗೋವಿಂದ ಗೋವಿಂದಕೃಷ್ಣ, ಹರಿ
ಗೋವಿಂದ ಮುಕುಂದ ಗೋಪಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ।
ಕಡೆಗಣ್ಣಿಲಿಂದೊಮ್ಮೆ ನೋಡೋ ನಿ |
ನೃಡಿಗಳೆಗರೆಗುವೆ ನೀ ದಯಮಾಡೋ |
ಬಿಡದೆನ್ನ ನಿನ್ನವರೊಳುಕೂಡೋ ಎ |
ನೋಡೆಯ ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದ ನೀನಲಿದಾಡೋ | ೦ |

||ಪ||
||ಅಪ||

ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೊಡೆಯ ನೀನಾಗಿ ಹಸು | ಮಕ್ಕಳಕೂಡೆ ನೀನಾಡಹೋಗಿ
 ಸಿಕ್ಕದೆ ಬಹುದಿನಕಾಗಿ ಧಿಂ ಧಿ | ಮಿಕ್ಕೊಂದು ಕುಣಿಸುವೆ ಬಾ ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ | ೨ |
 ಹೃದಯಕಮಲದೊಳಗಿನ್ನ ನನ್ನ |
 ಪದಕಮಲವ ನೀದಯ್ಯೊಯ್ಯೋ ಮುನ್ನ |
 ಚದುರ ಕುಣಿಯೋ ಚಲ್ಲರನ್ನ ವಿ | ಬುಧರೊಡೆಯನೆ ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದಕೃಷ್ಣ | ೩ |

ಭೈರವಿ - ತ್ರಿಪುಟತಾಳ

ಇಂದು ಎನಗೆ ಗೋವಿಂದ ನಿನ್ನಯ ಪಾದಾರ
 ವಿಂದವ ತೋರೋ ಮುಕುಂದನೇ || ಪ ||
 ಸುಂದರವದನನೇ ನಂದಗೋಪಿಯಕಂದ
 ಮಂದರೋದ್ಧಾರ ಆನಂದ ಇಂದಿರರಮಣ || ಅ.ಪ. ||
 ನೊಂದನೆಯ್ಯ ಭವಬಂಧನದೊಳು ಸಿಲುಕಿ
 ಮುಂದೆ ದಾರಿಕಾಣದೆ ಕುಂದಿದೆ ಜಗದೊಳು |
 ಕಂದನೆಂತೆಂದೆನ್ನ ಕುಂದುಗಳೆಣಿಸದೆ
 ತಂದೆ ಕಾಯೋ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಕಂದರ್ಪಜನಕನೆ || ೧ ||
 ಮೂಢತನಧಿ ಬಲುಹೇಡಿ ಜೀವ ನಾನಾಗಿ
 ದೃಢಭಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಲಿಲ್ಲವೋ ಹರಿಯೇ
 ನೋಡಲಿಲ್ಲವೋ ನಿನ್ನ ಪಾಡಲಿಲ್ಲವೋ ಮಹಿಮೆ |
 ಗಾಡಿಕಾರ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಬೇಡಿಕೊಂಬೆನೋ ನಿನ್ನ || ೨ ||
 ಧಾರುಣಿಯೊಳು ಬಲು ಭಾರ ಜೀವನನಾಗಿ
 ದಾರಿತಪ್ಪಿನಡೆ ಸೇರಿದೆ ಕುಜನರ |
 ಅರೂ ಕಾಯುವರಿಲ್ಲ ಸಾರಿದೆ ನಿನಗಯ್ಯ
 ಧೀರ ವೇಣುಗೋಪಾಲ ಪಾರುಗಣಿಸೋ ಹರಿಯೇ || ೩ ||

Swamiji's singing in extollation of the Almighty takes the gathering to the ecstasy of devotion. They would sing in the praise of God in chorus like the Daithya Balakas whom the advocacy of Haribhakti by Prahlada had greatly influenced. The swamiji coming out of a long state of divine absorption blesses all the devotees with Mantrakshata.

15. Swamiji Off To Tanjore

Famine:- After some years of swamiji's sanyasa, political turmoil overtook Cholamandala. In A.D.1642 Vijayaraghavanayaka, the nayak of Tanjore had to encounter the invasion of the kings of Madurai, Vellore, Mysore, Bijapur. Besides suffering the defeat, he had to enter into a treaty to save his life. All the hoard of grains and the treasure of the state were plundered. At this juncture, the draught stricken state was gripped by famine owing to the withering crops. Vijayaraghavanayaka was very generous like his ancestors

Jeevappanayaka and Raghunathanayaka. He provided his subjects with food and shelter liberally spending all his money. Still the situation did not return to normal. The sign of famine assuming diabolical proportions, the nayak got frightened. The perturbed king thinking that the swamiji in the vicinity alone is the perfect guide, came to him and fell at his feet. The swamiji who had the cognition of the past, present and the future did not see the prospect of the famine subsiding in the near future. Disposed to vouchsafe help to the king, the swamiji left for Tanjore. Staying there for about twelve years, the swamiji uplifted the subjects from their economic morass from out of the coffers of the Mutt. Further through his ascetic powers, he made the king's treasury brim with wealth. The king and his subjects escaped from the grip of great danger through the blessings of the swamiji.¹

The swamiji performed special Japa-Tapas for the prosperity of the state. Had yagnas and yagas performed. As a result, the state had rain in bounty. It was like rebirth for all the subjects of Chola state. The elated king gifted a garland of gems to the swamiji. At the conclusion of the rituals of yagna while offering Arghya and Padya to Yagneshwara, the swamiji consigned that garland of gems to the holy fire. This perturbed the king. He was angry that the swamiji offended him by consigning to the fire, the garland he had gifted. Noticing his perplexity, the swamiji with a smile prayed to Lord Parashurama embodied in Agni. The garland emerged untarnished from the fire with its original sparkle.² The whole audience stood still out of astonishment. His divine powers aroused in the audience extraordinary devotions for the swamiji. The king in great fear and devotion fell at the feet of the swamiji in extreme humility begging for his forgiveness. Bestowing his special blessings on the king, the swamiji returned to Kumbhakonam with his entourage.

16. Tour and Miracles

In olden times in spite of absence of convenient modes of transport it was incumbent on the exponents of Dharma to undertake tour all over the country with the mission of spreading

1 ದ್ವಾದಶವರ್ಷಾನೋದಕ ಸಲಿಸಿದೆ ಮೇದಿನಿಪತಿಗೆ ಮಹಾದಯವಂತಾ | - ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು.
 2 ಹುತವಹ ಗುಣಿಸಿದ ರತುನಮಾಲಿಕೆಯ ಕ್ಷಿತಿಪಗೆ ತಂದಿತ್ತುಳಮಹಿಮನೆ |

the message among the people so that they continued to protect and cherish the Aryan culture. That is the reason why the task of undertaking tour has been a vital exercise in the menology. In just the similar way, the swamiji too taking holy dips went on a tour to educate the people about the ways of achieving ennoblement. He set off towards east first.

During the course of swamiji's tour, discourses on the books of philosophy right from 'Pramana Paddhati' to 'Chandrika' were taking place as a daily routine. Hundreds of students were studying. In all prominent places scholars of different shastras used to exhibit erudition of their scholarship before the swamiji in the form of debates and return with generous pecuniary gifts.

The swamiji began his tour first towards east. Offering his worship at Paripoornadevanagara, he left for a place known as 'Kamalalaya'. After worshipping Goddess Lakshmidivi he headed towards the shrine of Ardhanareeshwara and worshipped Maharudradeva.

From there the swamiji came to the place where the river Cauvery joins the sea. He sojourned there for a few days engaged in the regular acts of holy dip in the sea and conducting classes. On his way to Rameshwaram from there, he visited the shrine of Champakeshwara to offer his prayers. He reached Alagiri after taking a holy dip at the Sethu and visiting the shrines of Darbhashayanarama and Sethumadhava at Rameshwaram. He set off on his journey to Ananthashayana from Alagiri after offering his obeisance to Sundaramoorthi there. Worshipping Anantha padmanabha and Janardhana there, he reached Tirunelveli on the banks of the river Tamraparni. On the banks of Tamraparni, a Brahmin suffering the humiliation of ostracism pleaded with the swamiji to save him. The swamiji who understood his real traits, had him do expiation, consecrated him with the holy water from the conch and purged him of the blemish. The locals sceptically questioned the swamiji how that Brahmin got purged. The swamiji averred that the Brahmin was a good man, demonstratively proving how sacred the water in the conch was. They prostrated before the swamiji for dispelling their ignorance. The swamiji arrived at Madurai from Tirunelveli.

Madurai was so famous as a centre of learning in south India as Kashi was in the north. It was a home of erudite scholars of all

Shastras. No scholar who entered Madurai could ever leave without going through a test of his scholarship. The nayaks of Madurai had spread their influence all over south being as powerful as the rulers of Vijayanagar and Tanjore. They were patrons of Sanskrit, education and art of that region. That was why the town of Madurai shone with hordes of pundits.

17. Victory At Madurai

When the swamiji came to Madurai, the king Tirumalanayaka (1623-1659) was its ruler. His minister Neelakantha Dixit, grandson of Appayya Dixit was greatly pious, an erudite scholar and prominent Shaivadaithi. As **व्यवहारे भ नयः** I connotes, the advocacy of 'Bhaatta Meemamsa' was helpful to Adwaitis. Therefore Dixit wished to test the scholarship of the swamiji in the propositions of the Bhaatta doctrine. The swamiji gave spontaneous replies to his questions. By then the literary activity of the swamiji with its brisk tempo had just seen completion of the book **Bhaatta Sangraha**. The swamiji had clearly portrayed the essence of the Bhaatta doctrine in the book. Dixit was marvelled at swamiji's excellent scholarship and his ingenuity in producing compendium of subjects. Dixit took that book in procession all over the town mounted on the palace elephant.¹ Tirumalanayak did special honours to the swamiji. This may be termed as the first milestone in the series of victories of the swamiji. After visiting the shrines of Sundareshwara and Kamakshi at Madurai, the swamiji arrived at Srirangam. It is a pilgrim centre with the temple of Sriranganatha, the Lord being worshipped through three yugas. The swamiji stayed there for a few days and departed towards North.

1 कृतमालिकासरिदलंकृतामगान्मधुराभिधाम् मधुर वाड्महापुरीम् ।
तदधीशसंदि विजित्यपंडितान् बहुमानितो यतिवरोमहीभृता । ।

-रा.वि ७-४६

मंत्रिश्रीनीलकंठाभिधमखिमणिना भट्टतंत्रानुबंधे
ग्रंथे तावद्वितीयेकरिणिगुणविदारोपितेभ्यर्हणायै ।

कीर्तिस्ते राघवेन्द्रव्रतिसुमतिमणे न्यूनमन्यूनवेगा-
दिडागा नारुरुक्षः स्वयमपि सहसाधावदष्टौदिगंतान् । ।

- गुरुगुणस्वनम्- ३५

18. Debaters of Vellore

The swamiji first went to Namakal and worshipped Lord Narasimha. Proceeding from there he arrived at Vellore. At that time Vellore was the capital of the Vijayanagar kings Venkatapathiraya and Sriramadevaraya IV. There, two Shaiva scholars by name Veerabhadra and Bhairava Bhatta challenged the swamiji to debate with them. They were invincible scholars. They had a large number of students and were recipients of royal honours. In the disputation that lasted two to three days, those scholars were humbled. The king was amazed at this. The supremacy of swamiji's knowledge and his extraordinary refulgence astonished him. He honoured the swamiji with a gift of lands and villages.¹ This second victory of swamiji may be termed as magnificent. With this the southern tour of swamiji terminating, he proceeded towards Dakshina Kannada district.

Visiting the village Vishnumangala where the king Jayasimha had earlier accorded a reception to Acharya, the swamiji worshipped the Lord there. Further he went to the pilgrim Subrahmanya. He stayed for some days in that sacred place where the devotees get there wishes fulfilled instantly.

19. Sojourn at Udupi

The swamiji further proceeded to Udupi. He camped at the same Mutt which his Paramaguru Sri Vijayeendratheertha had earlier received as gift. The darshan of Lord Krishna he had was blissful. He sat still before the Lord immersed in divinity as if his soul had sloughed off the worldly consciousness. Extolled the Lord dancing and singing in exaltation. That saintly soul of supreme attainment, who had the Lord's manifestation in many forms, had profound devotion in Lord Krishna. It was for this reason that Kaliyuga saw his incarnation. It is the very same Lord he worshipped in his previous incarnation. Even in the present incarnation, though he had been worshipping Moolarama, his mind cogitated on Lord Murali Manohara whenever he was in meditation. So, he sang the praise of Lord with his Ankita as Venugopala. His mind filled with tranquillity

1 सोऽथभल्लपुरि भैरवभट्टो वीरभद्र इति वीश्रुत विद्वान्।
नर्मणैवपरिभूय नरेन्द्रात् ग्रामरत्नमचिरात् समष्ट्यात्।।

-रा. वि ८-४

when he had the darshan of Lord Krishna. He had a feeling of comfort that a child gets on the lap of its mother. He set off to writing books, the primary task of his incarnation. Goddess Vidyalakshmi had ordained that writing commentary on Chandrika was most essential. Accordingly he began to write the book 'Prakasha' as commentary on Chandrika. But it remained unfinished. Thinking that it is better to explain the meaning of Sootras easily and impressively before explaining the Chandrika, the traditional form of commentary on Brahma Sootras, the swamiji compiled 'Tantradeepika' explaining the import of Brahma Sootras. This became a book expounding the meaning of each Sootra in detail. But it is **Nyayamukthavali** that unfolds in a majestic style the summary in discourse form of the aspects cited in Adhikaranas. This was written after Tantradeepika. After completing these two books, the swamiji wrote **Parimala** for **Sudha** and completed **Chandrika Prakasha** and dedicated all these books to Lord Krishna, the deity of absolute worship of Acharya.¹

By that time, the spring season in Shobhakrit Samvatsara (A.D.1663) was nearing. The swamiji decided that Mahabhisheka of Moolarama on the day of ensuing Ramanavami should be celebrated in the precincts of Lord Krishna only. Special preparations were made. The Mahabhisheka was celebrated in all fervour and geity at Lord Krishna's temple itself.² All those who witnessed the celebration were elated. The swamiji experienced an ecstatic bliss. The proximity of Lord Krishna that swamiji had was divinely inspiring. He dedicated all these to Lord Krishna.

By then the swamiji had discoursed on Chandrika ten times.³ This should be considered as a unique yagna. Thus many a momentous incident in the life of swamiji did occur at Udupi. It was a tearful experience for swamiji to leave that place. It was indeed

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|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 चंद्रिका विवरणम् समतानीत्संचरन्नपि स पुण्य महीशु।
न समास्तम् यावदेतदुभयम् विरचय्य।
न्यायगर्भवन्नयशाली तत्समापय दनंतरमार्यः। | -चंद्रिकाविवरणम्
-रा. वि ८-८, १२ |
| 2 श्रीरामदेवस्य महोत्सवे हरिम् विलोक्य तम् सेवितुमादरादिव।
मनोज्ञमाकंदमरंदधारया कृताभिषेकः सुरभिः समाययौ।।
रामचंद्रमथ रामनवम्यामिष्टद्वैवममृतैरुपकृत्यैः। पंचभिः
परमराघयोगी भक्तपूर्वमभिषिचति तत्र।। | -रा. वि ८-१५
-रा. वि ८-२८ |
| 3 चंद्रिकाप्रवचनम् दशकृत्वः सोकृतातिशयमात्मनि वांछन् । | -रा. वि ८-९ |

Lord Narahari whom he as Prahlada had been worshipping in Hari Varsha, and now Lord Moolarama but whenever he closes his eyes does the grand spectacle of Lord Krishna treat his inner vision. Therefore swamiji himself made a gold idol of Kadagolu Krishna as a token of the memory of winsome Lord Krishna of Udupi and began worshipping it. Even today it adorns the Mutt gloriously.

20. Swamiji's Visit To Mysore Royal Court

Proceeding from Udupi on his tour, the swamiji reached the state of Mysore. Doddadevaraja Wodeyar was the ruler of Mysore then. Srirangapatna was its capital. Swamiji's fame had spread all over the horizon. Besides, Vibudhendratheertha in the course of his tour had visited this state and had left the place honoured by the then king with gifts of estates for the Mutt. Vijayeendratheertha also had undertaken his journey to Udupi through the state (Vijayeendra Vijaya-IV canto). Therefore as it happened to be his original place, the swamiji too came to Mysore state. Doddadevaraja Wodeyar met the swamiji at Nanjangud, a town on the banks of the river Kabini and pleaded with him to visit the capital. But as it was already the month of Ashadha, the swamiji had to stay at a place for Chathurmasya. The king having learnt this was insistent in his request that swamiji as well observed Chathurmasya at Srirangapatna itself. With a desire to be in the precincts of Lord Ranganatha for sometime, the swamiji consented to the king's invitation. The king accorded a glorious reception to the swamiji in the outskirts of Srirangapatna. That day, pooja was performed at the palace itself. Next day it was Ashadha Shuddha Ekadashi. As it was the most sacred day of Prathama Ekadashi, with a wish to have fulfilment by paying obeisance to the swamiji, the king prayed that the swamiji perform the pooja at the palace itself next day also. The swamiji blessed the king by accepting his invitation. After the pooja was over on the day of Ekadashi, at the time of the swamiji blessing everybody with Theertha, the king ceremoniously gifted 'Nallur' or 'Devarajapura', a village at Sargur to the swamiji (Monday the 6th July, 1633) and felt fulfilment.¹ The gifts did, not only comprise this village but also diamond and other jewellery. The swamiji dedicated all these to Lord Moolarama.

1. Mysore Arc.Report for 1944, Sec 34

Completing the rituals of Chathurmasya at Srirangapatna, the swamiji left for Ramanathapura for Tulamasa. He took a holy dip in the river Cauvery there and performed pooja.¹

From there the swamiji's tour was towards the north. On his way he went to Chitradurga. At the Mutt, a disciple of swamiji had dedicated himself to the service of the swamiji very devotedly. He was constantly praying to swamiji for salvation. The swamiji would respond with a smile. This had become the routine everyday. Not only is Chitradurga famous as a historical place but also a sacred land where Pandavas in those days had toured. The belief is that the idol of Lord Gopalakrishna on the hill there was installed by the king Janamejaya. The idol of Pranadeva with five bells on its tail in the Mutt at the foot of the hill was the chief deity of Pandavas. The swamiji stayed there for some days. Unexpectedly one day the swamiji beckoned his disciple who always yearned for salvation and told him "do as I tell you and you will have salvation". He became highly elated and replied "I do as you tell me, sir". When he came after finishing his bath and Sandhyavandana, he observed the ritual of having Panchagavya for consecration at the behest of swamiji. Then the swamiji got prepared the place for holy fire, administered Beejakshara to him and directed him to jump into the holy fire. The disciple smearing the rajas (dust) from the sacred feet of the swamiji all over his head, jumped into the holy fire smilingly. Some of those watching this exclaimed sarcastically "what a deception! In the name of getting him salvation, the swamiji has caused his death and amusing over it". The swamiji of such a divine knowledge sensing this told them "listen carefully. When he is flown by the angels, the bells sound". True were the words of the swamiji. The bells did sound. This caused discomfiture among those who indulged in such a sarcasm and they fell at the swamiji's feet to beg pardon.²

The swamiji continued his tour towards North Karnataka. He worshipped at the shrine of Lord Veeranarayana at Gadag. Kireetagiri was a village near Gadag. It belonged to one Venkata Desai. He took the swamiji to his house where the swamiji performed

1 भानुमालिनि गतेथ तुलायाम् रामनाथपुरमेत्यचिराय ।
सह्यभूधरसुतासलिलेऽस्मिन् मञ्जनेन मुदितो भवदेवः । ।

-रा. वि ८ - ६३

2 ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ ತೋರಿದಿ ಮುಕುತಿಯ ಬೇಡಿದ ! ಭಕತನ ಯೋಗ್ಯತೆ ನಿಖಲ ಜನರಿಗೆ

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

pooja. As it was spring, mangoes were in abundance. Desai had mango squeeze prepared in a large vessel on the occasion. Desai's small child that was playing about fell into that vessel and died. As all were busy watching the pooja, it did not come to anybody's notice. After a while, Desai not finding the child around, went about searching for it. It was heart rending for him at last to find the child lying dead in the vessel. He bewailed very much that all the arrangements made for the swamiji seeking his blessings had gone in vain and the fear that this may lead to swamiji abstaining from the feast hosted, overtook him. The whisper that did the rounds amongst those present ultimately reached the swamiji also. The swamiji asked Desai to bring the mortal remains of the child on which he sprinkled the consecrated water. The child that had faced the untimely death suddenly got up to sit.¹ Desai's joy transcended all bounds. Considering it as the auspicious occasion, Desai gifted the village Kireetagiri to the swamiji in the name of Lord Krishna. It still is in the possession of the Mutt.

Such miraculous feats of swamiji rescuing the victims from the jaws of untimely death are copious. Once a follower of swamiji died of bumping against door frame on the day of his nuptials. The swamiji revived him.²

Leaving Kireetagiri, the swamiji reached Hubli. Similarly he revived the son of the Nawab of Savanur who also had untimely death from snake bite. The Nawab showing great reverence to the swamiji gifted Krishnapura among other villages.

The swamiji had to resort to doing some great miracles in order to educate those outside the four Varnas about the supremacy of Sanathana Dharma. Veerashaivas who had not identified themselves with Vedic religion were hostile to Vaishnavas. They planned to test swamiji's mettle.

The Desai of Shirasingi, a Lingayat had confiscated the assets of Brahmins that were in his custody. When the swamiji visited his village, he placed a pounding shaft before the swamiji and threw

1 ಚೂತಫಲರಸದಿ ಪೋತಮುಳುಗೆ ಮೃತ್ಯು | ಭೀತಿಯ ಬಿಡಿಸಿದನಾಥರಕ್ಷಕ |

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

2 ಭೃತ್ಯಗೆಬಂದಪಮೃತ್ಯುಕಳೆದು ಸುಖವಿತ್ತು ಪೊರೆದೆ ಪುರುಷೋತ್ತಮದಾಸ |

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

the gauntlet; "if you make it bear young leaves, I shall admit that the Brahmins have really conquered the powers of Mantras. Or else I shall call you flamboyantly sham". Had the Desai any knowledge of the Shastras, the swamiji could have established the efficacy of the Vedas through a debate with him and could have made him get convinced of the uniqueness of Sanathana Dharma. Now the choice left for the swamiji was nothing but to do miracles. Therefore the swamiji accepted the challenge and poured the water consecrated by Mantras on the pounding shaft for some days. It began to sprout as a sapling. The Desai who had considered it a highly impossible task, bewildered at this paradox, begged for excuse and did great honours to the swamiji. From then on he began to develop special reverence for Brahmins.¹

The swamiji diverted his tour towards Pandharapur from there. In the course of his journey, the wife of a servant of the Mutt who was in her advanced pregnancy delivered a baby in a place devoid of water and shade. The swamiji comforted her immediately by creating a water puddle and shade over, with the holy water from the Kamandalu in his hand.²

Thus the swamiji reached Pandharapur doing miracle here and there in the course of his journey. Meanwhile, a debate took place between him and a debater by name Shesha. The swamiji humbled him quoting the precepts from the book **Vagvaikhari** authored by Sri Vijayeendratheertha.³

After having a darshan of Pandurangavithala, the swamiji left for Kolhapur.⁴ It may be said that it was Tanjore, not only in South India but also in the entire country, which patronised the Aryan culture perpetually after the whole empire of Karnataka was ruined. It was Shahji Bhonsle who prepared the ground for his son Shivaji to strive towards enriching that wealth and build another Hindu

1 ಕನಲಿದ ಜನಪನ ಅನುನಯದಲಿ ನಿನ್ನಣುಗನಮಾಡಿಡಿ ಘನತರಚರಿತ |

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

2 ಮಳಲಮಾರ್ಗದಲಿ ಲಲನೆ ಪ್ರಸೂತಿಸೆ | ಪುಲಿನಕಮಂಡಲದೋಳ್ ಜಲತೋರ್ಡೆ |

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

3 वाग्‌वैखरी निर्जितभयशेषः |

-गुरुस्तोत्रम्

4 पांडुरंगपुरविठ्ठलमीक्ष्य प्रस्थितः स करवीरपुराख्यम् |

पत्तनम् विरचयन् हरिपूजाम् तत्र वासमकरोच्चिरकालम् | | -रा. वि ८-६७

empire. Shivaji achieved success in his endeavours with the help and advice of Naropant Hanumanthe, a Madhwa politician. His area of operation was Kolhapur. It was for this reason, the swamiji, the mentor of Tanjore king had a special welcome at Kolhapur where he stayed for a long time.¹

Proceeding further from there upto Nasik, the swamiji returned after having a holy bath in the river Godavari. On the way, a Brahmin who was going from Bijapur to Chikkodi lay like a corpse caught in the sweltering heat of the Sun with no water to drink. The swamiji saved him by creating an Oasis.²

Then Bijapur was a big state. At that time a Nawab by name Ibrahim Adil Shah II was ruling the state. Though he was a Muslim king, he had great predisposition towards Hinduism. He had great reverence for Brahmins. As he had much interest in Aryan culture, the Muslim subjects used to address the Nawab as 'Jagadguru'.³

The swamiji with his entourage went there. The Nawab did special honours to the swamiji. The disputants under the royal patronage there got defeated by the scholarship of the swamiji and became his disciples. Many disciples there had **Mudradharana**. Besides honouring with the title **Jagadguru**, the Nawab presented the swamiji with one of the royal insignias, the 'White-Umbrella'.⁴

From Bijapur, the swamiji reached Alur on the banks of the river Krishna where he had a holy dip. There he wrote 'Bhavadeepa', a commentary on 'Tattvaprakashika' and 'Tattvamanjari', a commentary on 'Brahmasootranubhashya'.⁵

1. By the time that the last traces of the Vijayanagar empire were disappearing, Shahji by his conquests and by the aid of his principal minister, Naropant Hanumanthe, a Madhwa scholar and financier trained in the school of Mallikamber, connected Tanjore in thought and outlook with Maharashtra and with the neighbourhood of Bangalore in the Mysore state. Shivaji then came into prominence and Raghavendratheertha.....remained for a long time in Kolhapur in the centre of Maharashtra thought and influence.

-Mythic society Journal Oct-1924

- 2 ವಿಪಿನದಿ ಚೆಂಡಾತಪದಿ ಬೆಂದ ಕಾ | ಶೃಪಿಸುರನುಳುಹಿದ ಕೃಪಣಜನಾತ್ಮಾ | -ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು
- 3 Oxford History of India - V.A.Smith, P.296.
- 4 गौतमाधपरिहारिणि तोये स्नानकर्म विरचय्य स विद्वान् ।
पूजितः प्रतिपदम् प्रतिधीरैः प्राविशत् किल पुरीम् विजयाख्याम् । ।
मुद्रयारिदरयोर्मिलिताम्योरंकितानकृत शिष्यसमूहान् ।
वादिनोपि परिभूय विशिष्य श्वेतमातप निवारणमाप्नोत् । । -रा. वि ८-६८ ६९
- 5 स्नातवानथ बुद्धिसह कृष्णानिम्नगापयसि निजितमारः ।
तत्तटेजयगुरुदितटीकाम् व्याकृतापि यतिराड्युभाष्यम् । । -रा. वि ८-७०

Setting off towards east from there, the swamiji arrived at Manvi in Raichur district and camped in a temple of Pranadeva nearby. It was then the beginning of Chathurmasya. The swamiji who was engaged in writing after finishing his morning bath and Ahneeka saw a Dalit standing near the Garudagamba (stone pillar right in front of the Sanctum) and smiled at him.

Swam : How come you are here?

Dalit : Yes sir, this has become my fate. Having heard about your arrival, I have come here. Ennoble me sir as you did me in my earlier birth.

Swam: All right; bring tomorrow something to offer to the God.

He returned happily. The next day he brought all the mustard seeds he had clenched in his fist and placing it afar before the swamiji, prayed devotedly for his ennoblement. Though it was the period of vow of the month of Ashadha, considering the mustard seeds offered with such devotion as forbidden particularly because the seed is one of the ingredients offered during Homas, the learned swamiji ordered it to be used in preparing food. After the swamiji and all the Brahmins finished their lunch, the Dalit who also had the Prasadam sat immersed in Divine thought, when his soul departed from its mortal abode and attained salvation. This soul which again now savoured the fortune of a darshan of swamiji and attained salvation is none other than 'Yamamshasambhoota' Kanakadasa, a contemporary of Vyasaraja, the previous incarnation of Raghavendra.¹

The swamiji sat for Chathurmasya there itself. Swarm of devotees often visited the Mutt to have a darshan of swamiji. An author by name Bidarahalli Srinivasacharya, a contemporary came to the Mutt. His elder brother was Yadavarya. He too was an author. Yadavarya who knew about the divine powers of swamiji had advised his younger brother Srinivasacharya to place his literary works before the swamiji for his perusal and blessings. In compliance with his

* A temple of Sri Pranadeva popular as 'Sanjeevaraya' is located at a distance of four k.m on the road from Manvi to Cheekalapari. It was here where the swamiji came and sat for his Chathurmasya. -Publisher

1 ಪತಿಸನ ನಿಯೋಗ್ಯತೆಯನರಿತು ಸದ್ಗತಿಯ ಪಾಲಿಸಿದ ಯತಿಕುಲವರ್ಯಾ |

-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

elder brother's order, Srinivasacharya prostrated before the swamiji and placed his books pleading him to vet them. The swamiji examined the books and appreciated Srinivasacharya saying "this is in conformity with the doctrine and greatly helpful. You really are noble to be so dedicated yourself to the works of Anandatheertha especially amidst your family life". Srinivasacharya felt elated by the sense of fulfilment through swamiji's grace. As swamiji had wished him to have his lunch at the Mutt only, Bidarahalli Srinivasacharya stayed on. For lunch, all were served with 'Kattu'. It was seasoned with mustard seeds. Srinivasatheertha belonged to Uttaradi Mutt. Since the custom of that Mutt stipulated refrain from using mustard seeds during the first month of Chathurmasya, the puzzled Srinivasacharya sat still. Sensing his predicament, the swamiji had him serve with the food cooked separately for him. Srinivasacharya after being blessed with Mantrakshathe by the swamiji returned to the village in the afternoon. He was extremely happy to have been appreciated so much by the swamiji. Back home, he paid his obeisance to his elder brother. Seeing Srinivasacharya whose face bore a tinge of having committed an act of flippancy, Yadavarya inquired "what is the matter? Why is that I see your face shorn of lustre? Did you fail to have the blessings of swamiji? He is the greatest among the learned. If he is displeased, we don't get the blessings of Acharya also.

Srin: No. The swamiji blessed me beyond my imagination. In addition, he so kindly honoured me.

Yad: Be it so. I am unable to comprehend the secret behind. Give me some Mantrakshathe with which the swamiji blessed you. Let me consecrate my head. Srinivasacharya took out the Mantrakshathe. It all had gone black.

"Look! You must have committed an act of impropriety. That is why instead of earning swamiji's blessings, you have, his wrath. Tell me what actually you did", asked Yadavarya.

While recounting what all had happened there, Srinivasacharya also mentioned that he did not take food seasoned with mustard seeds.

Yad: That is the point! That is very irreverential! You audacious, how egoistic you were in front of such a titan of knowledge! Do you

know what is fit or what is unfit to eat better than the swamiji? Can you refuse anything from out of the oblation made to Lord Moolarama and that which remains out of swamiji's Hasthodhaka? What has happened, has happened. You have always been treading such a path. Lose no time. Rush to the swamiji and fall at his feet with remorse. Earn his blessings and get back!

Srinivasacharya set off on the journey with a deep feeling of regret. He was palpating that something unsavoury and unexpected had turned out from his deportment which in a way was not deliberate. So abstaining from the food, he came to the Mutt and fell at the feet of the swamiji. The swamiji asked with a smile, "What, Srinivasacharya! Have you come here to take a darshan of Lord Moolarama again?"

Srin: What! A darshan for a sinner like me? I implore you to absolve me from the sin and bless me. Otherwise I am afraid that I may fall into the abyss. Please be gracious. It was not deliberate. But I confess that it is not venial. Now I have nobody but your Holiness to look to.

Swam: Nothing serious has happened. Get up, nothing to worry. It is only pertinent for you to observe the custom of your Mutt. But Lord Moolarama might have got angry with you for refusing his Prasada. It is enough if you take his Prasada today to undo the wrong done.

Srin: I shall do whatever you ordain.

That day Srinivasacharya had the food prepared as per the custom of the Mutt and left for his village with the blessings of the swamiji.

For one who treats the path of life in his forward march analysing all its impediments meticulously, Srinivasacharya's experience should serve as a glaring example. Though the path we have to take is predestined, we need to act in accordance with the time, place, circumstances, and our association. In India a clear and definite lesson has been prescribed from beginning to end. Dharmaraja's obsession was to always tread the path of Dharma; none other than Dharma. Bheemasena favoured it to be blended with sagacity. As the words of the elder Dharmaraja ruled, Draupadi had to undergo the travails in the open royal court. Pandavas had to live in forest. Srinivasacharya who being in the company of such a great soul adamantly stuck to his own custom, had to face the

immediate consequences. Particularly, of late such ignorance among the people is on the rise resulting in egoism. Regardless of the time and situation, they stick to their own customs. Be that wrong or right, what is conspicuous is the obduracy of some people to observe such customs. Even amidst the most revered, they are ostentatiously flagrant. What is rampant is the mad scramble to pre-empt others in proffering Naivedya, getting Mangalarathi and Theertha. This evidences nothing but degeneration of intellect and betrayal of ignorance of the people. It appears essential for such people to learn from the examples of the honourable Yadavarya and Srinivasacharya.

The swamiji after his Chaturmasya proceeded further on his tour. At Kandanati, a nearby village, an orphan boy prostrated before swamiji and prayed ardently, "there is none to take care of me, I seek your full blessings".

His name was Venkanna. Though he had learnt to read and write a bit in his childhood, he tended cows as he had no proper guardians. He had unmatched respect for elders. Still he had not learnt Mantras and Stothras. The swamiji was moved by his sadness. Venkanna's face betokened for the swamiji the prospects of his holding a high office. The swamiji blessing him with Mantrakshathe said, "The Almighty will see to your progress. You remember me during your hours of crises. You will overcome them". Venkanna was highly delighted.

Then Adoni was the capital of a Mandalika under the Nawab of Bijapur. One Siddhi Masoodkhan (A.D.1662-87) was its Mandalika. Though he was subordinate to Badshah of Bijapur, he used to expand his state independently. The entire province of Raichur was under his rule. Masoodkhan came to Venkanna's village for tax collection. As extortion and dacoity had become a routine those days, people were afraid of even seeing Khan. When Khan was moving in a procession in Venkanna's village, he received a letter. In the usual royal style, Khan gestured at Venkanna nearby and ordered him to read the letter. For Venkanna who could not properly read or write, this became a big problem. He thought that if he refused to obey, he would certainly be in for a danger. As ordered by Khan, he was mounted on the elephant. The Nawab gave him the letter. Venkanna began to sweat. His voice got duller. He quakingly submitted, "No, Janab, I do not know to read". But it failed to impress. The Nawab

thundered, "Khafir, being a Brahmin how do you say you do not know to read? You do read. I shall reward you appropriately. If not no chance for you to be alive". Venkanna trembled. He did not know what to do. Suddenly somehow he remembered the swamiji. "Now I am in real danger. Oh Raghavendra! You only should protect me" was how he prayed in himself and began to read the letter. To his great fortune that letter had the message of Nawab's victory. The Nawab overwhelmed by the style of Venkanna's reading and majesty, nodded his head in appreciation. He concluded that Venkanna was really endowed with good intellect but out of fear for him, he trembled like that. May be because of the blessings of the swamiji, Venkanna mustered unusual courage. Then in his unwavering tone, he suitably suggested what appropriate action the Nawab had to take. This in particular made the Nawab exude boundless joy. Immediately the Nawab said, "I appoint you as my personal Dewan and place you in charge of administration of Adoni". What then? The cowherd Venkanna turned a Dewan!

May be to enoble him, swamiji completely stood behind him in all his endeavours. Right from the day one he took over the administration, it so happened to him that he found all the things he had to deal with to be quite familiar since a long time. He began to run the administration quite ably. Gradually the Nawab's affection for him intensified. Venkanna became the virtual ruler. But he did not lack in his gratitude for swamiji's blessings. He always yearned for another occasion for a darshan of the swamiji and also narrate to him how swamiji's blessings made him what he had become then.

The swamiji who left after blessing Venkanna came to Srishyla through his sinuous tour and worshipped at the shrine of Rudra. Further he left for Tirupathi, the shrine of Lord Venkatesha, his beloved and also family deity in his pre-sanyasa days. After some days of worship there, he left for the town of Kanchi.¹

He worshipped Kamaksheesha Varadaraja at Kanchi and left for Arunachala. Offering his service to Arunachalesha, he left for

1 तत्र तत्र विरचय्य स वासम् पुण्यभूषु पुरुषोत्तम भक्तः।
श्रीमहीधरमुपेत्य च तुंगम् वैकटेशमवलोकितुमागात् ।।

नत्वा देवम्वैकटशम् यतीन्द्रः कृत्वावासम् वासरान् काश्चिदत्र ।

कंचीमागात् कांचनागारस्याम् नत्वा विष्णुम् चानमत् पार्वतीशम् ।। -रा. वि ८-७१-७२

Vriddhachala and Srimushna.¹ Reckoned among the pilgrims known for there uncreated self-emerged idols is Srimushna, a great pilgrim centre. It was here where the visiting Acharya had worshipped Lord Varaha and founded Dandatheertha. Srivaishnavas perform even today poojas to Pranadeva in all the three forms of his incarnations in the temple there. Therefore, this centre of such a temple is the place of pride for Madhwas. The swamiji offered his service and sang in praise of Lord Varaha there.

Thus in his circumambulation of South India, the swamiji held the flag of victory wherever he went and returned to Kumbhakonam after a long gap. The people of Cholamandala held the swamiji in great reverence for saving them from dire perils. They were very zealously anticipating his arrival. No sooner did the people learn that the swamiji was about to enter the town, than they bedecked the whole town and lay in wait with the usual flourish of music and Poornakumbhas at the outskirts to accord him a grand reception. Certain other regalia of the temples of Sarangapani and Kumbheshwara also queued up in his honour. Array of elephants and horses also stood in wait. Music from instruments rent the air as the swamiji appeared. Elephants and horses expressed their fervour with the symbolic welcome. Chant of Vedas by Brahmins wafted in the air. Shouts of praise of the jubilant gathering echoed. They showered swamiji with flowers. The whole occasion reminded of the grandeur that accompanied the return of Lord Rama along with Bharatha to Ayodhya after his Vanavasa. While buntings of green leaves, shower of flowers formed the cynosure in every street, the flourish of music soothed the ears. Young women performed Arathi to the swamiji in front of their houses. Dedicating everything to Lord Hari, the swamiji entered the Mutt through the eastern door.²

21. Swamiji's Second Tour

On his return, the swamiji settled at Kumbhakonam and reviewed the situation prevailing there and in its neighbourhood. He found

1 शोणाद्रिमासाद्य निषेव्य शंभुम् वृद्धाचलं प्राप्य विलोक्य रुद्रम् ।

श्रीमुष्णमभेत्य वराहरूपम् विष्णुम् प्रणम्येष नुतिम् व्यतानीत् । ।

-रा. वि ८-७३

2 वाद्यैश्चित्रैः शंखभेरीमृदंगैः फुल्लमैः पुष्पैर्विधिमनुजैःकीर्यमाणैः समंतात् । वीथ्याम् वीथ्याम्

युवतिकरगारार्तिकैः राघवेन्द्रो रामे पूर्वम् प्रविशति मठम् प्राविशत् संपदाढ्यम् । । -रा. वि ८-७७

the situation not congenial for his stay there. Besides a plethora of his tasks still lay unattended. He felt that Cholamandala was not suitable for the purpose. Therefore he contemplated on leaving Kumbhakonam for good. The work of swamiji's commentary on Vedas still remained unfinished. It was for this reason also, he had to leave Kumbhakonam. Viewing all these in perspective, the swamiji with all special arrangements offered Hasthodhaka to his paramaguru Sri Vijayeendratheertha, appointed a deserving confidant for daily performance of Brindavanapooja and also a suitable person for its administration. Besides he had all preparations made for his departure. The administration of all famous temples of Kumbhakonam rested with Sri Mutt only since the period of Vijayeendraswamiji. Sri Raghavendraswamiji entrusted the administration of the temples of Chakrapani and Sarangapani to Ahobala Mutt, while that of Kumbheshwara temple was entrusted to Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt.¹ The news was like a bolt from the blue for all the people of the town. They all met the swamiji and prayed to him to stay on. The swamiji convinced them with suitable reply and left Kumbhakonam on an auspicious day. This time his tour was not dilatory. He quickly reached Karnataka and from Hospet visited the place which had the Brindavans of his guru and Chandrikacharya. After offering Hasthodhaka there, he returned to Hampi where he worshipped the Brindavans of Raghunandana theertha and Naraharitheertha before he left for Adoni.

Siddhi Masoodkhan was the Nawab of Adoni, Venkanna its Dewan. Venkanna was extremely happy to hear that the swamiji was visiting Adoni. He was overjoyed that he would get an opportunity to play host to the swamiji. Whenever occasion arose, he had been apprising the Nawab of the miracles done by swamiji. Particularly after hearing that the Badshah of Bijapur had honoured the swamiji, conferred on him the title 'Jagadguru' and gifted the royal insignia 'Swethashatra', an urge to test swamiji's extraordinary powers developed in the Nawab.

When the Dewan Venkannapant apprised the Nawab of swamiji's visit to Adoni, he instructed Venkannapant to extend a cordial welcome to the swamiji. Venkanna who already was eager about the swamiji's visit, particularly in the light of such instruction, himself undertook the task of decorating the town for swamiji's reception.

1. Even today great honours are being done to the Sri Mutt there.

The whole town stood grandly bedecked. The people of the town were in a mood of great joy about the visit.

As swamiji reached the outskirts of Adoni, he saw people of the town and officials waiting to receive him with fervour and fanfare. Suddenly the swamiji ordered the sedan to be stopped. Venkannapant who was among the officials came rushing towards the swamiji and paid his obeisance touching swamiji's feet. The fount of devotion in Venkannapant for his beloved deity reminded the irrepressible emotion that overwhelmed Bharatha on meeting Lord Ramachandra after a long time. His voice became choked. Words failed him. He held the feet of the swamiji persistently, minding not the long time that passed. The swamiji himself waked him up and moving about his hand fondly on his back enquired, "Dear Dewan, how is your health? Is the Nawab doing well?"

Ven : I owe everything to the blessings of your Holiness.

Swam : It is a matter of gratification that you are in such a high position.

Ven : A worthless being I am. If I am anything, it is because of you. Where is the question of my ennoblement if I am addressed so respectfully?

Swam : No. Still much more remains to be done by you.

Ven : Everything belongs to your Holiness. Am I so lucky?

Swam : Leave it there. Let us discuss later. Now it is time.

Venkanna took the swamiji seated in a magnificent gold palanquin in procession all over the town and had him stay in the palace guest house. That day Venkanna himself played host to the swamiji. He had made arrangements very meticulously so that there was not a little flaw in the service done to the swamiji who has been instrumental in the betterment of his life. The swamiji was greatly pleased by his devotion, sincerity and generosity.

Next day the Nawab informed Venkanna that he would pay a visit to have a darshan of the swamiji. The tidings made Venkanna happy who made suitable arrangements. For a long time the Nawab was looking forward for an opportunity to test the swamiji. Now was the proper time for it. The Nawab ordered for a silver platter and had the prohibited stuff placed on it deliberately, to be offered to the swamiji under cover. Paying his respects from a distance in the manner conforming to his religious customs, the Nawab placed

the platter before the swamiji seated in Bhadrāsana. The swamiji asked him to sit. The Nawab sat in the chair meant for him. The swamiji smilingly enquired about his welfare. The Nawab who was already awestruck by a mere darshan was further astounded to hear swamiji's majestic voice. He discovered in the swamiji a great brilliance which could cast a spell on the whole universe; valour and doughtiness to conquer the whole world. He thought that it was unwise of him to have ventured testing such a saint. But now it was too late to retreat. Purporting this to be a suitable opportunity to make one belonging to a different religion realise the uniqueness of those pursuing Sanathana Dharma, the swamiji simply smiled. The naïve Venkannapant, who knew nothing about this, thought that the Nawab must have brought a suitable present to the swamiji. The swamiji instructed his attendant to bring some water. When water was brought, the swamiji sprinkled the water all over the platter and looking at the attendant said, "the Nawab has brought this to be offered to Lord Moolarama. Take off the cloth on the platter".

Now, the Nawab's heart began to palpitate. He opened his mouth to say no. But his tongue stumbled. He concluded that the time had come for him to keep his head down in shame. Alas! soonest the covering over the platter had got removed. In it lay fruits and flowers full!! The Nawab was smitten by the amazing revelation. Surprise, fright, devotion filled his mind simultaneously. Leaving his seat, he bowed before the swamiji and entreated for excuse.¹

Swam: (Smilingly) Nawab, after all what wrong have you committed?

Nawab: No, Khavand. Excuse me for the wrong done.

Swam: Do not worry. Our God is pleased with you. You need to be of help to us. My supreme guru too blessed a king like you. My own guru in particular fully graced your Badshah of Bijapur. Adilshah of Bijapur did special honours to me. You have the real sincerity. You ventured upon such a test only to realise the importance of our Dharma. You have seen how great our Dharma is. If one treads the path of our Dharma, so pleased does our God become that he dances before us!

Nawab: I beg your forgiveness. Let me play the host to you today.

1 ಅನಿವೇದಿತ ಭೋಜನ ವಸ್ತುಗಳಿಂದನುಭವಮಾಡಿಸಿದನುಪಮಚರಿತಾ | -ಜಗನ್ನಾಥದಾಸರು

Swam: All right, I am happy.

The Nawab returned to his palace and sent provisions and money for the day's feast. This day also Venkanna himself took a leading role. After the day's programmes were over, the Nawab conversing with Venkannapant in solitude told him, "I wish to offer your guru a lasting gift. Therefore I have decided to gift him one of the good villages under my administration. What is your opinion? Get me what your guru has to say in this regard".

Ven : It is ok your Honour. I am extremely pleased. I shall discuss this with my guru.

Venkannapant apprised the swamiji of Nawab's intentions. The swamiji felt gratified that the Providence itself had transformed into reality what had reflected in his mind by kindling such a thought of munificence in the Nawab, and told Venkanna "it is fine. I shall be happy to have the village Manchale on the banks of the river Tungabhadra.

Ven: Why, swamiji? It is not a fertile land. It is a village of arid lands. Considering it to be of no use, the Nawab has abandoned it to the use of a Kaji.

Swam: Whatever, I want only that village. It is for this only I have come farthest from the place where my guru stayed. There is a very strong reason behind my asking this insistently. I shall let you know it later. Further the presiding deity of that village is my favourite deity. Moreover, of what avail is it to a sanyasi to have a village of great wealth and prosperity? It is enough if it serves the purpose of being a right place for me to be in. What I most need is that it should be on the banks of a river. Is it that ordinary to settle on the banks of the river Tungabhadra, Venkanna? I have a special affection for it. It is in the centre of this river where Vyasaraja is seated. I too have desired to be at this river like him. It is on the island of Tungabhadra only where my guru is seated. Therefore I shall be very happy if only the village Manchale is gifted to me. Saying "as you please", Venkanna returned and apprised the Nawab of swamiji's wish.

Though at first he questioned Venkanna why the swamiji desired to get such a village of barren lands like Manchale, the Nawab acquiesced in after Venkanna narrated all that swamiji had expressed. He gifted two villages Vogaruru and Thimmapura to the

Kaji of that village in place of Manchale. Then Venkanna on behalf of the Nawab gifted the village Manchale to the swamiji dedicating it to Lord Krishna and had all the documents executed accordingly.

22. Brindavana Pravesha

The swamiji entered the village Manchale at an auspicious moment. Installing the idol of Lord Venkatesha, his family deity in that village, the swamiji settled down there. Venkannapant paying frequent visits to Manchale used to enquire about swamiji's welfare.

The swamiji had sat discussing Vedantha with his disciples on the day of Pournima of Jyestha Shuddha in Soumya Samvathsara. Suddenly getting up, he looked at the sky and offered his reverence with his hands clasped. As it became incomprehensible, the disciples curiously enquired what it was all about. In reply, said the swamiji "Krishnadwaipayana was departing from his world in a Vimana. On seeing me, he paid his respects from the space. I too reciprocated. While offering me reverence once again, he asked me whether it was certain that I would reach the abode of Lord Sri Hari after a period of two years, two months and two days. I nodded my head to say yes. That is all".

Though the disciples were astounded by the metaphysical powers of the swamiji, they were sad that their proximity to swamiji would last only another period of two years. Yet none wished to brood over this.

This is the characteristic of great souls. Though Krishnadwaipayana attained sanyasa in the tradition of Uttaradi Mutt, overtaken by renunciation, he refused to lead the Mutt as its pontiff. A soul of great intellect as he was who kept his feelings within, he always devoted his time to Japa, Tapa, teaching and discourse. The place of his Brindavan is at Kusumurthi, a village on the banks of the river Bheema. Krishnadwaipayana chose that place as it was flanked by the river Bheema, had the confluence of Krishna and Bheema at some distance, the Sangameshwara; topping all it was the abode of the great ascetic Jithamithra. The swamiji saw him fly in the Vimana. What appears very unnatural for the ordinary is equally natural for such men of metaphysical powers.¹

1 ಯತಿವರ ದೂರದಿ ಮೃತ್ಯುಯಲಾಗಸಪಥದಲಿ ಕಂಡು ನುತಿಸಿದ ಪಟಮಾ |

The swamiji busied himself with his preparations for further events. When Venkannapant came to Manchale, the swamiji took him to the banks of the river and got the place dug where his Brindavan is situated now. They found a sacred fireplace (Yagnakunda) there. Venkanna asked the swamiji what it was.

The swamiji replied: "This is what I told you, I would divulge later. For the present it may be a barren land; but do not think that it is an ordinary place. By securing this land for me, it may be said that you have really made a noble achievement. It was here only where Prahlada had performed Yagna in Kritha Yuga. Goddess Mantralayambike in the vicinity was his family deity. The centre of my activity ought to be this only. I too ought to contribute my mite like Prahlada. Have you now understood the reason why I insisted on your securing me this land?"¹

It is just not all that. When Arjuna was on Chaitrayatra as a prelude to Ashwamedhayaga of Pandavas in Dwapara Yuga, it was at this place a battle took place between him and Anusulva. As Anusulva's chariot was stationed on this spot where Yagna had been performed, Arjuna could not defeat him. On Lord Krishna's advice, Arjuna retrograded his chariot a little. Anusulva's chariot moved forward from this sacred spot. Then Anusulva suffered defeat. Therefore that anyone settling here will stay victorious for all time to come is an established truth".

Venkanna said in a choked voice: "Everything has become quite intelligible, every bit of your actions reveals that you are really a unique soul. Not a day has passed without your divine miracles. What I seek most is your benevolence only. I am specially fortunate to have you as my guru. I pray that I may tread the path of righteousness with your grace!"

As ordained by the swamiji, Venkannapant saw to the construction of a Sanctum Sanctorum on the spot where Yagnakunda existed. He also built a spacious corridor bordering the temple of Goddess Mantralayambike. He was always eagerly looking forward to the day of achieving the fullest satisfaction by

1 ಮೊದಲುಗಾಂಗೆಯಶಯ್ಯಜನು ಈ | ನದಿಯತೀರದಲಿಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾಗವ | ಮುದದಿ ರಂಜಿಸಿ ಪೂರೈಸಿಪೋಗಿರ | ಲದನು ತಮ್ಮೊಳು ತಿಳಿದು ತವಕದಿ | ಹೃದಯನಿರ್ಮಲರಾಗಿ ರಾಗದಿ | ಬುಧಜನರ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳದಲಿ ಸಿರಿ | ಸದನಸಂಘಿಯ ತಿಳಿದು ನೆನೆವರ | ಉದಿತ ಭಾಸ್ಯರನಂತೆ ಪೋಳವರ || -ವಿಜಯದಾಸರು

carrying out whatever was said by the swamiji. But his grief that the swamiji would soon call a halt to his spiritual activities in the mundane world became increasingly haunting. He bemoaned that the fortune of continuing to have the darshan of swamiji would not last long. Even then he did not deem it proper to question the swamiji on this.

The month of Ashadha in Virodhikrith Samvathsara was approaching. The swamiji decided to observe Chaturmasya at Manchale itself. The month of Ashadha elapsing, Shravana followed. On the day of festival of Varamahalakshmi on the first Friday, the swamiji had special Abhisheka and poojas performed to Manchamma. Offering oblation and Mangalarathi, he began praying to Goddess Durgadevi in great devotion.

ನಮಸ್ತು ವರದೇ ಕೃಷ್ಣೋ ಕೌಮಾರಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚಾರಿಣಿ |
 ಬಾಲಾರ್ಕ ಸದೃಶಾಕಾಢೇ ಪೂರ್ಣಚಂದ್ರನಿಭಾನನೇ | |
 ಭಾಸಿ ದೇವಿ ಯಥಾಪದ್ಧಾ ನಾರಾಯಣಪರಿಗ್ರಹಾ |
 ಸ್ವರಾಪೇ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚರ್ಯಮ್ ಚ ವಿಶದಮ್ ತವ ಖೇಚರಿ | |
 ಕೌಮಾರಮ್ ವ್ರತಮಾಸ್ಥಾಯ ತ್ರಿಧಿವಮ್ ಪಾವಿತಮ್ ತ್ವಯಾ |
 ತೇನ ತ್ವಂಸ್ತುಯಸೇ ದೇವಿ ತ್ರಿದಶೈಃ ಪೂಜ್ಯಸೇಪಿ ಚ | |
 ತ್ರೈಲೋಕ್ಯ ರಕ್ಷಣಾರ್ಥಾಯ ಮಹಿಷಾಸುರನಾಶಿನಿ |
 ಪ್ರಸನ್ನಾ ಮೇ ಸುರಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠೇ ದಯಾಮ್ ಕುರು ಶಿವಾ ಭವ | |
 ಪ್ರಣಮಂತಿ ಚ ಯೇ ತ್ವಾಂ ಹಿ ಪ್ರಭಾತೇ ತು ನರಾ ಭುವಿ |
 ನ ತೇಷಾಂ ದುರ್ಲಭಂ ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ ಪುತ್ರತೋ ಧನತೋಪಿ ವಾ | |
 ದುರ್ಗಾತ್ತಾರಯಸೇ ದುರ್ಗೆ ತತ್ತ್ವಂ ದುರ್ಗಾಸ್ಮೃತಾ ಬುಧೈಃ |
 ತ್ವಂ ಕೀರ್ತಿಃ ಶ್ರೀಧೃತಿಃ ಸಿದ್ಧಿಃ ಹಿಂ ವಿಚ್ಛಾ ಸಂತತಿರ್ಮತಿಃ | |
 ಸಂಧ್ಯಾ ರಾತ್ರಿಃ ಪ್ರಭಾ ನಿದ್ರಾ ಜ್ಯೋತ್ಸನಾ ಕಾಂತಿಃ ಕ್ಷಮಾ ದಯಾ |
 ಪ್ರಣತಶ್ಚ ತಥಾ ಮೂರ್ಛಿ ಚ ದೇವಿ ಸುರೇಶ್ವರಿ | |
 ತ್ರಾಹಿ ಮಾಂ ಪದ್ಮಪತ್ರಾಕ್ಷಿ ಸತ್ಯಾಸತ್ಯಾ ಭವಸ್ವ ನಃ |
 ಶರಣಂ ಭವ ಮೇ ದುರ್ಗೆ ಶರಣ್ಯೇ ಭಕ್ತ ವತ್ಸಲೇ | |

Goddess Durgadevi whom the swamiji was extolling manifested before him and said: "Dear son, I am pleased by your prayers. When my consort himself pleased by your devotion came out from the cracking pillar, it is only natural for me to bless you. Even when I was your family deity during your incarnation as Prahlada, you worshipped me. Now also you worship me as your family deity. I shall always be behind you in all your endeavours. Lord Hari has ordained that whenever a situation completely detrimental to Dharma

arises, I myself should incarnate and establish Dharma. Till such time, the responsibility of protecting Dharma rests on the righteous like you. Therefore the task for both of us is the same and the goal very much the same. As you have the full blessings of Vayudeva, many other extraordinary tasks are awaiting to be done by you. I will reside here only with the most ardent devotee like you in the forefront. You on your part install a goat's head which is my insignia on the door in front of your Sanctum Sanctorum. It acts as a repulsive force against all demonic influences. I expect nothing more from you except this". Thus assuring, the Goddess disappeared.

For the swamiji with an Amsha of Prahlada who had been ordained by Lord Hari, it was intensely blissful for he had the full blessings of the Goddess in all his divine endeavours. Considering everything as the blessings of Lord Hari, he let his mind meditate on Lord Moolarama, the deity he worshipped.

As announced earlier by him, the swamiji was of firm resolve to end his mundane life on a specific day. It was immutable for anybody. When an occasion arose, Venkanna raked up the matter. But the swamiji declared that all his acts were according to what Lord Hari ordained, and further ordered him to go ahead with the preparations for the day. Bowing to the orders, sorrowful Venkanna addressed himself to the tasks.

On an auspicious day, the swamiji bestowed sanyasa on one of his disciples Venkannacharya, the grandson of his poorvashrama elder brother, who was a great scholar and highly renounced and named him '**Yogeendratheertha**'. Pranava and all other Mantras besides all the sixty four arts were administered to Yogeendratheertha. The swamiji instructed Venkannapant to treat Yogeendratheertha just the same way he treated the swamiji. Taking material aspects into consideration, Venkannapant got the documents pertaining to the village Manchale transferred in the name of Yogeendratheertha. Anticipating swamiji's edict, Venkannapant had a magnificent Brindavan readied. The swamiji who saw it said, "this is not for me. Let this be there for a successor of mine to come a few generations later. There is a rock somewhere for me. I want you to bring it". Venkanna enquired what that stone was. The swamiji ordained it to be brought and revealed that it was the stone near Madhavara which became sanctified as Lord Rama touched it.

Obeying swamiji, Venkannapant got it brought. The different parts of Brindavan were carved out of that rock. The idol of Pranavadeva was also sculpted out of the same rock.

The services of the family priest of Venkanna were engaged for the regular pooja of swamiji's Brindavan. As a complementary measure, he gifted lands in the same village to sermonisers, those engaged in preparation of sandal paste and those providing Tulasi for daily rituals, including florists, instrumentalists and all others. He also provided houses for them in the same village.

As the day of swamiji's disappearance neared, people around were shrouded in deep sorrow. This pushed Venkanna into the abyss of grief. As the news spread, all the devotees from neighbouring villages poured in droves to take a darshan of the swamiji. The swamiji had announced in definite terms that he would disappear on the second day of Shravana Bahula. All the disciples of the swamiji began wondering, "How is this possible? Really what a great amazement this is!" This became an enigma for all. However, none could muster the courage to speak this aloud.

"Dear disciples! Today is the last day of mine. You all seem to be very sad about this. But there is no reason for you to worry even a little. My soul is not going to depart from this body. I am ordained by Lord Hari to stay for long in this world to protect Dharma. But to exist like this for an indefinitely long time does not conform to the principle of existence in this Yuga. Therefore I will enter the Brindavan with this body and soul together. It is for that purpose only this Brindavan has taken shape. I exhort you all to pursue the path of Dharma scrupulously till the end. May you all be bestowed upon bliss and prosperity by the Lord" were the words of swamiji's advice.

The swamiji had Venkannapant's presence in seclusion to instruct him to secure one thousand two hundred Saligramas of Lord Lakshminarayana. Obeying swamiji's instructions, he collected one thousand two hundred Saligramas. It was a day of special festivity. Arrangements were made for special poojas. The swamiji on that day performed poojas to Lord Moolarama with profound devotion and extraordinary fervour.

After he performed his pooja, had Theertha, the swamiji in the afternoon blessed everybody with Theertha and Mantrakshata,

enquired about everybody's welfare, advised properly his disciple Yogeendra and others and beckoned Venkanna and blessing him said: "My auspicious moment has arrived. I will sit in the Yogasana posture and meditating posture. As ordered by me earlier, go on arranging the size stones around me. Once it reaches the height above my head, place one thousand two hundred Saligramas on it and cover it with the slab. Further spread Mrithika on it all over.

Afternoon in the auspicious moment, the swamiji in his Yogasana posture, constricted his respiration, let his mind cogitate on the departure of all Devathas associated with different senses of the body, meditated on Lord Gopalakrishna enshrined in his heart and sat in sublime mortification, with conation absolutely discarded. On one side there was a blare of instruments. On the other, Brahmins were chanting Mantras from Vedas and other Shastras. There was an extravaganza of singing Harikeerthanas by Haridasas. Venkanna and such other devotees were overseeing the arrangements. Tears of joy and sorrow simultaneously welled in everybody's eyes. The whole gathering began extolling the swamiji with choked voices.

In strict adherence to the orders of the swamiji the task of completing Brindavana was over. Even placing the covering slab over the Saligramas was also complete. **Thus took place the glorious event of Sri Raghavendra swamiji entering the Brindavana with his body and soul together.**

As already instructed by him, swamiji's Mahasamaradhana went on in all pomp and devotion on the same day. Many Brahmins and Suvasinis were hosted dinner. Swami Yogeendratheertha made liberal offer of Dakshina to all. He composed the Charamashloka on his guru which reads

दुर्वादिध्वांतरवये वैष्णवेंदीवरेंदवे ।
श्रीराघवेंद्रगुरवे नमोत्त्यंतदयालवे ॥

Also he installed the idol of Pranadeva and Linga of Lord Rudra in front of swamiji's Brindavana. The Uttara Aradhana also was celebrated with all glory and devotion.

23. Miracles In The Brindavan

Since the day of installation of the Brindavan, miracles began. Even now it has become a regular phenomenon. Pooja and other rituals are being performed in great glory. While everyone of such miracles is amazing, they are countless.

Even if the ordinary like us go on writing a Holographic account of the miracles that come to their experience, it is sure to assume a diabolical proportion in terms of its volume. Still it may not be out of place to dwell on a few instances of such miracles.

Among the direct disciples of Sri Raghavendra, his ardent devotee Appannacharya was very pious. He was from a village Bhikshalaya (Bichale). It is situated on the far bank of the river Tungabhadra about six to seven miles from Mantralaya. At the time of swamiji entering the Brindavan, Appannacharya could not be present for a darshan of the swamiji as the river was in full spate. But since the moment he left his village, he kept extolling the swamiji all through the course. The hymn begins with the words श्रीपूर्णबोधगुरुतीर्थपयोब्धिपारा It is a high-spirited impromptu. This hymn stemming emotionally from the fathomless depths of his heart does not admit of hyperboles and other epithets. The chant of the hymn proliferated extemporaneously as if it had been drilled for days. As he reached the main door of the abode of the Brindavan, the last verse of the hymn remained incomplete short of seven letters. Appannacharya who knew about the auspicious moment of swamiji disappearing, had come there extolling the swamiji all the way, deeply saddened by the certainty of his missing the unique fortune of the final darshan of the swamiji. Earlier he had left extolling the divinity of the Brindavan, even before a darshan of the Brindavan became possible. But when he had its darshan, he could not control his emotions. His voice choked, the hymn remained incomplete. In a mood of total absorption he prostrated and stood sad in front of the Brindavan.

The last verse of the hymn composed by Appannacharya had flowed upto "whoever praises at the feet of the guru in deep devotion, whoever constantly chants this hymn will have permanent riddance from sorrow - consequences of sins and from this, all wishes, fame, sea of wealth and salvation through the grace of Lord Hari are sure to.....". Appannacharya had lost himself in having the darshan of

the Brindavan. But Sri Gururaja seated in the Brindavan completed the unfinished line of the verse with साक्षीहयास्योऽत्र हि, meaning “whatever recited in this hymn are true. It connotes that Lord Hayagreeva himself is the witness for this”. Perhaps Sri Gururaja was absorbed in reciting Hayagreeva mantra.

Appannacharya hearing these words got bewildered. He trembled and was thrilled. Tears of joy rolled down from his eyes. He was highly elated about the magnanimity of swamiji’s gracefulness in approving of the hymn composed by an ordinary devotee like him. “It was wrong of me to have lamented that I could not have a darshan of the guru. He would always be present in the Brindavan. The fortune of seeing him depends on the individuals merit. What more! I could here swamiji’s divine voice. That itself is great! I am the most fortunate” was how he praised Sri Raghavendra.

By the blessings of Sri Gururaja, it was this hymn which became much more popular than all other hymns on him. Even today there is none among the pious who cannot recite this hymn from memory. Each letter of this hymn fulfils the wishes of those who chant. Even today the benefit which this hymn states to offer has become more evident.

Appannacharya composed a Mangalashtaka on Sri Gururaja along with this hymn. Both these hymn and Mangalashtaka are being recited every night at the Moola Brindavan even today.

Sri Vadeendratheertha

Nearly in the middle of eighteenth century, after Sri Gururaja, Sri Vadeendratheertha, the fifth pontiff after him adorned the peetha of Sri Gururaja. He wrote many books. Among the books written by him ‘Sri Gurugunastavana’, a book descriptively extolling Sri Gururaja’s works is most popular. Though it is a small book containing merely thirty six verses, it may not be improper to say that it is a great poetry. Sri Vadeendratheertha has skilfully described why Sri Gururaja chose to write each book. Also in which order Sri Gururaja wrote the books can be known from this. Further, description of some books unavailable also appears in this.

After writing such a great book, Vadeendratheertha placed it before the Brindavan of Sri Gururaja. As a token of Sri Raghavendra

being greatly pleased, his Brindavan waved gently in appreciation of this book. All the devotees were greatly amazed at this.

Sri Vijayadasa

Sri Vijayadasa belongs to a period a little later than that of Vadeendratheertha. Though he grew up amidst poverty and was struggling just for one square meal, that he was extraordinary becomes evident from his biography. He was an Aparokshajani. Widely known to be an Amsha of sage Bhrgu. He nurtured thousands of Brahmin families after he became a Dasa.

It may be said that he was a contemporary of Sri Vasudhendratheertha. He occupied a prominent place in the world of Haridasa literature. Sri Vijayadasa rejuvenated the tradition of Dasa literature in Kannada which was on the brink of extinction after Sri Purandaradasa. It was Sri Gururaja from whom he drew such inspiration. After being blessed in his dream with Ankita by Purandaradasa at Kashi, he came to Adoni on his tour. From there he left for Mantralaya to have a darshan of Sri Gururaja. He instantly sang all that he saw as he stood before the Brindavan.

ಚೈರವಿ -ತ್ರಿಪುಟತಾಳ

ನೋಡಿದೆ ಗುರುಗಳ ನೋಡಿದೆ || ಪ ||
 ನೋಡಿದೆನು ಗುರುರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರರ | ಮಾಡಿದೆನು ಭಕ್ತಿಯಲಿ ವಂದನೆ |
 ಬೇಡಿದೆನು ಕೊಂಡಾಡಿ ವರಗಳ | ಈಡು ಇಲ್ಲದೆ ಮೆರೆವ ಗುರುಗಳ | ಅ.ಪ ||
 ಮೊದಲು ಗಾಂಗೆಶಯಶ್ಯಜನು ಈ | ನದಿಯತೀರದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾಗವ
 ಮುದದಿರಚಿಸಿ ಪೂರೈಸಿ ಪೋಗಿರ | ಲದನು ತಮ್ಮೊಳು ತಿಳಿದು ತವಕದಿ
 ಹೃದಯನಿರ್ಮಲರಾಗಿ ರಾಗದಿ | ಬುಧಜನರ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳದಲಿ ಸಿರಿ
 ಸದನನಂಭಿಯ ತಿಳಿದು ನೆನೆವರ | ಉದಿತ ಭಾಸ್ಕರನಂತೆ ಪೊಳೆವರ || ೧ ||
 ಅಲವಬೋಧಮಿಕ್ಕಾದ ಮಹಮುನಿ | ಗಳು ಸ ಅಂಶರು ಒಂದು ರೂಪದಿ
 ನೆಲೆಯಾಗಿ ನಿತ್ಯದಲಿ ಇಷ್ಟರು | ಒಲಿಸಿಕೊಳುತಲಿ ಹರಿಯ ಗುಣಗಳ
 ತಿಳಿದು ತಿಳಿಸುತ ತಮ್ಮ ತಮಗಿಂ | ದಧಿಕರಿಂದುಪೇದಶ ಮಾರ್ಗದಿ
 ಕಲಿಯುಗದೊಳು ಕೇವಲ ಕ | ತ್ತಲೆಯ ಹರಿಸುವ ಸೊಬಗಸಂತತ || ೨ ||
 ರಾಮ ನರಹರಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಕೃಷ್ಣರ | ನೇಮದಿಂದೀ ಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳ ಪಾದ
 ತಾಮರಸ ಭಜನೆಯನು ಮಾಳ್ವರು | ಕೋಮಲಾಂಗದಿ ಕರಿಣ ಪರವಾದಿ
 ಸ್ತೋಮಗಳ ಮಹಮಸ್ತಕಾದ್ರಿಗೆ | ಭೂಮಿಯೊಳು ಪವಿ ಎನಿಸಿದ ಯತಿ
 ಯಾಮ ಯಾಮಕೆ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೆ ಶುಭ | ಕಾಮಿತಾರ್ಥವ ಕರೆವ ಗುರುಗಳ || ೩ ||

ನೂರು ಪರ್ವತ ವರ್ಷ ಬಿಡದಲೆ | ಚಾರುವಂದಾವನದಲಿ ವಿ
ಸ್ತಾರ ಆರಾಧನೆಯು ತೋಲಗದೆ | ವಾರ ವಾರಕೆ ಆಗುತ್ತಿಪ್ಪುದು
ಸಾರ ಕಾರುಣ್ಯದಿ ಲಕುಮೀ | ನಾರಯಣ ತಾ ಚಕ್ರರೂಪದಿ
ಸಾರಿದವರಘಕಳೆದು ಇವರಿಗೆ | ಕೀರುತಿಯತಂದಿಪ್ಪರನುದಿನ

|| ೪ ||

ಮಿತವು ಎನದಿರಿ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನದಿನ | ಕಶಿಯವೇ ಆಗುವುದು ಭೂಸುರ
ತತಿಗೆ ಭೋಜನ ಕಥಾಶ್ರವಣ ಭಾ | ರತ ಪುರಾಣಗಳಿಂದಲೊಪ್ಪುತ್ತ
ಕ್ಷಿಪಿಯೊಳಗೆ ಮಂಚಾಲೆಗ್ರಾಮಕೆ | ಪ್ರತಿಯು ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂದೆನಿಸಿಕೊಂಬುದು
ಪತಿತಪಾವನ ವಿಜಯ ವಿಠಲನ | ತುತಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತ ಮೆರೆವ ಗುರುಗಳ

|| ೫ ||

This unfolds some amazing aspects invisible for the ordinary which elevate Sri Gururaja to the ranks of great saints. It has become clear that Sri Gururaja is an incarnation of Prahlada and Prahlada has performed Yaga there. Above all, Vijayadasa had a darshan of all starting from Acharya down to his guru. He also saw one preach the other in sequence. Lord Hari as the protector of the four sides of Brindavan as Rama, Narahari, Vedavyasa and Krishna was showing his divine powers. Lord Lakshminarayana who stood sporting the divine wheel was fulfilling the wishes of the devotees. Vijayadasa who was an Aparokshajnani foresaw that great miracles would go on for seven hundred years in the Brindavan increasing day by day and then regular poojas and other rituals would take place for a long time. Thus Vijayadasa of great divine intellect to whom the extraordinary miracles in the Brindavan unfolded, propagated it to the world. It is needless to elaborate on the point that this is the greatest of all the other miracles.

Sri Jagannathadasa

It may be said that Jagannathadasa is to the world of Haridasa literature what Sri Gururaja is to the world of Madhwa philosophy. It was under the guidance of Sri Varadendratheertha that Jagannathadasa achieved scholarship in four Shastras. His poetical expertise was excellent. He lived in the last phase of the eighteenth century. Though Jagannathadasa was of a divine birth, he had to suffer from acute stomach-ache as a consequence of abusing Vijayadasa owing to the ill effects of his past deeds. As he offered his regular obeisance to Sri Gururaja, he got rid of his affliction. It was because of Lord Panduranga's grace that he earned the Ankita 'Jagannathavitthala'. He dedicated the extra longevity of forty

years that his guru Gopaladasa bestowed from his own, to the work of translating the original books to Kannada language and writing other Prameyagranthas. His **Harikathamruthasara** is the most popular composition. Historians have unequivocally established that he was the reincarnation of Sahlada, the younger brother of Prahlada.

Jagannathadasa was singular in his devotion to Sri Gururaja; everyday he used to converse in solitude with Sri Gururaja in the Brindavan. His eyes never opened to the sight of Brindavan in isolation. The glorious sight of the divinely imperial form of Sri Gururaja in his saintly robe, Danda Kamandalu he held and the sacred symbols that his forehead sported, filled Jagannathadasa with infinite bliss who has sung the praise of Sri Gururaja.

But as this secret became known to others, Jagannathadasa ceased to have such darshan of Sri Gururaja again. The immensely sorrowful Jagannathadasa ardently prayed to Sri Gururaja. From then on Sri Gururaja began to manifest to him in his dreams.

Sir Thomas Munro

Munro was a Survey settlement officer in Madras jurisdiction of East India Company. The company officials issued orders to acquire for the government, the village Mantralaya which was gifted to the Mutt for poojas and other rituals. The worried devotees of Sri Gururaja submitted an application averring that "this is a sacred place. It is not viable for the government to interfere unnecessarily". The officer Munro came to Mantralaya with Shirastedar and others to enquire this. He was himself a believer in matters of piety. So he left his footwear outside the Mutt, took off his hat and stood before the Brindavan. Sri Gururaja came out of Brindavan, discussed with him the matter of Manchale's gift, convinced him and disappeared after blessing him with handfuls of Mantrakshata. None nearby could understand what the matter was. Sri Gururaja was visible to none except Munro. It was surprising for others to find Munro talking to himself. Later returning to his camp, he rescinded the company's order. He used the Mantrakshata with which he was blessed by Sri Gururaja in preparing his day's meal.

This has been cited on 280th page of the eight volume of the journal 'Madras Review'. This has also been cited in the Bellary Gazeteer of Madras Government. This may be said to have happened in the beginning of the nineteenth century. To understand Sri Gururaja's superhuman powers, nothing is more astonishing than Sri Gururaja manifesting to and discussing with an official, foreigner and of a different religion. The actual account of that incident is as follows:-

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Mantsala (Mantralaya):- A Shrothriem village with a population of 1212 on the bank of the Tungabhadra in the extreme north of the Taluk. The village is widely known as containing the tomb of the Madhva saint Sri Raghavendra Swami, the annual festival in August connected with, which is attended by large numbers of pilgrims, including even Lingayats, from Bombay, the Nizam's Dominions and even Mysore. The tomb itself is not architectural interest. The grant of the landed endowment attached to it, is said in one of the Mackenzic MSS, to have been made by Venkannapant, the well known Dewan of Sidi Masud Khan, Governor of Adoni from 1662 to 1687.

A quaint story of Sir Thomas Munro is told about the place. The endowment being threatened with resumption, Munro, it is said* came to make enquiries. After removing his boots and taking off his hat he approached the grave. The saint there upon emerged from his tomb and met him. They conversed together for sometime regarding the resumption, but though the saint was visible and audible to Munro-who was himself the people declare, semi-divine, none of the others who were there could either see him or hear what he said. The discussion ended, Munro returned to his tent and quashed the proposal to resume the endowment. Being offered some consecrated rice, he accepted it and ordered it to be used in the preparation of his meals for that day.

-Madras Review VII 280.

Thus Sri Gururaja's miracles are marvellous, countless and incomprehensible. Even now such miracles are taking place right before the eyes of those among us who are ignorants as such. Devotees who are blind and deaf are endowed with powers to see and hear, dumb turning eloquent, issueless begetting children, fulfilment of the wishes of those wanting in wealth and knowledge, emancipation from the haunt of evil spirit, sovereign cure from deadly diseases like leprosy, tuberculosis, fits, etc are the everyday happenings there. Though these appear astonishing for us, they are all very ordinary there. When such marvels are common in the places which have Mrithika Brindavans, what to expect of a place of Moola Brindavana? Even those worshipping silver Brindavans with Mrithika in their houses – let alone, those worshipping the portraits of Sri Gururaja, get their wishes fulfilled.

If we keep on listing such miracles just within our knowledge, it becomes a work of huge volume. Therefore it is in the fitness of things to stop at this with the certainty that through the miracles described already, one can, depending on one's capacity delve into the rest.

Four Incarnations – A Retrospect

It is difficult for one to be satiated by reading Sri Gururaja's biography once or twice. One would come across many distinguishing features by going deep into it. We as ordinary persons would find it impossible to understand it comprehensively, as aptly described by Sri Vadeendratheertha. We use very small quantity of water even though we perform Sankalp as **सुमुद्रस्नानमहंकरिष्ये** " while taking bath in the sea.¹ Likewise, we should make earnest efforts to conceive as much as possible to the best of our ability.

There are many facts which prove that Sri Gururaja was an incarnation of Prahlada. Factors like definite purpose, systematic achievement of goal and many other similarities were significantly visible in all the four incarnations viz Prahlada, Bahleeka, Vyasaraaja and Raghavendra.

1 इह पुनरुदधिस्नानसंकल्पवत् सा ।

If Prahlada was **विद्यार्थरूप जन्माढ्य**, Gururaja was **भव्यस्वरूप, निरवद्यवेष**; Prahlada was **जितेंद्रिय**; Gururaja was **समुपेक्षित भावज**. Even foreigners have extolled Chandrikacharya as an earnest Bachelor. If Prahlada was **निर्वैर आत्मवत् सर्वभूतहित, प्रियसुहृत्तमः** Gururaja was **दयादाक्षिण्य वैराग्य वाक्पाटव मुखांकित** Prahlada was **रहितासुर, असुर**. Purandaradasa has extolled Chandrikacharya **ಮಾನವರನ್ನುವರು ಹೀನಜನರು. ಅವರು ನಾನಾ ನರಕಕ್ಕುರುಳುವರು.** (those who consider Chandrikacharya as an ordinary man land themselves in hell). If Gururaja was **देवस्वभाव**, Prahlada was **सत्यसंधः**; Vyasaraja has found a place among the ‘Munithraya’ (sage trio). Gururaja has earned the fame as **सर्वतंत्रस्वतंत्र, श्रीमध्वमतवर्धनः**. Prahlada’s **वासुदेवे भगवति यस्य नैसर्गिकी रतिः** is reflected in Gurusthotra as **हरिपादकंज निधेवणाल्लब्ध समस्तसंपत्**।

While **यस्मिन् महद्गुणाराजन् गृह्यन्ते कविभिर्मुहुः** was Prahlada’s fame, Gururaja’s was **विद्वत्परिज्ञेय महाविशेष**. Prahlada’s quality **गुणैरमलसंखेयैः महात्म्यं तस्य सूच्यते** corresponds well with **अगम्यमहिमालोके राघवेंद्रो महायज्ञः**, the trait attributed to Gururaja. Purandaradasa has extolled Vyasaraja as **ವರಮದ್ವಮತವೆಂಬ ಸಾಗರದೊಳು ಉದ್ಭವಿಸಿದ ಚಂದ್ರನಂತೆ ನೀನು** (the Moon in the ocean of Madhwa Siddhanta). Appannacharya has described Gururaja as **श्रीमध्वमतदुग्धाब्धि चन्द्रोवतु सदानघः** Prahlada’s advice to his father was **तत्साधुमन्येवनंगतो यद् हरिमाश्रयेत्**. Likewise Appannacharya has described Gururaja as **भवदुःखतूल संघाग्निचर्यः** and has prayed to him “**संसारे... मग्नरूपं सदा**। Thus similarities are found in all the incarnations in every letter and word. There can be no greater illusion than to think that one’s scholarship lies in the interpretation of words by splitting them in the most delicate and expedient manner.

Further, many events appear similar to each other in this regard. When Prahlada advised the Daithya Balakas that **संसार is असार** they prayed to Prahlada **छिन्दिनः संशयं सौम्यस्याच्चेद्विश्रंभकारणम्** and pleaded with him to preach them the real Tattva. Thus Prahlada became the right guru for teaching **भगवत्तत्व**. Even Lord Narasimha had blessed Prahlada with words **भवन्तिपुरुषालोके मद्भक्तास्त्वामनुव्रताः** which means that only those who followed Prahlada were the true devotees of God. Thus it became evident that Prahlada was the right guru to his disciples in the right path.

“**ಶ್ರೀಯರಸ ಪ್ರರಂದರ ವಿಲನನ್ನ ಭಕ್ತ ರೊಳು ಹೆಗ್ಗೆ ಡೆಯೆನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡೆ**”, “**ಗುರುವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರೇ ಪರಮ ಗುರುಗಳೊಳು**” “**ಈಸುಮುನಿಗಳಿದ್ದೇನು ಮಾಡಿದರಾ ವ್ಯಾಸಮುನಿ ಮದ್ವಮತವನುದ್ದರಿಸಿದ**”(“You are the most supreme devotee of Purandara Vitthala”, “Guru Vyasaraja is the supreme guru”, “What did those countless sages do? Only the sage Vyasa gave a new lease of life to Madhwa philosophy”) – These were the words used by Purandaradasa to praise Vyasaraja while declaring him as the right guru. Appannacharya extolling Gururaja with phrases like **गुरुराघवेंद्रः, श्रीराघवेंद्रोयतिराट् गुरुर्मस्यात् भयापहः, ज्ञानभक्तिसुपुत्रायुर्ग्रश्री पुण्यदर्शनः** has inferred that Gururaja was the only guru who blessed his devotees by getting them rid of all their hardship and by fulfilling their wishes.

Therefore Gururaja who was hailed as the right guru could bless his devotees with salvation. This was exhibited by him at Chitradurga when he guided his ardent devotee to salvation. Lord Narasimha endowed Prahladaraja with this power by blessing him **त्वां च मां च स्मरन् काले कर्मबन्धात्प्रमुच्यते**. With this in mind, Vijayadasa has rendered in his song that one gets all his sins destroyed and all his wishes fulfilled by merely uttering the name of Vyasaraya. Not only this, it leads him to Vaikuntha, the abode of the Lord. Appannacharya too in his Gurusthotra has extolled **हन्तु नः कायजान् दोषान्..... मोदते नात्र संशयः, यो भक्त्या..... विभूतिरतुला** ।

One need not hesitate opining that this is only perfunctory. It is clear from the phrase **विष्णुर्हीदाता मोक्षस्य वायुस्तु तदनुज्ञया** that Vayu by the orders of the God could bless one with salvation. **वायुना च समाविष्टः महाबल समन्वितः** which means Prahlada had the ‘Avesha’ of Vayu in him. That was the reason why Prahlada could perform jobs superior to those performed by the Devathas though they enjoyed higher status. The phrases in Shastras such as **प्रह्लादो जन्मवैष्णवः, प्रह्लादो नित्य भक्तिमान्, रुतेतु तात्विकान् देवान् नारदादींस्तथैवच । प्रह्लादादुत्तमः कोनु विष्णुभक्तौ जगन्नय ॥** have confirmed this fact. Thus it could be appropriately concluded that it is Vayu, the ‘Antharyami’ of Gururaja who bestows eligibility to attain salvation. Such is the extraordinary power of Gururaja.

This could be the reason for many similarities in the events that happened in the lives of Vayu and Gururaja. Cracks surfaced on the earth as soon as Bahleeka was born just as mountain cracked

as Bheemasena was born. Food laced with poison could not harm Bheemasena. Prahlada too was not harmed when he was forced to consume poison. If Bheemasena had firmly determined not to kill the devotees of Sri Hari, Bahleeka was equally determined to meet his end at the hands of Bheemasena. Bahleeka did adopt the same strategy as did Purandaradasa through the Devaranama ಬಿಡುವೆನೇನಯ್ಯಾ ಹನುಮ ಬಿಡುವೆನೇನಯ್ಯಾ. As Bahleeka had the Avesha of Vayu Deva in entirety, his guru Narada too in his earlier incarnation took birth as Purandaradasa and became his disciple.

To speak of the birth of Chandrikacharya, his was as untainted as the birth of Acharya. His highly worshipped deity Lord Narasimha emerged out of the pillar. Madhwacharya entered the womb of his mother like a king entering his city. With the blessings of Sri Brahmanyatheertha, Chandrikacharya too took his birth when his parents were already passed their youth, without coming into contact with the earth. The reception accorded to Vyasaraja by king Saluva Narasimha reminded the reception accorded to Madhwacharya by the king Jayasimha.

Madhwacharya created **Ambutheertha** by placing **Bheemanakallu** at the centre of the river. Likewise Vyasaraja constructed **Vyasathataka** which was treated as **Mahatheertha** by Aparokshajnanis. The Geetharthasangrahapada ಕೇಳಯ್ಯ ಎನ್ನ ಮಾತ ಪಾರ್ಥನೇ composed by Chandrikacharya was like an echo of Shloka ॐ तेसेने in Tatparyanimaya of Madhwacharya.

Striking similarities would not fail to present themselves before us when we view the incidents wherein Madhwacharya induced a feeling of devotion in Balbon, a Muslim king through discussion and Gururaja convinced Sir Thomas Munro through his conversation in English right from his Brindavan.

It may be said that Brindavanapravesha of Gururaja was quite akin to the birth of Chandrikacharya. Just as Acharya disappeared after being showered with flowers while teaching lessons from **Aithareyasookta**, Gururaja also in ecstatic meditation of Lord Rama sitting unmoved in total absorption and himself insulated from the worldly matters in the Brindavan being built around, showed it to the world that he had transcended the mundane bond of birth and

death. Vadiraja was the first to enter the Brindavan alive and Gururaja, the second and the last to do so. Vadiraja was considered by Aparokshajnanis as **Rujuganastha** and **Bhavisameera**. Gururaja with the Avesha of Vayu in him entered the Brindavan alive with the blessings of Vayu. This has proved that nobody could be compared to Gururaja for his divinity.

Now it is appropriate to discuss what Vijayadasa saw in the Brindavan of Gururaja. He found there, all the spiritual guides right from Sri Madhwa to his personal guru, which indicated the presence of all the Devathas there.

Sri Hari resides in one form near his devotees Indra and Bali. But being present in five forms in the Brindavan of Gururaja, He destroys the evils and fulfils the wishes of His devotees and transfers the benefaction to the credit of Gururaja. All these holy presences in the Brindavan could be attributed to the extraordinary presence of Vayu there.

Whereas all others who attain 'Aparoksha' need to complete a cycle of births through ages to exhaust the accumulated Punya of their earlier births, as for Gururaja, the Almighty has specially blessed him. Instead of having to exhaust his Punya through such cycle of births, He has had Gururaja stay in the Brindavan to exhaust his Punya by blessing his devotees from out of it. Gopaladasa has given a beautiful description of this in one of his Devaranamas.

ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರನೆಂಬ ರೂಪ ತಾನೆ ಆಗಿ
ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರನೆಂಬ ನಾಮಾ ಇರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು
ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರರಿನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದಂಥಾ ಪುಣ್ಯ
ಭೋಗವರಿತು ತನ್ನ ಭಾಗವತರಿಗಿತ್ತು
ಸಾಗಿಸಿ ಸಲಹಿನ್ನು ಜಗದೊಳಗೆಲ್ಲಾ
ಮೋಘಸೂರ್ಯನಂತಾಮೋಘಕೀರುತಿಯನ್ನು
ರಾಘವ ಇವರಿಗೆ ರಾಜ್ಯದಿ ತಂದಿವೆ
ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರಮೂರ್ತಿ ಗೋಪಾಲವಿಠಲ
ಭಾಗವತರಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹುಪೂಜೆ ಕೈಗೊಂಬ

Gurugopaladasa has extolled as

ಸೋತ್ತಮರಾನಿಷ್ಟಾ ಪುಣ್ಯವೆಂಬೊದೆ
ಬೃಹ್ಮರ ಸುಖಿಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿಹುದೆ
ಕ್ಲೆಪ್ತವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ನಂಬಿದೆ ಇಂದು
ಇತ್ತು ಪಾಲಿಸಬೇಕೋ ದೀನಜನರಬಂಧು

This privilege of Gururaja could be attributed to the blessings of Vayu. The form of Sri Rama was reserved for Hanumantha in 'Kimpurushakhanda'. In the same manner the form of Sri Narasimha was reserved for Prahlada in 'Harshakhanda'.

Thus many such similarities could be found. The poet Somanatha has interestingly described that the assurance given by Vedavyasa to the Devathas that he would ordain Madhwacharya to take birth once again resulted in the birth of Vyasaraja.

It does not mean, in the light of the above that an attempt is made to say that there is equality and identity between Vayu and Gururaja. It can never be correct. The main purpose here is to enunciate that there is a perfect similarity between the events that took place during the incarnation of Vayu and those that took place during the incarnation of his devotee Gururaja with the Avesha of Vayu. Has not Madhwacharya shown that the words which advocate equality of Lord Hari with Jeeva have to be interpreted much the same way? Then is it wrong to emulate his very works? Therefore Vadeendratheertha has extolled Gururaja as **श्रुतगुणभवताचार्यचर्यानुवृत्तिः।**

There is one thing common to the four incarnations of Gururaja. Prahlada had more propensity towards Krishna Avatara even after he had **Nrusimhasakshathkara**. When he was a worshipper of Narasimha in Harivarshakhanda, the sage Narada went there at the end of Dwaparayuga and gave a description of the playful acts of Krishnavatara before him. It was then that Prahlada prayed to Narasimha to bless him with the opportunity of worshipping Krishna in Kaliyuga.¹

When Bahleeka was about to be killed by Bheemasena, he prayed to him to bless him with a birth in Kaliyuga so that he could serve him as his Dasa.

When Chandrikacharya opened the casket containing the idol which was being worshipped by his guru, the God in the form of Venugopalakrishna manifested and danced before him. Even though Gururaja was a worshipper of Moolarama, he made a gold idol of his singular deity Venugopala himself and worshipped it ardently. He also composed various Devaranamas with **Venugopala** as his Ankita.

1 ಪರಿಪಾದಕೈರಗಿ ವರ ಪ್ರಹ್ಲಾದನು | ಎರಡೊಂದುಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣಸ್ವಮೂರುತಿ |
ಪರಿಪರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಜಿಸಿ ಧನ್ಯನಾಗುವೆನಂದು | ಸುರ ಮುನಿಗೇರಿಗೆ ನಿಂದಿರಲಾಗಿ | -ವಿಜಯವಾಸರ

Thus **कृष्णरूपाराधना** is conspicuous in all the four incarnations.

The purposes of all the four incarnations of Sri Raghavendra complemented each other. If propagation of Bhagavatha Dharma was the main task in Prahladavatara, that of Bahleeka pertained to war. If Vyasaraja was engaged in advising the king about administrative matters and patronising the Dasa-Vyasa literature, protection of the noble was dearer to Raghavendra's heart.

Similarity was evident even in the line of thought in the four incarnations. The principles of Prahlada were reflected in the life of Bahleeka. The imprint of the same could be found in the works of Chandrikacharya and Gururaja. That was the reason why the tradition of learning was continued in these last two incarnations by the pillars of the Dwaitha philosophy namely Vibudhendra-Sripadaraja-Chandrikacharya-Vijayeendra-Sudheendra-Raghavendra and others. Therefore whenever doubts cropped up while learning, Madhwa scholars looked for solutions in the opinions of Chandrikacharya and Gururaja.

Thus it becomes essential to comprehend the works of Chandrikacharya and commentaries of Gururaja to ascertain the views of Madhwacharya and Theekacharya. Therefore Chandrikacharya has become one among the triumvirate of Munis, the other two being Madhwacharya and Theekacharya. Similarly Raghavendra has become familiar as **Tippanikara**. It is only 'Chandrikaprakasha' of Raghavendra which can shed light on the meaning of Vyasaraja's 'Chandrika'.

It is to the credit of Sri Raghavendra to have maintained the tradition of coherent consistency in Madhwa Shastra.

The peculiarity of this is, the end of a work conveys the essence more powerfully than the beginning. Viewed from this perspective, special characteristics could be found in his works which were not found in the works of his previous incarnations. Therefore if the uncommon birth of Chandrikacharya is surprising on one side, the manner in which Gururaja turned invisible is astounding on the other.

This speciality is more evident in the field of literature. Raghavendra wrote commentaries on three Vedas at the behest of Madhwacharya. Earlier Acharya had laid the foundation with his commentary on Rigveda, which comprised only forty Sooktas. The

most difficult assignment of strengthening it fell on Gururaja. Elucidating these forty Sooktas, he wrote 'Mantrartha Manjari'. He also propagated 'Rigarth Manjari', the work of Lakshminarayanacharya, his poorvashrama son.

The following are the books written by Raghavendra.

- 1-3) Vedathraya Vivruthi
- 4) Mantrartha Manjari
- 5-9) Purushasooktadi Panchasooktavyakhya
- 10-19) Dashopanishad Khandartha
- 20) Geethartha Sangraha
- 21) Prameyadeepika Vyakhya
- 22) Geethatapyateeka Vivarane
- 23) Tantradeepika
- 24) Nyayamukthavali
- 25) Tattvamanjari
- 26) Tattvaprakashika Bhavadeepa
- 27) Parimala
- 28-37) Dashaprakaranateeka Vyakhya
- 38) Ramacharitra Manjari
- 39) Krishnacharitra Manjari
- 40) Tatparyanimaya Bhavasangraha
- 41) Vadavali Vyakhya
- 42) Chandrikaparakasha
- 43) Tarkathandava Vyakhya
- 44) Pramanapadhathi Vyakhya
- 45) Anu Madhvavijaya Vyakhya
- 46) Pratahsankalpagaadya
- 47) Bhaattasangraha

Madhwacharya's Dwaitha philosophy gathered strength by its exposition by Teekacharya. Chandrikacharya's **Vyasathraya** strengthened it further. Vijayeendratheertha elucidated it extensively through his one hundred and four works. Elaboration of each topic of Madhwa philosophy resulted in the emergence of many works. People with the scholarship of highest degree were capable of understanding such works. The prevailing political atmosphere then also contributed substantially to such a high standard of education and scholarship.

But after the demise of Vijayeendratheertha and Sudheendra theertha, the states of Tanjore and Madurai became weak. The

status of Vijayanagar king at Vellore was reduced to a nominal head. This resulted in great unrest among the people. Added to this, the barbarism of Muslim rulers of Bijapur and Golconda on Hindus turned severer. During this period of twenty to thirty years, the homogeneity of cultural traditions faced the threat of extinction.

The all round development of Shastras led to the loss of warmth of search for truth and the scholars started spending their time absurdly exhibiting their scholarship.

At this critical juncture, the need arose for men of wisdom and philosophical acumen who could lead the people into the unbroken traditional chain in the field of Madhwa philosophy.

Besides there was also a need for Granthas on the lines of those which successfully brought the Vedic literature within the ambit of understanding by students with the help of **Shrauta, Grihya, Dharma** and **Meemamsa Sootras**.

The credit of completing this great task goes to Raghavendra. He not only wrote commentaries on all the original works and terse commentaries but also wrote independent works comprehensively explaining the meaning of Brahma Sootras, Geetha and Upanishads making them simpler. Then he began to write 'Prakasha' a commentary on 'Chandrika'. But he stopped it half way thinking that the students without the knowledge of the essence of Sootras might find it difficult to understand it and wrote two books 'Tantradeepika' and 'Nyayamukthavali'. Then he completed the half finished 'Prakasha'.

When great scholars cannot comprehend the deep meaning in the works of Gururaja, then how can laymen like us understand them? But one characteristic is clearly visible in all his works. His quality of succinctness is extraordinary. No one could match him in writing compendiously. In his poorvashrama he wrote a commentary on Anu Madhvavijaya of Narayanapanditacharya explaining its entire meaning in a nutshell. Feeling the necessity of such works at this juncture, he adorned the Vidyasimhasana of Anandatheertha to popularise the philosophy of Madhwacharya through his works. Therefore, Vadeendratheertha's description that Acharya blessed Raghavendra to adorn his peetha in appreciation of his commentary on Anu Madhvavijaya is very apt and true and it cannot be construed as an exaggeration.

If 'Tantradeepika' is taken as an example, Raghavendra has elaborated on each and every Brahmasootra such as the relationship between one Sootra and its preceding one, merit of each word in that Sootra, the distinctive sequence of these words and the meanings of that Sootra in totality. It can be asserted boldly that no other work has given such a comprehensive explanation about Sootras. In addition to this, he has also explained the meaning of each Sootra as interpreted in other works such as Madhwacharya's Bhashya; Sudha, Chandrika, etc. The same characteristics are significantly found in his other works also.

Gururaja has contributed greatly to the literary world through his characteristic Granthas not only on 'Prasthanathraya', but also on Rigveda and 'Tatparyaniraya'. He has highlighted the essence of 'Sootraprasthana' in 'Tattvamanjari', his commentary on **Anubhashya**. Thus to successfully write compendious commentaries most required during that period was possible for no scholar except Gururaja. Here too the influence of Madhwacharya is evident. The phrases used by Gururaja resemble those of Acharya in conveying the vast meaning succinctly. Like Acharya, he has also written independent works on Geetha, Sootras and Upanishads which clearly indicates that Gururaja had the special blessings of Vayu.

Such summarisations brought Madhwa Shastra into a proper frame which greatly helped the real aspirants to comprehend and retain what they have studied.

Gururaja never wrote redundantly as a commentator. One could understand the meaning of all sentences with the help of his commentaries. What had already been written in a work of his, never found mention in his other works. It is for this reason that his latest works are not as comprehensive as his earlier works such as Chandrikaprakasha, Tattvaparakashika Bhavadeepa, Vadavali Vyakhya, etc.

"Sri Raghavendra never entertained meaningless thoughts. Meaningless words never came out of his mouth. Let alone having discussions with scholars about the doubts, he never entertained any doubt about Tattva. Such absurdities had no place in his writings. He never let what was in his mind become known. What he once

said was never repeated. What he once wrote was final".¹ Sri Vadeendratheertha has thus extolled the greatness of his scholarship.

Gururaja's commentary on Rigveda is also a very important work. Though Sayana's interpretation of Vedas was of great help in conducting Yagnas and Yagas, it polluted the real meaning of Vedas. The meaning of Vedas inherited and nurtured by Indians since ancient times did remain as a secret. People could not understand the meaning of Aryan culture. It became an important task to bring it to light.

Raghavendra nursed the ambition of writing commentaries on Vedas in his poorvashrama. His guru Sudheendratheertha said that his ambition would not materialise unless he ascended the Vedanthasamrajyapeetha. His prophecy came to be true. Raghavendra's commentary on Vedas revealed their real meanings. He successfully showed that every syllable of the Vedas connotes the supremacy of Sri Hari. This became possible due to the special blessings of Vayu on him.

Sri Raghavendra's place in Kannada literary world is as unique as his place in Vedic literature. Sreepadaraja provided great thrust to Dasa Sahitya and Chandrikacharya instilled fresh breath into it. Great Haridasas like Purandaradasa, the gem in the crown of Dasakula, Kanakadasa, Vadiraja, etc were under the patronage of Vyasaraja. Dasa Sahitya was at its zenith during this time. But this tradition could not sustain its tempo and almost faced the threat of extinction. Raghavendra admirably carried out its revival through his compositions of Devaranamas in Kannada. But unfortunately only one of his compositions is available now. This composition could be seen as the best example for expression of emotion with its lyrical beauty and profundity of devotion built into it.

Whatever it may be, Gururaja was like a perennial source of water for the tree of Haridasa Sahitya as he was in his previous incarnation as Vyasaraja. This tree grew rapidly under his divine influence and spread into many branches through the guiding spirit

1 चित्तेनायुक्तमर्थम् कलयति सहसा नाभिदत्तेन सद्भिः
साकम् मीमांसतेवा नलिखति वचसोद्घाटयत्याशयम् स्वं ।
उक्तम् नो वक्ति भूयः क्वचिदपि लिखितम् नैव निर्माष्टि
तस्मादस्माभिस्सत्प्रबंधप्रणयनविषये स्तूयते राघवेन्द्रः । ।

-वार्दीन्द्रतीर्थाः ।

of Vijayadasa. A new atmosphere was created in the regions of Raichur and Adoni by his presence and instilled a sense of vigour in the minds of spiritually emotional men and women, devotees and Bhagavatas. Great Haridasas like Vijayadasa and Gopaladasa were born at places around Mantralaya like Cheekalaparavi, Uthanur, Manvi, Lingsugur, Adavani, Modalakallu, etc. Sri Raghavendra was like a source of inspiration for them. Great scholars like Vadeendratheertha and Varadendratheertha who followed in his tradition and saints like Vyasatattvajnatheertha contributed substantially to the growth of Kannada Dasa Sahitya. Not to speak of Jagannathadasa who is pre-eminent in the realm of Haridasa literature. Thus with the inspiration of Gururaja, the pent up feelings of great souls came out in the form of Dasa Sahitya and started flowing in all directions like flood.

Thus Gururaja instilled new vigour into both Vedic and Dasa literatures. Vadeendratheertha has touchingly described that it is only due to Raghavendra, the Kalpavruksha of Madhwa philosophy turned luxuriant with fruits.

Gururaja played a vital role in political field also. South India was facing political unrest never seen before. The remnants of the devastated Vijayanagar empire were lingering at Vellore. The entire South Indian region which was peaceful for the past three to four hundred years had broken into pieces as it had during the days of invasion by Mullick Kafar. The once powerful Nayaks of Tanjore had become weak. Vijayaraghavanayaka was sandwiched between his enemies. The Nayaks of Madurai were on the verge of collapse. In spite of all these, the state of Mysore was peaceful under Doddadevaraja. The condition of North Karnataka was most precarious. It was experiencing harassment from Adilshah of Bijapur on one side and Nawab of Golconda on the other side. In between these two, the feudal lords of Savanur and Adoni were busy in adding fuel to the fire in their own ways. Above all, the people were subjected to vexation by Westerners. At this critical juncture, Sri Gururaja took the initiative to spread peace and happiness amongst the people by leaving Kumbhakonam, the place of his guru and touring the whole of South India.

The ruler of Mysore Doddadevaraja had endowed Gururaja with gifts of estates in Mysore region. But Gururaja chose Mantralaya as his place of residence instead of spending his last days in Mysore

region. Many reasons could be conjectured for this. His topmost priority was establishment of peace through his spiritual influence in North Karnataka which was under political turmoil. This was the main reason for his choosing the place under the Muslim ruler Siddhi Masoodkhan for his residence. This resulted in Mantralaya turning into the centre of growth of Dasa Sahitya which privilege was hitherto being enjoyed by Pandharapura.

Finally, the place where Mantralaya is situated is strategic being the confluence of the boundaries of the states of Maharashtra, Andhra and Karnataka. Gururaja residing there could wield his influence over all these three states. As a result of this, Varadendra and Bhuvanendra could settle down at Pune and Gadval respectively. Sujanendra settled down in Mysore region, the place of his ancestors in the state of Karnataka. Thus Gururaja who stood at the entrance of Karnataka is still shining like a commander-in-chief of the Kannada army.

Gururaja not only egged the feelings of spiritually emotional men and women, but also laid an easy path for the devotees to reach the God. The system of worshipping gurus in their Brindavans was started by Gururaja. Offering to Gururaja in the form of Hasthodhaka started with the worship of his Brindavan. His blessings were not only for those who worship him at Mantralaya, but also for those who worship his Brindavans established all over the country with the original sacred soil known as Mrithika placed in them. His kindness knew no bounds for "he runs to the places whence he is called" as has aptly been praised by a Dasa in a song. It is with this uniqueness that he has been able to uphold the banner of Sanathana Dharma even in this Kaliyuga. The modern generation under the influence of western culture have found it really difficult to solve the mystery of Gururaja's vast influence spread through the lifeless soil (Mrithika). It has still remained a challenge for science, atheism and heresy. Isms like agnosticism, materialism and illusionist idealism dwindle with shame before the divinity of the saint. It would have been an uphill task to confront such isms even by writing a number of books and protection of Dharma would have been very difficult. These tasks were made easy by his superhuman power. This factor has received a lasting appreciation in this materialistic age and the banner of Dharma would be fluttering ever in the sky.

There is no one who has not been impressed by the miracles of Gururaja. Even a British officer like Munro had to reverse his decision. Even a Muslim like Masoodkhan had to become his devotee. Today scientists, doctors, secularists, atheists bow down their heads in great reverence before him in an appreciable departure from their principles. This shakes the very foundations of their respective doctrines. He has gained the power of successfully checking the vicious influence of Kalipurusha by the grace of Vayu. He has transformed everything he advised to the children of Daithyas, when he was Prahlada, into actions to suit Kaliyuga. Sri Hari has showered his special blessings on him and has brought all the fame to him.

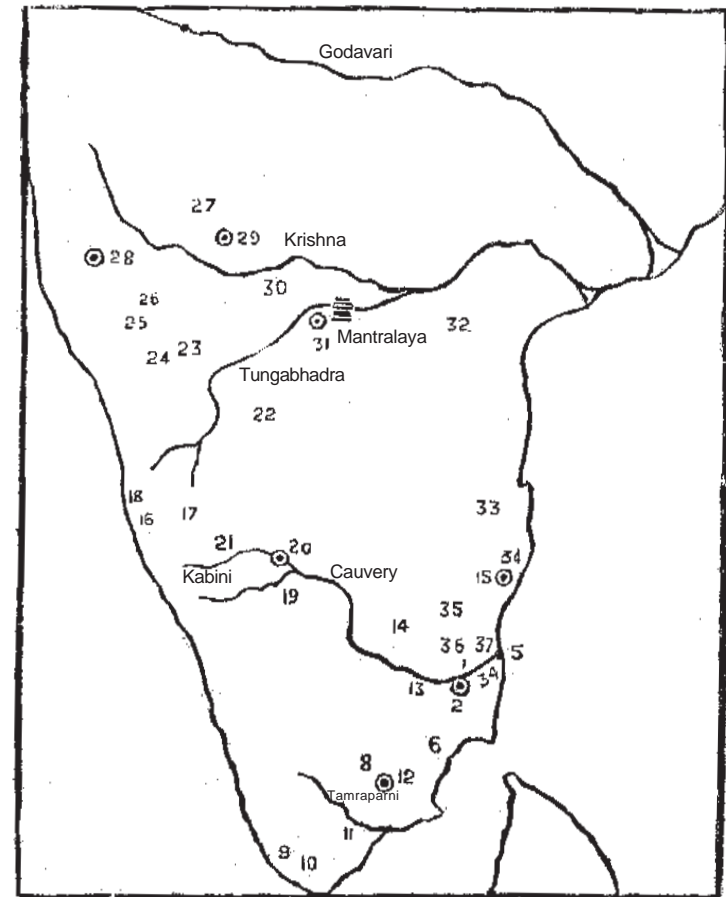
Thus the divine influence of Gururaja has become universal, which none can deny. Gururaja has rendered great service not only to Madhwas, to Karnataka, and to South India, but to the whole country. It can be authoritatively declared that Gururaja has carved a niche in the cultural, social, moral and political history of India.

Route Map Of Gururaja's Journey

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Kumbhakonam | 20. Srirangapatna |
| 2. Tanjore | 21. Ramanathapura |
| 3. Paripoornadevanagara | 22. Chitradurga |
| 4. Kamalalaya | 23. Kireetagiri-Gadag |
| 5. The place where Cauvery joins the sea | 24. Hubli |
| 6. Champakeshwara | 25. Shirasangi |
| 7. Rameshwara | 26. Kittur |
| 8. Alagiri | 27. Pandharapur |
| 9. Ananthashayana | 28. Kolhapur |
| 10. Janardhana | 29. Bijapur |
| 11. Tirunelvelli | 30. Manvi |
| 12. Madurai | 31. Adoni |
| 13. Srirangam | 32. Srishyla |
| 14. Namakkal | 33. Tirupathi |
| 15. Vellore | 34. Kancheepuram |
| 16. Vishnumangala | 35. Arunachala |
| 17. Subrahmanya | 36. Vridhachala |
| 18. Udupi | 37. Srimushna |
| 19. Nanjangud | 38. Mantralaya |

Kingdoms Of That Period

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 2. Tanjore | 20. Srirangapatna |
| 12. Madurai | 28. Kolhapur |
| 15. Vellore | 29. Bijapur |



Part III
THE NEXT SUCCESSION

Yogeendratheertha (1671-1688)

Amongst the disciples of Gururaja, three grandsons of his poorvashrama elder brother were prominent. Considering Venkannacharya of them as most deserving, Sri Gururaja bestowed sanyasa and named him **Yogeendra**. Vasudevacharya and Mudduvenkatakrishnacharya, the remaining two disciples adorned the peetha subsequently.

Yogeendra was a great scholar, intellectual. It has already been cited earlier that Venkannapant had re-conveyed the village Mantralaya to him. After his guru entered the Brindavan, Yogeendra made proper arrangements for regular poojas of Brindavan, stayed there for sometime and left on a tour. He defeated Kakashastri and others in debates at been cited earlier that Venkannapant had re-conveyed the village Mantralaya to him. After his guru entered the Brindavan, Yogeendra made proper arrangements for regular poojas of Brindavan, stayed there for sometime and left on a tour. He defeated Kakashastri and other in debates at Bhagyanagar. As Gururaja had moved away from Southern region, the swamiji went towards that region. After having a darshan of Sri Vijayeendra swamiji at Kumbhakonam, he came to Srirangam. The pilgrim of Srirangam was then under the administration of the Nayaks of Madurai. Muddalagadrinayaka, son of Vishwanathanayaka and grandson of Thirumalanayaka was ruling at Madurai then. In keeping with the tradition of the reverence, his ancestors had towards Mahasamsthana, he gifted a village 'Arambhanna' on the banks of the river Tamraparni and Kalla Mutt lying to the west of Chitra street in Srirangam on the most sacred day of Akshaya Thritheeya in Siddharthi Samvatsara (1679) dedicating it to Lord Krishna.¹ Having got a suitable place to reside at the most sacred place like Srirangam, Yogeendratheertha settled down there itself and reached eternal abode on the tenth day of Magha Shuddha in Vibhava Samvatsara.

सान्द्रबोधाय शास्त्रेशु निस्तन्द्रमनसे हरौ ।
राघवेन्द्रकुमाराय नमो योगीन्द्रयोगिने ॥

1. Mysore Archaeological Report 29.

Sooreendratheertha (1688-1692)

After Yogeendra, Vasudevacharya his poorvashrama elder brother attained sanyasa. He too was a direct disciple and ardent devotee of Sri Gururaja. He adorned the peetha for only four years and reached eternal abode on the second day of Jyestha Shuddha in Ingeerasa Samvatsara at Madurai.

राघवेन्द्रार्पितधिये योगीन्द्रार्पितसूनवे ।
श्रीमत्सूरीन्द्रयतये सुतपोनिधये नमः ॥

Sumatheendratheertha (1692-1725)

In the succession of Sri Gururaja, it was Sumatheendratheertha who opened a golden chapter in the history of Mahasamsthana. Mudduvenkatakrishnacharya was his name prior to sanyasa. He was the grandson of Gururajacharya, poorvashrama elder brother of Sri Gururaja, and the son of Venkatanarayancharya. What is ostensible in the whole lineage of Sri Gururaja is that the women are pious, children excel their fathers and younger ones exactly resemble the qualities of their elder brothers.¹

It was under Gururaja where Mudduvenkatakrishnacharya had his higher education. Sri Gururaja had great affection towards Krishnacharya. He was extremely happy at his quick comprehension. He had foreseen that the right person to propagate his works would be Krishnacharya only. That was the reason why Sri Gururaja had ordered Yogeendra in solitude that Sooreendra should succeed Yogeendra; later on Mudduvenkatakrishnacharya should succeed Sooreendra; thus the tradition of Mahasamsthana to continue. Could the prophecy of such an ascetic become untrue? Sooreendratheertha entrusted Mahasamsthana to his brother Mudduvenkatakrishnacharya and aptly named him as **Sumatheendratheertha**.

It was just a few days after the bestowal of sanyasa when Sumatheendra's pre-eminence unfolded. Starting on a tour he

1 जनकोपमकन्यकेन्द्रयस्मिन्नजिताताधिकनन्दने गुणौघैः ।

अनुजातसमानपूर्वजाते ॥

-रा. वि

reached Arani. It was a small Jahagir in Madras region. Its owner was a Madhwa, disciple of Uttaradi Mutt. One, Subhanuraya was the Jahagirdar of Arani during swamiji's period. He had become a great scholar, matchless poet and had acquired great physical strength by consuming Jyothishmathi oil, a very popular Ayurvedic preparation. That oil meant to be consumed simultaneously by three persons has different effects on different persons. One among those who drink it dies, another would turn mad and the other would become intelligent. By drinking such an oil, the lucky Subhanuraya became not only intelligent but also acquired great physical strength. Infatuated by this acquisition, he went on a spree of challenging the scholars and abashing them. Subhanuraya who learnt that the swamiji had come to his place, invited and felicitated him. He initiated a debate choosing a very tough aspect of grammar. The swamiji defeated him in the debate which lasted eight days.

Further he challenged the swamiji to compete with him in composing poems. Instantly swamiji's reply came thus

अनाराध्य काळीं अनास्वाद्य चौळीं
विना मंत्रतंत्रे ऋते शब्दचौर्यात् ।
प्रपंचप्रसिद्ध प्रबंधं विधातुं
विरिंचप्रपंचे मदन्य कविः कः ॥

That means "I did not worship Kali; have not drunk Jyothishmathi. Not indulged in witchcraft. Nor do I plagiarize. In spite of this I am quite competent to compose most fascinating poems. Let me see who equals my challenge". These remarks provoked Subhanuraya. The stormy competition of poetry kicked off. Before the poetical excellence of the swamiji, Subhanuraya's paranoiac spirit of competition suffered a jerk. Startled Subhanuraya sat benumbed.

The wonderful scholarship of swamiji aroused profound devotion for him in Subhanuraya. He exclaimed, "all the Mutts have sanyasis. But O' Sumatheendra, who is there to come close to you in excellence!"¹ He felt fulfilment by offering 'Rahu-Kethu Vadya' and a pair of 'Chitrasana' as a mark of his service to the swamiji.

1 प्रतिमठमुदरंभरयो बहवो हंत वर्तत । समतियते
वित्तमते भवता समताम् कः पुमानियेत?

Thus the swamiji emerging triumphant in debates after debates all along, reached Srirangam by 1696. The most popular queen Mangamma (1689-1706), daughter-in-law of Vishwanatha was ruling Madurai, an educational centre. A conference in which the scholars belonging to all the three sects participated took place at Srirangam which was under her rule. The pontiffs of all the three Mutts representing Dwaithism assembled there. The high esteem, the queen Mangamma had for education was singularly responsible for the conference.

When a scholar initiated the debate with a poorvapaksha on behalf of Adwaithis, the responsibility of replying him devolved on Madhwas. Sumatheendratheertha lost no time in sensing the silence of the aged Sathyapoonatheertha of Uttaradi Mutt and that of the swamiji of Vyasaraaja Mutt, and pleaded with both of them to give him an opportunity. Then strongly refuting everything set forth by the Adwaitha scholar with a befitting reply, the swamiji put forth another poorvapaksha challenging him to come out with a reply. The opposite group failed to thrash out a reply.

Sathyapoonatheertha of Uttaradi Mutt watching the proceedings all along nodded his head in appreciation of Sumatheendratheertha's triumph. Then he presented to the swamiji, the seat on which he used to sit and praised him, "your scholarship is unmatched. Today here in this royal court, the reputation of Dwaithism has reached the zenith through the excellence of your scholarship. Or else a severe ignominy would have stared us in the face. Therefore it would be nice if you accept this seat. From now on in commemoration of the honour I have done to you, carry on the administration of Vedantha Samrajya using the two seats to sit on". The pontiff of Vyasaraaja Mutt too expressed his admiration for swamiji's scholarship.

From then on the custom of using the two seats for swamiji to sit on came into vogue in the Mutt.

The queen Mangamma was no exception and she too became an ardent devotee of the swamiji. Greatly impressed by his charisma, she did special honours to the swamiji and gifted him a village Aayirdhama in Srivilliputtur region as also a Mutt there on the day of Pournima of Magha Shuddha in Eshwara Samvatsara of 1697. Also she gifted an idol of Vaikunthavasudeva studded with

Books on philosophy too are held in high esteem. It has been described in Raghavendravidya that Sri Gururaja wrote his books foreseeing that 'Sumatheendra' in his family would be competent to understand their importance.¹

Thus it is Sumatheendra who was renowned to be a popular litterateur after Sri Gururaja.

He was not a mere litterateur. Also greatly learned and conversant indeed with the essence of Tantrasara. Besides a great ascetic. In his book 'Mantrarathnakosha', he has compiled all Mantras useful for Ahneeka adapted from the methodology and Dhyana-shlokas. Madhwas can never afford to forget this gift. He regulated all the age old customs of the Mutt and introduced a suitable system. It was the swamiji who set the standard for the unique system that is being followed even today in the Mutt. It may not be redundant to state that this has opened altogether a new chapter in the history of the Mutt. It is because of this, he became popular as a trailblazer. Even today, the Mutt is popularly known as **Sumatheendra Mutt** in Tamilnadu.

From this it becomes evident how extraordinary the charisma of swamiji is. It is only in him can one conspicuously find the grit that Vijayeendratheertha displayed in the tradition of the Mutt. What gave rise to his obsession with scholarship was his student hood under Sri Gururaja.

The swamiji has carved a permanent niche for him in the history of the Mutt. He spent his last days at Srirangam itself and reached his heavenly abode there only, in the vicinity of his most beloved and paramaguru Sri Yogeendratheertha.

पूर्णप्रज्ञमतांबोधि पूर्णदुमकलंकिनं ।
सुजनाम्बुधिभास्वन्तं सुमतींद्रगुरुं भजे ॥

2 भाव्यसंशयमहो गुरुवंशे दर्शनश्रुतिपरारसुमतींद्राः ।
तस्य सार्थकमिदम् सकलम् स्यादित्येवेत्य कृतवान् कृतिसार्थम् ।

Upendratheertha (1725-1728)

He was known as Vijayeendracharya before sanyasa.¹ As he was a great scholar, he was blessed with sanyasa by Sumatheendratheertha and became popular as **Upendratheertha**. From the hymns composed by his disciple Vadeendratheertha, it becomes evident that he was a famous scholar and a great orator. But as he was in the peetha only for three years, more details are not available. His Brindavan also is at Srirangam.

कृपारसामृतांबोधि मपारमहिमान्वितम् ।
उपास्महे तपोमूर्तिमुपेन्द्र गुरुपुंगवम् ॥

Vadeendratheertha (1728-1750)

Purushottamacharya was the son of Laksminarayanacharya, the poorvashrama son of Sri Gururaja. His son was Srinivasacharya. In keeping with the reputation of his family, he had acquired great scholarship and was conducting classes in the Mutt. Recognising his scholarship and loyalty to the Mutt, Upendratheertha decided that he only was deserving and named him **Vadeendratheertha** after bestowing sanyasa.

By then political turmoil had raised its ugly head in South India. If today one tiny ruler rose to power, tomorrow a new such ruler would conquer him. In the chaos that prevailed, it became an uphill task for religious institutions to enjoy the perpetual possession of the villages gifted by the rulers of yesteryears. If one Palegar was helpful to the possession, another would dispossess. Under the circumstances religious heads had to undertake different tours to protect through their personal influence. Instead of royal patronage forthcoming, anarchy that became the trend played havoc. It had become extremely difficult to defend the honour of the Mutt and pursue the routine of performing poojas and conducting classes in the face of such adversities. Despite these oddities, the heads of the Mutt did well to defend and nurture their tradition in the best

1. He too was poorvashrama brother of Sri Sumatheendra. His younger brother was Garudavahana Lakshminarayanacharya. He has composed Vibudhendravijaya.

way possible. From this point of time onwards, what becomes more and more evident in the documents of the Mutt is getting fresh gifts of lands and villages in addition to recovering those that the Mutt enjoyed for long earlier.

When the swamiji began his tour in Tamilnadu, the officer in charge of the administration of a small province there honoured him. Some selfish and greedy people there eyeing the most priceless and gem-studded idol of Vaikunthavasudeva and Kalpavruksha stole the valuables of the Mutt at night. But owing to the shrewdness of the officials of the Mutt, they were not fully successful. Still those culprits made away with Kalpavruksha. The swamiji set off on his journey with the idols of the Mutt and other valuables in his safe custody.

Earlier Sri Gururaja leaving Tamilnadu had settled down at Mantralaya bordering North Karnataka. Afterwards Yogeendratheertha again proceeded towards Tamilnadu. The Samsthana that was there since then again proceeded towards north during Vadeendratheertha's period. But the threat of dacoity, troubles and turmoils which were rampant in Tamilnadu were repulsive. Further some lands and properties of the Mutt at North Karnataka were on the verge of wriggling out of Mutt's control. Therefore the swamiji came to the surroundings of Ranebennur passing through the state of Mysore. Some affluent Desais and Deshpandes of that region had still remained theists. Influenced by the majesty of the swamiji, they offered him their deep reverence. The Nawab of Savanur gifted to the Mutt some lands at Rettehalli. Nadagouda, the Desai of Havanur gifted estates at village Moraba. Thus making the Mutt richer with new gifts of properties, the swamiji came to Hubli region. The village Kireetagiri which had been gifted to Sri Gururaja had missed the control of the Mutt. Jayavantabhai Venkatappayya Bahadur Desai Paragane again gifted that village to the swamiji in 1734 and had the documents in the name of the Mutt.

Thus the swamiji touring places reached Mantralaya. The Mutt was facing the danger of losing control over even Mantralaya. Then the swamiji again had a discussion in this regard with Muzaffarjung Bahadur, the administrator of Adoni and had the documents in respect of the village reconveyed in favour of the Mutt. The Brindavan which Venkannapant had hastened to ready for Sri

Gururaja in the past had remained now as it is which was ordained by Sri Gururaja to be so. None but the superbly cognitive Gururaja knew when a suitable heir to this Brindavan would arrive. Now it appears that the time has come. The swamiji without being disposed to going towards Tamilnadu again stayed on at Mantralaya and reached his heavenly abode on the ninth day of Jyestha Shuddha in Pramodini Samvatsara of 1750 in the sacred place of Sri Gururaja. The Brindavan which was readied for Sri Gururaja in the past was dedicated to Vadeendratheertha. His Brindavan was installed on the left side and very near to Sri Gururaja's Brindavan.

The very thing that his Brindavan could be located near Sri Gururaja's Brindavan speaks volumes for Vadeendra's greatness. It has already been described how the Brindavan of Sri Gururaja waved in approval of it when Sri Vadeendratheertha submitted **Gurugunastavana**, his magnum opus to Sri Gururaja. This itself demonstrates how great was Sri Gururaja's blessings on him. As was Sumatheendratheertha, a minister to Gururaja in respect of literary work, Jagannathadasa in respect of the world of Haridasa literature, so was Vadeendratheertha a minister to Sri Gururaja in respect of miracles in the Brindavan. Even today Vadeendra appears along with Gururaja and graces the devotees in their dreams.

Of the several books written by Sri Vadeendra, the following are the books available.

1. Tattvaparakashika Tippani (Meemamsa Nayadarpana)
2. Tattvodyota Tippani
3. Bhoogola Khagola Vichara
4. Raghavendramathagatharchagathikrama
5. Gurugunastavana
6. Navyadurakthishiksha (written in poorvashrama)

Vadeendratheertha has done yeoman service to Haridasa literature with many compositions in Kannada too. Amongst them, a few Devaranamas are available now.

वंदारुजनसंदोहमंदारतरुसन्निभम् ।
वंदारकगुरुप्रख्यम् वंदे वादीददेशिकम् ॥

Vasudhendraheertha (1750-1761)

Venugopalacharya, the poorvashrama younger brother of Vadeendraheertha had three sons. Purushothamacharya was the eldest. Balaramacharya and Lakshminarayanacharya were his younger brothers. All the three who became famous as the heads of the Mutt were named Vasudhendraheertha, Varadendraheertha and Bhuvanendraheertha respectively.

Vasudhendraheertha was a great ascetic. Without undertaking extensive tours, he stayed for many days at Mantralaya conducting classes and holding discourses. Even during his period, one Nawab Sabdaljung Bahadur, the administrator of Adoni executed the documents in respect of the village Mantralaya in favour of the Mutt. Documents in respect of the village Kireetagiri which was in the control of the government between 1756 and 1760 were again executed in swamiji's name. Apart from it, one Ramabhoopala, a Palegar gifted a village Somanahalli to the swamiji. Once the swamiji went on a tour to Tamilnadu. One Vijayavoppulamalavaraya, the Nayak of Ariyaloor in Tiruchirapalli region there felicitated the swamiji.¹ The swamiji always was busy carrying out Japa and Tapa. At last he reached the heavenly abode at Kenchanagudda, a village on the banks of the river Tungabhadra near Shiraguppa.

Of the books written by him, only his commentary on Gurugunstavana is available now.

The very place of his Brindavan has the renown of being very sacred which demands purity of mind and body. Whoever visits the place with their mind and body polluted is sure to have gruelling experience immediately. Even today it is widely believed that the swamiji was a great ascetic.

वसुधातलविख्यातम् वैराग्यादिगुणार्णवम् ।
वेदवेदांगचतुरम् वसुधेन्द्रगुरुम् भजे ॥

1. Mysore Archaeological Report 44.

Varadendraheertha (1761-1785)

The name of **Varadendraheertha** has been very famous in the history of the Mutt. He was a great scholar. A well known victor in debates. The Mutt saw all round development during his period. The swamiji was very versatile. He undertook tour all over South India. In the course of his tour of Southern region, one Somaraja (1761-1785), a Nayak, had his desire fulfilled by gifting estates on the second day of Ashwayuja Shuddha in Jaya Samvatsara of 1774.¹ The swamiji received Dhanapura and other villages as gift from rulers like Veeravenkata Tirumalaraya and Balasatjung Bahadur in Shalivahana Shaka 1691 corresponding to A.D.1769.

The swamiji was an erudite scholar. Equally shrewd he was in administrative matters. Sri Jagannathadasa, a scholar in four Shastras known to be a paragon among Haridasas, did his studies under the swamiji and composed **Varadendrapancharathna malike**, a poem in extollation of the swamiji.

The swamiji extended special encouragement to Haridasa literature. The Haridasa literature once again had its revival now just as how it was patronised during the period of Chandrikacharya in the past. It was exactly the swamiji's period which saw the grand convergence of Apparokshajnanis like Vijayadasa, Gopaladasa, Jagannathadasa. These Haridasas used to visit the Mutt and return with the blessings of swamiji. Apart from this, the swamiji himself has composed **Tantrasara** in Kannada in the form of songs. Jagannathadasa has written a song depicting the benefits it confers.

What needs a special mention here is that the swamiji gave his special blessings to Praneshadasa, a disciple of Jagannathadasa. Touring places when the swamiji reached Lingasoogur, Kulkarni Yogeendraraya (Praneshadasa), a disciple of the Mutt played host to the swamiji first at his house. It was afternoon when the swamiji smilingly asked, "Dear Dasa, what are you going to offer to Moolarama?"

"All belongs to the Mutt. Your Holiness can take whatever you want".

"I see the stack of Jowar crop in the backyard. Gift that place to me".

2. Mysore Archaeological Report 29.

“Why just that swamiji? I would like to offer you a better place”.

“No. I need that only”.

“As you wish”.

So saying, Praneshadasa gifted it to the swamiji dedicating it to Lord Krishna. Saying “Let this be in your possession only. When I want it, you give me its possession”, the swamiji continued his tour.

Pune was under the administration of Peshwas then. Balaji Bajeeraya was at the helm of affairs. Ramashastri, a famous Adwaitha scholar had become a judge for Peshwas for his sagacity in dispensing justice. The swamiji reached that place. Peshwas, who were Brahmins, accorded a cordial reception to the swamiji and felicitated him. The stage was set for a debate between swamiji and Ramashastri. It was Ramashastri's house where the debate was scheduled to take place. The debate began on the condition that in the event of Ramashastri's defeat, his house had to be ceded to the swamiji or if it is otherwise, the swamiji had to relinquish all his titles and honours. At this point of time, Jayaramacharya, the poorvashrama son of Vadeendratheertha came to the venue. The coincidental visit of such an erudite scholar was much delighting for the swamiji. He accorded him a warm welcome. Participating in the debate between the swamiji and Ramashastri, Jayaramacharya was mainly supportive to the swamiji. The swamiji triumphed. Complying with the condition, Ramashastri ceded the house and left for Kashi. His house became the sacred abode of Lord Moolarama.¹ The affluent in Pune were Adwaithis. Nevertheless greatly admiring swamiji's scholarship, they treated him with special honours. Spending the last days of his life at Pune, the swamiji reached his heavenly abode on the sixth day of Ashadha Shuddha in Vishwavasu Samvatsara there itself.

His disciple Bhuvanendratheertha built a Mutt there and installed the Brindavan of his guru; devotion and fervour accompanying. So long as Peshwas ruled, funds flowed liberally for poojas and other rituals.

1 ರಾಮನಗೃಹ ವೀರಾಮಾಯು ಆ | ರಾಮಗೆ ವಿರಾಮವು ಆಯು ||
ರಾಮನೀಯಕಪುರದೀ ಮೆರೆದು ಮುನಿ | ಶ್ರೀಮಂತಗೆ ಸಸುಮತನಾಯಕು

The swamiji after attaining Brindavan at Pune ordained Praneshadasa, appearing in his dream on the same night, that he should see to the conduct of regular poojas and other rituals for the Tulsi plant under the stack of Jowar, the place gifted to the swamiji by Praneshadasa earlier which symbolises the presence of swamiji there.

Praneshadasa found himself in infinite joy. Immediately he got up and finished his bath and other morning rituals. He removed the stack with the help of others. To the utter surprise of all, there stood the tall Tulsi plant. The spot was consecrated and poojas began from that day onwards. The pooja of the Tulsi plant went on for sometime. Later as per the orders of the swamiji, a Brindavan was made out of rock brought from a quarry at Gulaganji and installed there. Swamiji's Padukas brought from Pune were also placed. Varadendraswamy Mutt was built there. From then till today, swamiji's Aradhana is being celebrated in all geity and devotion. Devotees offer there obeisance in strict adherence there and have their wishes fulfilled.

Varadeshavithaladasa, a disciple of Praneshadasa has rendered the incident of Praneshadasa's dream in the form of a poem. Praneshadasa has composed many Keerthanas on swamiji. It is indeed praiseworthy that an institution to promote publication of Haridasa literature under the name **Varadendra Haridasa Sahitya Mandala** has been functioning at Lingasugoor even today.

वादे विजयश्रीलाय वरदाय वरार्थिनाम् ।
वदान्यजनसिंहाय वरदेन्द्राय ते नमः ॥

Dheerendratheertha (1785)

Jayaramacharya who stood behind Varadendratheertha in his victory at Pune, was not ordinary. His scholarship was excellent. He had acquired versatility in all Shastras, besides being Sreepadaputra. Appreciating such excellence of his scholarship, his father Sri Vadeendratheertha was confident that if he ever became the head of the Mutt, the Mutt would achieve great prosperity and fame. But Jayaramacharya had no inclination towards sanyasa. He was interested in debates, literary works, conducting

classes and holding discourses. He had written commentary on **Gurugunastavana**, his father's composition. With a view to kindle his inclination towards renunciation, Vadeendratheertha had expressed timely, "These will not put you onto the path of salvation, renunciation in the right sense counts very much".

As Vasudhendratheertha, on whom Vadeendratheertha had bestowed sanyasa, knew the mind of his guru, he had decided that Jayaramacharya only should succeed him. But it was not possible for him to give sanyasa to Jayaramacharya as the latter was unavailable at his last moment. When Varadendratheertha emerged victorious in the debate at Pune, stunned at the scholarship of Jayaramacharya, the prominent people of Pune asked who this great scholar was. Then the swamiji in his reply said, "He is an elderly person in our family, Sreepadaputra. One who should have been in my place. If not now, he is destined to adorn this peetha one day".

But at the last moment of Varadendratheertha also, Jayaramacharya was unavailable at the Mutt. Therefore, under such compelling circumstances, swamiji had to bestow sanyasa on his poorvashrama younger brother Lakshminarayanacharya. Swamiji advised, "You should study the Shastras under Jayaramacharya only. Treat him with utmost respect, this enhances the honour of the Mutt".

After Varadendratheertha departed from his mortal abode, Jayaramacharya recollected what his father had advised. When he went to Kumbhakonam for a darshan of Vijayeendratheertha's Brindavan, he felt that he was urged to take sanyasa. Accordingly he took sanyasa before the Brindavan.

When Bhuvanendratheertha who adorned the peetha was planning to send for Jayaramacharya as ordained by his elder brother, he was given to understand that Jayaramacharya had become '**Dheerendra**'. He hurried to Dheerendra's place and entrusted Mahasamsthana to him. Dheerendratheertha after worshipping Moolarama for sometime returned the idol to Bhuvanendratheertha. It was Dheerendratheertha under whom Bhuvanendratheertha studied the Shastras completely.

Though Dheerendratheertha who did not aspire to be the pontiff of the Mutt was renounced, wherever he went, the regular pooja

and other rituals of the Mutt were marked by the same ardour and glory. The swamiji came to village Ritti in Haveri Taluk. The majority of people there were Lingayats. Nevertheless, owing to his ascetic powers, the swamiji was greatly revered. As that village on the banks of the river Varada was found conducive, the swamiji settled down there itself. Jagannathadasa also came there. Sathyabodhatheertha of Uttaradi Mutt had stayed in the vicinity. Vishnutheertha also joined them. However it was a coming together of saints of great intellect. The very manner in which the discussions were held there was impressive. It looked incomprehensible for the ordinary. It was an aura of unusual emotions for them who could not discern whether those intellectuals were rejoicing or bewailing or waltzing. The Divine Power, the powers of His devotees were the gist of their talk. Thus some years elapsed. History has it that Jagannathadasa composed **Harikathamruthasara**, his magnum opus there itself.

Dheerendratheertha who set off on a journey reached Maharashtra. At Satara, palace officials greatly honoured the swamiji there. The swamiji had unprecedented welcome at Pune. The Peshwa who had great respect for swamiji's scholarship in his poorvashrama extended a very warm welcome, played host at the palace, gave many presents and gifted lands and estates to him. The swamiji performed the pooja and offered Hasthodhaka to the Brindavan of Varadendratheertha whom he regarded as his guru. Staying there for some period, he returned to Ritti travelling through Mantralaya where he had the darshan of Sri Gururaja.

After sometime, swamiji's end neared and it was at Ritti where he reached his heavenly abode. As Bhuvanendratheertha was on a distant tour, it was not possible to subject the mortal remains of the swamiji to 'Kalakarshana' and install his Brindavan.

Seven years after the swamiji was laid to rest, a devotee of his had a dream. Accordingly he exhumed swamiji's mortal remains for 'Kalakarshana'. The sandal paste, Akshatha and Tulsi garland which he wore had remained as fresh as they were seven years back. It looked so fresh that his mortal remains were decorated just then. This spectacle astonished all the devotees. As ordained by the swamiji, his mortal remains were taken from the centre of the village to the banks of the river Varada and his Brindavan was installed there itself. Ever since the installation of Brindavan there,

the poojas and other rituals began taking place quite in the same manner as they are done in Mantralaya. The wishes of the devotees began to get fulfilled. In the place where swamiji's Brindavan was installed, a full fledged Mutt came to exist. Even today Sevas and poojas take place there.

Sri Gururaja has assured that with his Amsha coming to exist in the Brindavan of Dheerendratheertha, he would fulfil the wishes of the devotees. There is no doubt that the swamiji with the absolute blessings of Sri Gururaja is a greatly honoured soul.

Dheerendratheertha is not only famous as an ascetic but also as a litterateur. It has already been described earlier that in his poorvashrama life itself, he had written commentary on 'Gurugunastavana' composed by his father Vadeendratheertha. Apart from this, the following of his writings are popular now.

1. Kaarakavada
2. Commentary on Narayanopanishad
3. Commentary on Manyusooktha in favour of Lord
Narasimha
4. Vishayavakya Sangraha

Even today in the history of the Mutt, the fame of Dheerendratheertha has occupied a permanent place. His Aradhana falls on the thirteenth day of Phalguna Shuddha.

धरणीमंडलेख्यातम् धैर्यादिगुणबृह्णितम् ।
धिक्कृताशेषवादीभं धीरसिंहगुरुं भजे ॥

Bhuvanendratheertha (1785-1799)

Bhuvanendratheertha was of great intellect. He acquired the administrative acumen from his guru Varadendratheertha just as how he acquired scholarship from Dheerendratheertha. Besides he also patronised Haridasa literature. The swamiji was very ardent in performing the pooja of Lord Moolarama. He was revered by Peshwas of Pune. Still he got a big gold Mantap made with the contributions he received from his disciples during his tour and

worshipped the idol of Moolarama placed in it. Kings and Desais were wonderstruck by the administrative acumen of the swamiji.¹

A great intellect by name Vyasatattvajna who received sanyasa from the swamiji became Rajaguru in the royal court of Seetharama Bhoopala, the king of Gadwal. He apprised the king of the great powers of the swamiji. Hearing this, the king in great devotion and earnestness prayed to the swamiji to visit his state and bless him. Acceding to his request, the swamiji visited the palace where he performed the pooja of Moolarama. The king gifted lands and villages in his state to the swamiji. In addition, the following villages came as gifts through the respective officials.

1. Hiremoraba – Mir Mohammed Shah Jung
2. Nagaladinni – Khiravalanayaka Somappanayaka Desai
3. Agnyahala and Handrala along with Noubathu honour –
Surapura King
4. Benakapura - Somashekarayanaka

During the swamiji's period also, documents in respect of the village Mantralaya were executed by one Nawab Mansoordaul Bahadur.

Thus the swamiji became instrumental in the progress of the Mutt. As if that was not enough the swamiji introduced a seal with a Shloka श्रीरामो भाति सव्यासः श्रीमध्वास्थानसंस्थितः । श्रीराघवेन्द्रसद्वंश्यैः भुवनेन्द्रैः श्रियार्चितः॥ in order to get such recognition for the Mutt as would boost its fame in accordance with the ancient tradition. This was an important milestone.

Praneshadasa in his poem "गुरुगण संतोषो लुप्तम वरकणं बंधो" has extolled the swamiji as

सुम्नैः एतस्मिन् पदवियुक्तं जगदोक्तं बभूवुः अरिं अहमदो ।
यैः सुम्नैः संश्रितं पुंसि यत्पु सत्यां भवति नित्या ॥

1 श्रीमन्मठे त्रिंशत्सदलं सुजन नवरत्नं ह्येवमण्डपव विरचिष्ये भुवनेन्द्रोत्तमः

-जगन्नाथदासರು

* There was an official seal in the past also. One read as 'Sri Madhwacharya Mahasamsthana' and another as 'Vidya Matha Kumbhakona'

History confirms that the swamiji completed Acharya's **Rig Bhashya** with a view to counter the opponents of Dwaithism and did not bring it out after his victory in debates. As the swamiji had the patronage of the king of Gadwal, he spent his last days at a village Rajavalli of Tungabhadra region which was under the administration of Gadwal where he reached the heavenly abode on the seventh day of Vaishaka Bahula.

भूदेववन्द्यपादाब्जम् भूतिमंतमभीष्टदं ।
भूतलो साधुविख्यातं भुवनेंद्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Vyasatattvajantheertha

One Venkatanarasimhacharya among the disciples of the Mutt was very famous. He used to be in Venisomapura, a village on the banks of the Tungabhadra belonging to Gadwal. One Venkataramacharya was his son. He was a great scholar, highly renounced and a paragon who did the rare feat of worshipping through his soul. He had sanyasa bestowed by Bhuvanendratheertha and became famous as '**Vyasatattvajna**'.

Securing the idol of Lord Narasimha with sixteen arms which had come into Vibudhendratheertha's possession as a sequel to his dream, he had been worshipping it ever since. Through his ascetic powers he freed the king of Gadwal from the threat of enemies and therefore the king had him stay as his guru in his royal court.

Vyasatattvajna was an avid devotee of God. One who had close association with Gopaladasa. He composed many rare Devaranamas in Kannada with **Vasudevavitthala** as his Ankita. His scholarship in Shastras was extraordinary. He has also written many books like *Laghuprabha*, *Guruprabha*, *Vyajana*, *Drakshapaka*, *Mandanandinee*, *Manasapoojapaddhati*, *Gayathri Artha*.

He attained the Lotus feet of the Lord on the eight day of Shrava Bahula in Roudri Samvatsara of 1790. He was a teacher of Vishnutheertha and he had an Amsha of Krishnadwaipayan atheertha. Jagannathadasa has greatly extolled him both in his poorvashrama and after he attained sanyasa.

Subodhendratheertha (1799-1835)

And

Sujanendratheertha (1807-1836)

Muddukrishnacharya, a renowned disciple of the Mutt was an erudite scholar. Bhuvanendratheertha who consider him to be suitable to head the Mutt bestowed sanyasa on him and named him '**Subodhendratheertha**'. His ascetic powers were marvellous. The very next year after his sanyasa, he undertook a tour. In 1800 he got the village Kanakagiri as a gift. Thus spending most of his time in tour, he reached Bommaghatta, the pilgrim centre of Pranadeva at the time when Chathurmasya was approaching in Prabhava Samvatsara of 1807.

One Jayaramacharya, Dherendratheertha's poorvashrama daughter's son was in the Mutt. As the swamiji fell very sick, he gave sanyasa to Jayaramacharya and named him '**Sujanendratheertha**' on the ninth day of Ashada Shuddha in Prabhava Samvatsara at Bommaghatta. After a few days, the swamiji convalesced completely. It was just a few days after his nuptial, sanyasa was bestowed on Jayaramacharya. He had finished the study of literature in histrionics. After he unexpectedly became sanyasi, he went to Pune to prosecute further studies on the orders of his guru.

One Vithalopadhya, the main student of Naiyyayika Gadadharabhattacharya of Navadweepa renowned to be an Acharyapurusha in Naveena Nyaya was a scholar and exponent of four Shastras in Pune. He belonged to Bhagavatha tradition under whom many were studying. Those famous among Madhwas studying under him were Satari Ramacharya, Hulgi Acharya and Sujanendratheertha. After studying Nyayashastra there for some days, Sujanendratheertha returned to his guru.

Sujanendratheertha was entrusted with part administration of the Mutt on the day of Pournima of Vaishakha Shuddha in Vibhava Samvatsara. He studied Shastras for sometime under his guru and left on a separate tour with due permission from his guru.

Sujanendratheertha was very ingenious. Though he studied for a very short span, he attained versatility in Shastras. Became an

excellent orator. Quite competent to defeat even stalwarts in debate. In addition to these, his guru who had excellent mystic powers advised him, "worshipping this you undertake your tour". "Always success will be yours. You will be accredited with the royal honours" was how he blessed Sujanendra while specially gracing him with the idol of Digvijayarama, the symbol of part administration entrusted to him. Would his words ever go untrue?

In the course of his tour, Sujanendratheertha came to Mysore state. As his guru had in the past toured the holy places there once, he came to Mysore region as ordained. He reached Nanjangud after touring the holy places like Ramanathapura, Srirangapatna, T.Narasipura. In the past Vibudhendra, Vijayeendra and Gururaja had come to Nanjangud and returned after taking holy dip in the river Kapila and having the darshan of Lord Rudra. Sujanendratheertha too like his ancient gurus came here and took a holy dip in the river and had the darshan of Lord Rudra. As Nanjangud is not only an important pilgrim centre but also a serene place, the swamiji stayed there for some days.

Some who were ignorant and unabashed in betraying their chauvinism towards Dwaithism objected to swamiji's sojourn at a Shaiva centre and his taking darshan of Lord Rudra worshipped in Shaivagama system. This came to swamiji's knowledge too and he pitied them for their ignorance with a smile. Next day before going for darshan of Lord Rudra, the swamiji while talking with those who raised objection, interpreted the quotations of Vedas in respect of **Rudrachamak**as on Lord Mahadeva ingeniously in favour of Lord Narayana. Those chauvinists who were astounded by swamiji's excellent scholarship and Anusandhana bowed their heads in shame and sought swamiji's excuse at his feet.

Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar (1779-1868) was ruling the state of Mysore then. The king reputed as **Abhinava Bhoja** was a patron of ancient Dharma, education and art. It was because of him the rulers of Mysore enjoyed the reputation as the protectors of Dharma. Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar stood out as the only protector of Dharma in India at a chaotic time when the empires and kingdoms of Vijayanagar, Tanjore, Madurai, Pune had suffered ruin and when foreigners like the Portugese, the French and the British were invading the country. During the long tenure of Wodeyar's rule, religious institutions which are the symbol of Hindu culture prospered

well. Famous scholars, musicians and other artists from different parts of the world also enjoyed royal patronage at Mysore. The king also came to know of the excellence of Sujanendratheertha's scholarship.

A very famous scholar Thryambaka Shastri who enjoyed the patronage of the affluent folk of Pune came to the court of Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar after he had lost patronage at Pune. He came forward to have a debate with the scholars in the royal court. None could face his cascade of words. This threatened to tarnish the image of the royal court of Mysore. This worried the king. Suddenly it occurred to the king that Sujanendratheertha of a wonderful scholarly fame has just then come to Nanjangud and was sojourning. Accompanied by Thryambaka Shastri, he came to Nanjangud on a horse carriage. The swamiji was staying at Poornayya choultry there. As it was Dwadashi, the king who had come at 8 O' clock had to wait for sometime in the corridor of the choultry.

The swamiji who heard of the king's visit had him by his side after extending him due honours. After exchange of pleasantries, the king introduced Shastri to the swamiji. The swamiji had heard of Shastri when he was studying at Pune. But he had not seen him. In sharp contrast while swamiji's scholarship was simply mountainous, he was just an anthill in height. Shastri's remark was **आकरोहस्वः** when he saw the swamiji. That very remark became the subject of debate for the swamiji. He asked how **आ कार** could be **हस्व** .

An extensive discussion was held on the subject. The debate transcending the bounds of Vyakaranashastra extended to Nyaya, Meemamsa and Vedantha. Gradually Shastri gained an edge over swamiji. Wondering how it could be so, the swamiji thought for a while when something occurred to him. By then it was 11 O' clock. The swamiji said that the debate could be resumed after Shastri had had his lunch.

The debate rested there and Shastri was hosted a luncheon by the Mutt. The debate resumed in the afternoon. During that debate Shastri remained tight lipped. He could not reply to the questions, swamiji tackled him with. Shastri had propitiated the Sun God with special worship and as the Sun kept on ascending, Shastri's debate became more and more stormy. The scholars who failed to discover

this used to suffer crushing defeats at the hands of Shastri. But the swamiji who could easily crack the mystery with his unique cognitive powers played the expediency by postponing the debate to the second half of the day. This projected Shastri in his true colours. The king was extremely pleased to find Shastri remain answerless. Immediately the king placed the necklace of pearls he had worn at swamiji's feet. Presenting the necklace to Shastri, the swamiji told the king, "Shastri is a great scholar; the presence of such a scholar would add lustre to your court. Have him stay in your court".

Shastri rose to prostrate before the swamiji and said, "The scholarship of swamiji is unparalleled. The mystic powers of your Holiness is simply legendary. It is indeed a great fortune for me to have seen and spent moments of enlightenment with such a divine legend". The swamiji suitably honoured him.

Ever since then the king developed an unusual reverence for the swamiji. The king thought that it would certainly enhance his honour and fame to have such a rare gem adorn his court. He came down to meet the swamiji again and pleaded with him, "Your Holiness! Please be kind enough to adorn my court, I shall provide you with all the requisites, consider my request favourably.

It became reiterated for the swamiji how unique the ascetic influence of his guru was! Remembering his guru, the swamiji told the king, "Dear King, all these are the results of the divine powers of my guru. A sublime attainment he has had through asceticism".

Savouring the sublimity of swamiji's ascetic powers, learning about the ascetic influence of swamiji's guru, the king's devotion grew more intense. He sent an appeal inviting Subodhendratheertha to his court. The king requested the swamiji to indicate a place in his state where the Samsthana would prefer to settle down. In reply the swamiji showed his inclination to consider the matter after the arrival of his guru. Then came the news of Subodhendratheertha's visit to the royal court of Mysore in response to the king's invitation. Arrangements were in place to meet the daily expenses of the Samsthana from the palace treasury right from the day Subodhendratheertha and his entourage entered into the boundary of Mysore state.

Subodhendratheertha was devoutly received by his disciple Sujanendratheertha. The king had come with all the regalia in swamiji's honour. Sujanendratheertha introduced the king to his guru. Enquiries of well being were exchanged. The convergence of two pontiffs and the king was a grand spectacle.

The king led the twosome to the palace amidst the royal glory and felicitated them. Elephant and howdah, chamara, daylight torch and other special honours were kept at the disposal of the Mutt. The king gifted to Subodhendratheertha the choultry at Nanjangud in which Sujanendratheertha stayed and made arrangements for the monthly payment of three hundred and sixty Kanthee Varahas to meet the expenses of the Mutt. To make way for annual income, he also gifted (in place of village gifted earlier) the villages Ambale, Kaggalooru and Kongalli.

Now the Mutt secured a proper patronage. Subodhendratheertha again on a tour proceeded towards Hyderabad. Though the officials there were jealous of the prosperity of the Mutt, the whole of its atmosphere was rendered conducive by the acme of swamiji's fame. One Chandulal, an official there did the Mutt special honours of beating of the drum mounted on the elephant. Swamiji's tour of Bhagyanagar has become very famous. While the swamiji was away on his tour, the king Mummadi Krishnaraja wished to have his darshan again. The king sent a royal invitation with one Sumatheendracharya to Subodhendratheertha. Then the swamiji was at Pandharapur. Sumatheendracharya handed over the royal gifts to the swamiji and prayed to him to visit the royal court. Replying in affirmative, the swamiji proceeded towards Mysore. On the way a Desai by name Anandarao Bheemaji Neeratar gifted the village Khanapur in place of village Gudakanahalu that was under the Mutt's control.

All along the way the swamiji proceeded, the king was getting the news of his movements. The king honoured the swamiji in deep devotion this time also. Sujanendratheertha, the disciple of the swamiji kept dedicating all the honours showered on him to his guru. Guru's affection too for his disciple was quite immense.

The letters that Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar wrote those days with special interest about the proper facilities for the Mutt are even today available at the Mutt.

Subodhendratheertha spent the last days of his life at Nanjangud itself with his disciple, conducting classes and holding his courses, and reached his heavenly abode there itself on the third day of Chaitra Bahula in Manmatha Samvatsara.

Jagannathadasa, Praneshadasa have extolled the swamiji through and through.

सुधासेवासमुद्भूत सुखसंवित्समाश्रयं ।
सुजनाभीष्टदातारं सुबोधेन्द्रगुरुं भजे ॥

After the demise of his guru, the disciple Sujanendratheertha lived only for a year. The swamiji was a unique soul. On the eighth day of Kartheeka Bahula in Durmukhi Samvatsara, he attained the Lotus feet of Lord Hari.

Sujanendratheertha, the disciple of Sujanendratheertha saw to the installation of the Brindavans of Subodhendra and Sujanendra together.

In the history of the Mutt, Sujanendratheertha permanently occupies a special niche. It may be said that his triumphs in debates, the royal honours that rained on him were monumental achievements. He was the most renowned logician. “**Soujanendriya Pakshathavachhedaka Vichara**”, a book authored by the swamiji does well to show the excellence of his scholarship.

सुयुक्तिजालसहितं सुजनामोदकारिणम् ।
सुरोत्तमगुरुप्रख्यं सुजनैन्द्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Sujanendratheertha (1836-1861)

One Raghavendracharya, the poorvashrama son of the great grandson of Dheerendratheertha and poorvashrama brother-in-law of Sujanendratheertha was a great scholar. He was very pious and austere. Raghavendracharya who received sanyasa from Sujanendratheertha as per the orders of his mother was named **Sujanendratheertha**. He spent most of his time at Nanjangud during his reign of twenty five years except for his tour for a brief period. During his tour, he got back Kireetigiri, Moraba, Somanahalli

and other villages whose possession the Mutt had lost, and lands in the villages of Amarapura, Shettihalli and others. As the British rule had already become entrenched, it was during his time the documents pertaining to all the assets of the Mutt were done. The swamiji was a great ascetic. He exuded unusual brilliance whenever he was seen after he had performed Pranavajapa and Ahneeka. In connection with a certain village, the Mutt needed the help of the Deputy Commissioner of Mysore. He was an Briton. Thinking that if he could see to it that the official met the swamiji, it would facilitate the Mutt to have an easy passage of its requirements, the Sreepadaputra Raja Rajagopalacharya placed his views before the swamiji. The swamiji replied that, “Shastras forbid even seeing a foreigner. I do not wish to give him an interview”. Raja Rajagopalacharya urged the swamiji to clear the way for meeting, keeping the interest of the Mutt in view. He brought that official to the Mutt. But the official could see only an empty plank but not the swamiji. All the pains Rajagopalacharya took were of no avail. This not only aroused in the official, devotion for the swamiji but even the Sreepadaputra was astounded and frightened by the bewildering ascetic powers of the swamiji. This demonstrated how brilliant was the charisma of the swamiji.

Being in the peetha for twenty five years, the swamiji wished to spend the last days of his life in Mantralaya and went there. After he had spent some days there worshipping Sri Gururaja, he had a dream where Gururaja ordained him to return to Nanjangud and said that he would be so blessed as to have his Aradhana fall on the day next to the concluding day of Sri Raghavendra swamiji’s Aradhana instead of having his Brindavan at Mantralaya as desired by him. As ordained by Gururaja, the swamiji returned to Nanjangud. After a few days of his arrival at Nanjangud, the swamiji reached the heavenly abode on the fourth day of Shravana Bahula in Durmathi Samvatsara. As the Uttara Aradhana of Sri Gururaja coincides with the Poorva Aradhana of Sujanendratheertha, the devotees could understand the import of what Sri Gururaja had ordained. Swamiji’s scholarship was extraordinary. Besides rendering discourse on Nyayasudha nine times conclusively, he has become celebrated by writing the book ‘**Chandrikamandana**’.

सुधासारार्थतत्त्वज्ञम् सुरदृमसमं सतां ।
सुराधिपगुरुप्रख्यं सुजनैन्द्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Sudharmendratheertha (1861-1872)

Ganeshacharya born in Bharadwaja Gothra was a famous exponent of Sanskrit grammar. Sujnanendratheertha had great affection for him. Therefore the swamiji chose him as his successor and named him 'Sudharmendratheertha'. He mostly used to stay at Mantralaya. Therefore the king Krishnaraja Wodeyar invited the swamiji several times to visit the capital.

It came as a revelation for the devotees that the swamiji had excellent cognitive powers and had an Amsha of Doorvasa. A devotee was cured of his leprosy with the blessings of the swamiji.

He attained Brindavana at Mantralaya, the sacred place of Sri Gururaja.

सुधांशुमिवसम्भूतं सुज्ञानेन्द्रसुधांबुधौ ।
सुधीसंदोहसंसेव्यं सुधर्मेन्द्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Sugunendratheertha (1872-1884)

Sujnanendratheertha had two sons, Rajagopalacharya and Venkataramacharya in his poorvashrama. It was Venkataramacharya, the younger of the two who was bestowed upon sanyasa by Sudharmendratheertha and was named 'Sugunendratheertha'.

During his period a gruesome famine 'Dhatu-Eshwara' broke out and the people were very distressed. The swamiji provided the people with food meeting the expenditure from the coffers of the Mutt and rescued them. During his period documents conveying Agnahala and Handralu villages to the Mutt were executed. Using his influence with an official he had got acquainted with, in his poorvashrama he saved Uttaradi Mutt from a danger.

सुधर्मेन्द्रकराब्जोत्थम् सुविद्वन्मणिराजितं ।
सुमृष्टान्नप्रदातारम् सुगुणेन्द्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Suprajnendratheertha (1884-1903)

Venkataramacharya, Gururajacharya and Srinivasacharya were the three sons of Rajagopalacharya. Of them Gururajacharya was blessed with sanyasa by Sugunendratheertha and was named 'Suprajnendratheertha'.

Suprajnendratheertha was an ardent devotee of God and great scholar. The scholars in the royal court of ruler of Mysore, Chamaraja Wodeyar like Koulagi Seshacharya and others who were greatly attracted by swamiji's love for the paragons of scholarship, paid their obeisance to the swamiji and earned his blessings. The king invited the swamiji to visit the palace and did him special honours after having the swamiji perform pooja at the palace. The swamiji who stayed mostly in Nanjangud attained Brindavan on the sixth day of Magha Bahula in Shobhakrith Samvatsara at Nanjangud.

सुधाजिज्ञासया सर्वसुबुधानन्ददायकान् ।
सुप्रज्ञेन्द्रमुनीन् वंदे सदाविद्यागुरून् मम ॥

Sukruthendratheertha (1903-1912)

Venkataramacharya, the poorvashrama elder brother of Suprajnendratheertha had three sons. Venugopalacharya, the eldest of them was a scholar in four Shastras. Acharya had his education in Nyayashastra under one Nyamagondlu Shamacharya, a famous scholar and studied Shastras under one Huli Hanumanthacharya, his close associate and relative.

Venugopalacharya's majestic personality, piety and austerity added greater glory to the excellence of his scholarship. Besides his younger brother Krishnacharya stood with him in all his endeavours. Venugopalacharya who came in the poorvashrama eldest lineage of Sri Gururaja was the eldest son. Thus he became the pontiff of the Mutt as 'Sukruthendratheertha'. The quotation from the Geetha श्रुचीनां श्रीमतांगेहे योगोभ्रष्टोभिजायते aptly applied to the swamiji who was a descendant of poorvashrama family on the one side and on the other in the tradition of Sri Gururaja. (उभयवंशाब्धिचन्द्रम)

The swamiji's unmatched brilliance arising from performance of regular poojas, imparting of knowledge in his poorvashrama itself grew more effulgent. It was a virtual feast for the scholars to listen the swamiji teach. The train of lines and quotations from the Shastras gushed cogently from swamiji like the flood of the Ganges without he even taking a cursory look at the books. In his tour of Tamilnadu, scholars like Srimushnam Gopalakrishnacharya, Subbarayacharya, Krishnacharya of Mayavara were amazed to hear swamiji's lecture. The scholars of Thothadri Mutt had no answer to the questions posed by Huli Krishnacharya who was a close associate of the swamiji in his poorvashrama and his disciple. Even a great scholar like Elathoor Krishnacharya was not confident in his reply to the questions the swamiji raised about **Deepika**. In his poorvashrama, Sathyadhanatheertha, the famous pontiff of Uttaradi Mutt was astonished at the scholarship of swamiji.

Though the swamiji lived for a short period, the fame of his scholarship had spread across all corners. The swamiji attained the Lotus feet of Lord Krishna on the tenth day of Ashwayuja Shuddha in Pareedhavi Samvatsara.

The last moments of the swamiji were very strange. As soon as his health began to wane, the swamiji sent for the local officials and said, "You are the representatives of the king. My end is imminent. I have entrusted the Mutt in succession to my poorvashrama younger brother Krishnacharya. It is your responsibility to apprise the king of this development and obtain the esteemed concurrence of His Highness. Krishnacharya is quite competent to steer the administrative machinery of the Mutt to greater glory. Let my connection with '**Being**' cease now". Thus saying he got absorbed in the meditation of Lord Hari. Beckoning some disciples nearby he said, "Look here. Pranadeva has left the navel and has moved upwards". Thus narrating the different stages of the breath as it moved upwards and chanting the name of Lord Narayana, the swamiji departed from the world. This amply demonstrates the transcendency of his ascetic powers and profoundly premonitive vision.

सुविद्वत्कमलोल्लासमार्तण्डं सुगुणाकरं ।
सच्छास्त्रासकहृदयम् सुकृतींद्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Susheelendratheertha (1912-1926)

Among the multitude of events dotting the life of a man, there would be a few instances which become very remarkable. It is in such remarkable instances only, when his true colours become conspicuous. Generally a person moving in the path of his life at a constant pace surges ahead farthest in such propitious circumstances. Such occasions are considered very opportune. It is only on such occasions, chain of successes favour him.

This is as well absolutely true of a tradition and more so of the history of an institution as of the life of a man. It keeps moving looking forward to an opportune moment. When it chances to get a right opportunity, it shoots itself to the zenith to spread its influence all over. What has suffered a set back from the causation of the governor of events, "the time" similarly resiles itself to reach the peek it had lost. Those responsible for such upswings are men of extraordinary attainments and spiritual souls. Their foot prints rest eternally on the path of time.

The tradition initiated by Sanakadis transformed into life and acquired completeness because of such holy men like Acharya, Teekakritpada, Vibudhendratheertha, Vijayeendratheertha, Sri Gururaja and Sumatheendra. Now appeared another charismatic saint to enliven this great tradition.

The personality of Krishnacharya, the poorvashrama younger brother of Sukrutheendratheertha who stood with him solidly was wonderful. His great ambition was to bring about a revolution in the Mutt. He prosecuted his studies alongside his brother. But he did not give much attention towards his studies. He was quick in his comprehension. Once anything was grasped, it would remain indelible in his mind. Though he was not very advertent in the study of Shastras, every aspect was reflected in his entirety in the knowledge that Krishnacharya had acquired.

He had a great craving for securing an assembly of scholars to have debates on topics of Shastra and churning of various philosophies. Gathering of the scholars and holding discussions on Vedantha were quite in the fitness of things for the Mutt. Yet Krishnacharya strove hard to see that all these events took place well within a proper frame. He saw to it that the assembly of scholars

which used to take place every year in the Mutt during the Mahasamaradhana of swamiji's guru got larger and larger and made arrangements for holding it on a massive scale on other occasion. Sukruteendratheertha ordered such annual assembly of scholars to be named '**Srimatsameera Samaya Samvardhini Sabha**'. Accordingly Krishnacharya got up such an assembly spending large sums of money. The scholars belonging to the three Mutts and also those belonging to the three sects gathered. The conference lasted for three days on a grand scale. Scholars were honoured with liberal pecuniary awards. Krishnacharya displayed his great organising abilities by conducting such an annual assembly. It is only because of his having understood all these well, Sukruteendratheertha entrusted the Mahasamsthana to Krishnacharya and named him '**Susheelendratheertha**'.

Susheelendratheertha who adorned the seat of the Mutt shone with bewildering spiritual brilliance. That he was a legend in the divine world was quite ostensible in his very personality. Though the swamiji wore a smile always, none dared speak to him. The encouragement to scholarship extended by the swamiji after he attained sanyasa was extraordinary. He became known for his generosity. All the scholars of excellence of that period had adorned the Mutt. In the very second year of his sanyasa the swamiji had a conference of a very large number of scholars at Nanjangud. It was a milestone achievement. All the scholars assembled at the palace in Nanjangud. It comprised great scholars from different sects advocating their philosophies. The debates that ensued, the generous cash awards swamiji honoured the scholars with, the manner of serving dainties and delicacies of every description, to leave even a gourmet greatly pleased were simply inexplicable. This brought about an ever lasting fame for the swamiji and the Mutt as well. Such conferences under the aegis of **Srimatsameera Samaya Samvardhini Sabha** became regular annual events.

Swamiji's genius and interest were multifaceted. Apart from being a pioneer of such meticulously organised massive assemblies, he was instrumental in making way for achieving many milestones. It was swamiji's ambition to worship Lord Moolarama in a gold Mantap. Fulfilment of even this ambition became possible only through his ingenuity. He had a very beautiful Mantap readied and worshipped Moolarama in that Mantap.

More than these two, what makes swamiji's name ever memorable in the history of the Mutt is his pilgrimage to Udupi. Then Vibudhapriyatheertha of Adamar Mutt was in charge of the affairs of Krishna Mutt at Udupi. He too was a great scholar. Known for his ingenuity. Vibudhapriya who had heard of the fame of Susheelendratheertha invited him to Udupi. Accepting this invitation, the swamiji went to Udupi. Vibudhapriyatheertha had made excellent arrangements to receive the swamiji. The swamiji was taken in procession seated in a bedecked palanquin from the outskirts of the town. This two mile long procession was very astonishing for the citizens of Udupi.

As the procession neared the Krishna temple, the swamiji alighted from the palanquin. Vibudhapriya received the swamiji holding his hand warmly. He exchanged greetings and enquiries. It reminded of the meeting of Vadiraja and Vijayeendratheertha in the past. The swamiji had Dhoolidarshan of Udupi Lord Krishna and offered rupees seven thousand to the deity.

To commemorate his visit, the swamiji next day installed the Brindavan of Sri Gururaja at the Mutt which had come to Vijayeendratheertha as gift and where Sri Gururaja had stayed many days. The glory of installation of this Brindavan exactly opposite to the idol of Lord Krishna was extraordinary. In the history of the Mutt this is an unprecedented event and a service of exceptional kind that the swamiji did to Sri Gururaja. Lord Krishna must have been greatly pleased to have the **most devoted** seated in front offering his worship forever. That was why the Lord too looked more glorious that day than ever.

The weeklong celebration of Sri Krishnaparyaya was very grand. The presence of the swamiji added greater glory to the celebration. The visit of the swamiji to his Mutt was very delightful for Vibudhapriyatheertha. He too did suitable honours to the swamiji. Lord Krishna's hospitality to Lord Moolarama and that of Lord Moolarama to Lord Krishna- these two were a visual treat for the sea of devotees. For everybody it was like reminiscing Acharya worshipping Rama and Krishna. The whole gathering gleefully shouted that such a celebration was possible only in the likes of heaven and never on the earth even in the wildest of imaginations.

The swamijis of other Mutts had the Padapooja of the swamiji performed. The swamiji proceeded to North Karnataka after doing

generous honours to the scholars there. The swamiji streamlined the system of rituals and daily worship of Sri Gururaja at Mantralaya.

Thus the entire life of swamiji lasted as an occasion of great festivity. When swamiji was touring Hubli region, he was slightly indisposed. Immediately he hurried to the village Ritti, the abode of Dheerendratheertha, where he sent for his confidant and the Dewan of the Mutt Huli Krishnacharya and bestowed sanyasa on him. On the third day of Ashadha Shuddha in Akshaya Samvatsara, he reached the Lotus feet of Lord Krishna.

The swamiji diverged lucent beams like the Sun in the firmament who rose and set, blazing a trail of glory to endure through the ages. His eventful and wholesome life remained etched in permanent memory. Though his tenure as the head of the Mutt spanned a long period of fourteen years, it passed off for a few days. Even today those who were in the Mutt during his days grieve over his departure.

His was a daemonic personality. Not that he was himself just a zestful divine luminary, but whoever that had the fortune to be in his proximity was definitely environed by his illumination. Not a trace of selfishness, grudge and such other taints did his magnanimity have. It was as sublime as pure milk. The swamiji was an epitome of asceticism, embodiment of renunciation. Though his life itself was a history of treasure, he remained insulated like a lotus leaf on water. He was free from the worldly propensities and penchants and other attractions which goad one into demean oneself. The swamiji who had attained absolute continence exuded unparalleled charisma. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the void created by the swamiji's absence is highly irretrievable.

सुधाद्यमलसद्बोधं सुकीर्तिविलसद्दिशम् ।
सुधीसंस्तुत्यसुगुणं सुशीलेंद्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Suvratheendratheertha (1926-1933)

Huli Krishnacharya who was specially blessed by Susheelendratheertha with sanyasa was the eldest son of Huli Hanumanthacharya who imparted lessons on Vedantha to Sukrtheendratheertha and Susheelendratheertha.

Huli Hanumanthacharya belonged to Harithasa Gothra. His family had close association with the Mutt ever since. They were all scholars of the Mutt. Each of the descendants of the family had become a scholar studying under the elders. In the same tradition, Hanumanthacharya also attained scholarship studying under the guidance of his father Huli Bheemacharya. Hanumanthacharya acquired a profound knowledge in Nyayashastra. Knowledge of Vedantha in particular had become acquired through inheritance in the family.

Huli Krishnacharya also became a scholar studying Nyaya and Vedantha Shastras under the guidance of his father. Moreover, he studied the great books on Nyayashastra under the guidance of Kapisthalam Deshikacharya, a celebrated scholar in Nyayashastra and professor of Nyayashastra at Venkateshwara Sanskrit college at Tirupathi.

Krishnacharya not only attained great scholarship but also allied himself with the administrative matters of the Mutt which he dealt with discreetly. Krishnacharya played a pivotal role in assisting Susheelendratheertha in the conduct of the famous conference of scholars at Nanjangud and in the celebrations at Udipi.

Krishnacharya's loyalty to the Mutt was peerless. It was his great ambition to see its all round progress. He had no respect for the rivals of the Mutt. Despite, he was foeless, righteous, one who confined his feelings to himself and an erudite scholar. He was simply unassuming.

Susheelendratheertha had the greatest affinity for well disposed and tranquil Krishnacharya. He used to involve Krishnacharya whom he had with him always, in all important tasks.

During his last days, Susheelendratheertha had Krishnacharya by his side and confided in him all the secrets of the Mutt. He also enlightened Krishnacharya about all the aspects of sanyasashrama and urged him to shoulder the future responsibilities of the Mutt. Krishnacharya was taken aback at this. He declined saying that he did not merit such a responsibility. He pleaded that his family life still had a long way to go. But Susheelendratheertha's decision was irreversible. His special grace itself dispelled all the doubts of Krishnacharya. Krishnacharya who had sanyasa from him was named '**Suvratheendratheertha**'.

Suvratheendratheertha was in the peetha just for seven years. Though he was himself a Dewan in his poorvashrama, he spent most of his time in Japa, Tapa, pooja, teaching and discourses. Srinivasamurthyacharya, poorvashrama son of Sukrutheendra theertha supported the swamiji in all matters and it was he who looked after all the affairs of the Mutt.

All the seven years of his tenure, the swamiji used to be on his tour. Once he came to Mulbagal, the abode of Sreepadaraja. Dayanidhitheertha, the pontiff of Sreepadaraja Mutt accorded special honours to the swamiji. Further he proceeded towards south. The swamiji was accorded a grand and unprecedented reception at Srirangam. As a result of the unique ascetic prowess Sumatheendratheertha exhibited in the past there, the Mutt had been regularly receiving special honours from the temple. Then the swamiji who had holy dip at Cauvery and worshipped Ranganatha daily for sometime there, proceeded to Kumbhakonam with a sense of fulfilment. With the help of Dewan Srinivasamurthyacharya and his poorvashrama younger brother Bheemacharya, the swamiji had all arrangements made at Kumbhakonam for celebration of Mahasamaradhana of his guru and holding a conference of scholars on a large scale.

The Sameera Samaya Samvardhinee Sabha held at Kumbhakonam deserves to be etched in golden letters in the history of the Mutt. All the famous scholars of 1930 in South India had converged at the conference. Towering scholars such as Elathur Krishnacharya, Kapisthalam Deshikacharya, Virupaksha Shastri (who later became the pontiff of Koodali Sringeri Mutt), Abhinava Bhanabhatta, R.V.Krisnamacharya, Doddaballapuram Vasudevacharya, Tiruvadi Vijayeendracharya, Vaidyanatha Shastri, Chakravarthi Iyengar had adorned the conference.

The arrangement for Mahasamaradhana had been done well under the supervision of Srinivasamurthyacharya.

All the three days of the conference witnessed special debates in Nyayashastra. The phrase पशुना यजेत in Vyuthpatthivada became the topic for debate. When the discussion became hot, the swamiji intervened and gave apt and acceptable interpretation. Even Kapisthalam Deshikacharya lauded the grand and majestic eloquence and style of interpretation of the swamiji. Though he

was a Srivaishnava "Swayam Acharyapurusha", he rose to prostrate before the swamiji and dedicated to the swamiji his extemporaneously compiled hymn:

सोमात् सौम्य निसर्गतां सुरतरोरौदार्यमभोनिधेः
गाम्भीर्यं मरुतां गुरोश्चतुरतां स्थैर्यम् हिमाद्रेरपि ।
सारोद्धारनयेन सारसभुवा संगृह्यसंमोदतः
सृष्टोयं जगतीतले विजयते श्रीसुवर्तींद्रोगुरुः ॥

The entire gathering hailed. This was a great victory for the Mutt. Dedicating all these to Sri Gururajanthargatha Vijayeendra, the swamiji continued his tour. After being honoured by the rulers of Shivaganga and Ramanadu, he went to Rameshwara. The swamiji after his holy dip in Rama Sethu and worship at the shrines of Rameshwara and Sethumadhava at the end of his tour proceeded towards Mantralaya.

On his way to Mantralaya, the swamiji visited Venisomapura where he had the darshan of Vyasatattvajna and proceeded towards Gadwal province. The queen of Gadwal who did special honours to the swamiji prayed to him to celebrate the festivities of Chaturmasya Navarathri there only.

The festivities of Navarathri went on with pomp and geity at Gadwal. When the swamiji was at Manvi, Sri Gururaja appeared in his dream and ordained him to return to Mantralaya.

Accordingly, the swamiji arrived at Mantralaya. He took ill a few days after his arrival at Mantralaya. Instead of improving, his condition turned severe. The swamiji purported that Sri Gururaja wanted him to return to Mantralaya only to grace him with place in his sacred vicinity. On the fourth day of Vaishakha Shuddha in Sreemukha Samvatsara, the swamiji bestowed sanyasa on Dewan Srinivasamurthyacharya, a scholar of the Mutt. Next day the swamiji administered Pranava Mantra to him and named him 'Suyameendratheertha'. Blessing his disciple, the swamiji said, "You will have the absolute blessings of Sri Gururaja and you will have the fortune of doing special service to Sri Gururaja. Be here in Mantralaya only and continue doing your service. Let your endeavours be fruitful always".

The swamiji chanting the name of Lord Hari attained eternal peace on the sacred day of Vaishakha Shuddha Ekadashi.

The very fact that the swamiji was blessed with his eternal abode in the sacred vicinity of Sri Gururaja itself is a proof of the swamiji's ascetic excellence. The swamiji really is the most fortunate to have had such special blessings of Sri Gururaja. It is needless to mention separately that the swamiji is a unique soul particularly when whatever offered as Hasthodhaka to Sri Gururaja also stand offered to him.

सुशीलेंद्रकराब्जोत्थं सुशांत्यादिगुणार्णवं ।
सुधाप्रवचनासक्तं सुव्रतींद्रगुरुं भजे ॥

EPILOGUE

The history of Madhwa philosophy spanning about eight centuries is a very important chapter in Indian history. The philosophy founded by Acharya which expounded the essence of the Vedas and all other Shastras coherently demonstrated to the entire world the principle philosophy that Lord Vishnu only is supreme. Many great souls who were born and adorned many Mutts established by Acharya became immortal by rendering unmatched service in educational, social, political and other fields. In the history of eight hundred years of South India, the paragons of Madhwa tradition in addition to being mentors of several rulers, recipients of royal honours, lifted the nation, Dharma and the society from the morass of crises. The excellence of profound spiritual prowess of such men redounded to the birth of a culturally brilliant and refined society. Why only Madhwas of this age, all the other Brahmins and others should remain ever grateful to the entire tradition of such gurus for their bequest.

It becomes incumbent on the part of every right thinking individual to understand the indispensability of Dharma and the importance of those devoutly cherishing Dharma by remembering the immense benefit that the universe has derived through the lives and noblest accomplishments of host of such spiritual pathfinders and strive for making it sublimely pervade the sea of humanity. In order to achieve this divine object, the need of the hour is to stymie the inroads waged by the opposing forces into the inviolable realm of Dharma and proclaim to the world its eternal message; indeed this is the only golden path to the spiritual progress of India and of the whole world.

ADDENDUM

Suyameendratheertha (1933-1967)

Sri Suyameendratheertha was the thirty sixth peethadhipathi of Sri Raghavendraswamy Mutt. Srinivasamurthyacharya was his poorvashrama name. He was born to Venugopalacharya (Sri Sukruthendratheertha) and Gangabai in the sacred poorvashrama family of Sri Raghavendraswamiji. He had his initial education in Sahitya and Veda from his paternal uncle Krishnacharya (Sri Susheelendratheertha). Then he studied Nyayashastra and Vedanthashastra under his maternal uncle Huli Hanumanthacharya and Huli Krishnacharya (Sri Suvratheendratheertha) respectively.

Srinivasamurthyacharya was the Dewan of the Mutt during the regime of Suvratheendratheertha. He was vested with the administration of the Mutt by Suvratheendratheertha who concentrated mainly on Japa, Tapa, pooja and teaching Shastras to students. Acharya demonstrated his genius in the administration of the Mutt. His role in the successful conduct of the most famous Vidwathsabha by Suvratheendratheertha at Kumbhakonam stands as a testimony to the administrative skills of Acharya.

When Suvratheendratheertha was camping at Manvi, Sri Gururaja ordained him in his dream to immediately come over to Mantralaya. On going there, the swamiji fell ill after sometime and his health began to deteriorate day by day. The swamiji who realised that his end was not far off, had Srinivasamurthyacharya by his side and advised him to take over the responsibility of the peetha so that the daily pooja of Sri Moolarama could continue uninterrupted. Acharya was taken aback by swamiji's advice as he could not digest the thought of separation from his beloved guru. He requested the swamiji not to pursue the proposition as he would like to continue to have his blessings for many more years. But the swamiji stood firm by his decision which made Acharya give his consent reluctantly. The swamiji blessed Srinivasamurthyacharya with sanyasashrama after completing all rituals in order that he held the reins of the Mutt and named him '**Suyameendratheertha**' (conqueror of Yama, the God of death) on the auspicious day of Vaishakha Shuddha Chaturthi in Srimukha Samvatsara (1933). Suvratheendratheertha attained the Lotus feet of Lord on Vaishakha

Shuddha Ekadashi at Mantralaya. Suyameendratheertha who was in deep sorrow by the loss of his most beloved guru performed his Brindavana Prathisthapana and Mahasamaradhana.

Suyameendratheertha was an embodiment of 'Gurubhakthi' (devotion towards guru) which was reflected in the dedication with which he served his guru during the last days of the latter. One could see tears welling his eyes at the mere mention of his guru's name either by himself or by others. The zeal and pomp with which he celebrated the Mahasamaradhana of his guru evidenced the profundity of his gurubhakthi.

The devotion, involvement and concentration with which Suyameendratheertha worshipped Moolarama were to be seen to be believed. The performance of pooja was an act of greatest joy for him. He used to feel loads of flowers brought for the purpose for pooja insufficient. One would have the feeling that the curvature in the idol of Moolarama must be because of the immensity of Bhakthi the swamiji lavished on the Lord while performing the pooja. He had his own style, purpose, concentration and devotion while performing the pooja which could unhesitatingly be termed as unparalleled which goaded even an atheist into becoming a theist.

Suyameendratheertha was known for his kindness. His heart was as pure as milk. His concern for the difficulties and sufferings of others and the timely help he rendered made him **kindness personified**. Many people who enjoyed his patronage still cherish his kindness.

When His Highness Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, the then Maharaja of Mysore visited Mantralaya for worship of Sri Gururaja in the past, the reception accorded by the swamiji to His Highness was very warm and greatly memorable. The advice then rendered by the swamiji to the Maharaja was invaluable. This enunciates the excellent relationship that existed between the spiritual heads and heads of states.

What is very conspicuous in the sacred life of Sri Gururaja is his singular purpose of promoting the welfare of the universe. To steer this noble task to success under his leadership, Suyameendratheertha who had profound devotion for Sri Gururaja and who was instrumental in overall development of Mantralaya saw to it that proper facilities were provided at Mantralaya to enable

both the ordinary and the spiritually enlightened to get the blessings of Sri Gururaja and attain fulfilment. Many welfare measures for the convenience of the devotees visiting Mantralaya such as construction of choultries, serving food to the children in the morning, regular supply of drinking water, providing medical facilities, etc were initiated by him on a war footing. He started the Brindavanam office with the purpose of revamping the administration of the Mutt. He reconstituted the Samskritha Pathashala started by Sri Susheelendratheertha as 'Sri Gurusarvabhoma Samskritha Vidyapeetha'. Further, the swamiji made the festivities of Sri Gururaja initiated by Susheelendratheertha go on, on an extensive scale with a new system of Saptharathrotsava during Aradhana, in vogue at Tirupathi. It was during his regime that Ramanatha Chettiyar, an ardent devotee of Sri Gururaja donated a silver chariot to the Mutt.

Apart from these, the swamiji installed Mrithika Brindavans of Sri Gururaja in the cities of Mysore, Bangalore and other places where Sri Gururaja has been fulfilling the wishes of his devotees through his divine powers and blessing them.

Late Dr. Huli Vedavyasacharya and Late Raja S.Gururajacharya, the son-in-law and the son of Suyameendratheertha in his poorvashrama respectively established **Sri Parimala Research and Publishing House** to take up research and publication of rare ancient manuscripts depicting Dwaitha philosophy and started publication of '**Parimala**', a cultural monthly magazine in Kannada for the benefit of common man on the advice of Suyameendra theertha. Realising the need for an authenticated book about the history of the Mutt, the swamiji instructed Late Dr. Huli Vedavyasacharya to undertake the work. Obeying the orders of the swamiji, Dr. Vedavyasacharya started the work in right earnest and finished it in record time. Late Dr. Acharya's painstaking efforts resulted in the emergence of '**GURUCHARITHE**', considered to be the most authoritative work about the history of the Mutt.

Thus Suyameendratheertha did the noblest of acts in keeping with the glorious tradition of the Mutt in every respect.

The period between 1933 and 1967 during which Suyameendra theertha was in the peetha was considered the golden era in the history of Sri Raghavendraswamy Mutt and the swamiji himself

was known as the architect of Mantralaya. His attainment of Brindavana at Mantralaya in 1967 signalled an end to this golden era.

सुखतीर्थमताब्धीन्दुं सुधींदसुतसेवकम् ।
सुधापरिमळासक्तं सुयमींद्रगुरुं भजे ॥

Sujayeendratheertha (1963-1986)

Sujayeendratheertha in his poorvashrama was known as Venkataraghavendracharya. He was born in 'Beegamudre' family of Gouthama Gothra, the sacred poorvashrama family of Sri Gururaja. His father Sujnanendracharya was the younger brother of Sukruthendratheertha and Susheelendratheertha and his mother Lakshmbai was the sister of Survatheendratheertha. Venkataraghavendracharya born to such pious couple was naturally an epitome of piety. He had his initial education in Nyaya and Vedantha under his grandfather Huli Hanumanthacharya, the most celebrated scholar of four Shastras of Nyaya, Vedantha and others and under Doddaballapuram Vasudevacharya who was a scholar in the royal court of Mysore and professor of Nyaya Vedantha at Maharaja Sanskrit college, Mysore. He also studied Tarka Shastra under the renowned scholar of Tarka Shastra, Elathur Krishnacharya. He made a comprehensive study of Vedantha Shastra under Susheelendratheertha, Suvratheendratheertha and Suyameendratheertha and won the plaudits as a great scholar.

Sri Suyameendratheertha who was heading the Mutt then, had entrusted Venkataraghavendracharya with all the responsibilities pertaining to the administration of the Mutt. Acharya who had acquired expertise in dealing with all official matters of the Mutt being Sarvadhikari of the Mutt and its Dharmadhikari, caretaker of Brindavana Sannidhana at Mantralaya, representative of the Mutt in respect of legal disputes at various courts, had earned swamiji's blessing and appreciation.

When Suyameendratheertha who was at Nanjangud was indisposed in 1963, he decided to name his successor. He chose Venkataraghavendracharya to be his successor, bestowed sanyasa on him and named him '**Sujayeendratheertha**'. Later with a view

to complete all the tasks he had envisaged, he sent his disciple to Mantralaya. Obeying the orders of his guru, Sujayeendratheertha went to Mantralaya and addressed himself to the task in right earnest.

The unresolved issue pertaining to the administrative affairs of Mantralaya that rested between the Mutt and the Andhra Pradesh government was the first and foremost task Sujayeendratheertha undertook. The swamiji decided to take up the development works of Mantralaya entrusted by his guru after resolving the issue to the advantage of the Mutt through discussions and correspondences with the government.

Suyameendratheertha fully recovered his health. After staying at Nanjangud for three years, he went to Bangalore. His health suffered a major setback after a few months there. He reached the heavenly abode in 1967 at Mantralaya.

Sujayeendratheertha slowly recovering from the grief of estrangement from his guru, continued the developmental works of the Mutt that had been assigned by his guru. The swamiji who set apart lakhs of rupees for all round development of Sri Gurusarvabhoma Vidyapeetha at Mantralaya, appointed several scholars and saw to it that learning activities went on ceaselessly at Vidyapeetha. He provided the students studying there with free boarding and lodging facilities and thus paved way for a large number of aspirants to enter Vidyapeetha. He saw to it that the annual conference of scholars being held during Raghavendraswamiji's Aradhana took place biannually. The swamiji who brought out several ancient books through the Mutt also started '**Gurusarvabhoma**', a Kannada cultural monthly magazine to bring about greater awareness of Dharma amongst the people. The magazine which has touched a new high of nine thousand copies is also being published in Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, English and Sanskrit languages at the behest of Sushameendratheertha, the present swamiji.

Sujayeendratheertha who renovated the Mutt's building at Mantralaya became responsible for construction of rooms, cottages, schools, spacious dining halls, choultries, hospitals; provision of facilities for drinking water with contributions from devotees. Thus for the instrumental role he played in multifaceted development of Mantralaya, he earned the sobriquet as the '**Architect of Mantralaya**'.

The swamiji earned the special blessings of Lord Moolarama and Sri Gururaja by getting the entire Brindavan of Sri Gururaja decorated with gold relief and the gold Mantap of Lord Moolarama enlarged. Thus the swamiji came to be held in high esteem by making Haridasa's accolade ಸುರಪನಾಲಯದಂತೆ ಮಂತ್ರಾಲಯ true. The swamiji built beautiful buildings for the Mutt, choultries at many other major cities and places besides Mantralaya, installed the Brindavans of Sri Gururaja at several places resulting in the fulfilment of wishes of the devotees. The swamiji became an exemplar of 'Gurubhakthi' for he always proclaimed that all his achievements were possible only because of the great blessings of Sri Gururaja and his guru Sri Suyameendratheertha.

The greatest gift Sujayeendratheertha enriched the society with is Sushameendratheertha. When his health began to fall, Sujayeendratheertha bestowed sanyasa on Suprajnendracharya, the son of his poorvashrama elder brother and named him 'Sushameendratheertha'. Being served by his disciple for about a year, Sujayeendratheertha reached heavenly abode in 1986 at Mantralaya.

ಸುಯಮೀಂದ್ರಕರಾಜ್ಜೊತ್ಥಂ ಸುವಿಧ್ಯಾ ಬೋಧಕಮ್ ಸದಾ ।
ಸುಮೂಲರಾಮಪೂಜಾ ಸುಜಯೀಂದ್ರಗುರುಂ ಭಜೇ ॥

PRESENT HEAD OF THE MUTT

Sushameendratheertha (1985-)

Sri Raghavendraswamiji has been “**Kamadhenu-Kalpavruksha**” in Kaliyuga for the ocean of devotees seeking divine refuge in him, by freeing them from their sins and fulfilling their wishes. It may unequivocally be said that none other than men of divine traits and men whom the Divinity has so blessed can be in the seat adorned by such greatest saint of all times. The most reverential Sushameendratheertha belongs to such a tribe.

In his poorvashrama Sushameendratheertha was known as Suprajnendracharya. He comes of the sacred poorvashrama lineage of Sri Gururaja of ‘Beegamudre’ family of Gouthama Gothra in Shashtika Kula known for accomplishments in the realm of learning. Raja Rajagopalacharya who was the son of Sujnanendracharya, the youngest brother of Sukruthendratheertha and Susheelendra theertha was his father and Padmavathibai, the poorvashrama daughter of Suvratheendratheertha was his mother. He had his basic traditional education under his grandfather Sujnanendracharya, learnt Sanskrit from the scholars of the Mutt Vidwan Durgam Bheemacharya and Vidwan Durgam Gundacharya and studied Yajurveda under Dakshinamurthy Narayanashastry of Nanjangud. Acharya who studied up to sixth standard could not prosecute his studies further owing to ill health. His Upanayanam was celebrated in his very early age as a boy. In the coming years, the then swamiji Suyameendratheertha appointed him as Dharmakarta of Subbarayanakere branch of the Mutt at Mysore so that he could learn about the customs and traditions of the Mutt. Suprajnendracharya acquainted himself with the affairs of the Mutt in general and tradition and religious aspects in particular under the guidance of his maternal uncle Vidwan Huli K Srinivasacharya, the poorvashrama son of Suvratheendratheertha who was in charge of the branch. Later he entered into family life at an appropriate age.

On instructions from Sujayeendratheertha who was in the peetha then, Suprajnendracharya, the son of swamiji’s poorvashrama elder brother came to Mantralaya. Further the swamiji trained him in the great customs and glorious tradition of the Mutt, imparted him the system of offering poojas to the idols, taught him many secret

Mantras and had him in his close association. The swamiji was indisposed in 1985. Then he took Suprajnendracharya to the village Bichale, blessed him with sanyasa, named him ‘**Sushameendra theertha**’ and nominated him as his successor. The swamiji also made him get acquainted with the system of offering poojas to Moolarama, Digvijayarama, Jayarama and Vaikunthavasudeva, the idols of the Mutt. Months later, Sujayeendratheertha had severe health problem and attained the Lotus feet of Lord Hari at Mantralaya, the very sacred shrine of Sri Gururaja. The grieving Sushameendratheertha installed the Brindavan of his guru next to the Brindavan of Sri Suvratheendratheertha in all piety and devotion, placed the idols of the Mutt on the Brindavan, performed Kankabhisheka and composed Charmashloka on his guru.

The all round development of the Mutt scaled greater heights after Sushameendratheertha took over the reins of the Mutt. During his countrywide tours undertaken by the swamiji for spiritual upliftment of the disciples of the Mutt and of the devotees of Sri Gururaja, he has been gracing them by accepting their obeisance in the form of Tulabhara, grand processions and other honours and treats at several pilgrim centres, towns, cities and metros. Besides he has undertaken pilgrimage to Badari twice at his ripe age.

Swamiji’s sole object is to facilitate more and more devotees to have the fortune of worshipping Sri Gururaja. Towards this divine goal he has installed Sri Gururaja’s Mrithika Brindavans numbering more than eighty in different parts of the country and has got many Brindavans, in poor condition, rejuvenated.

The swamiji who evinces great interest in the field of education has been striving for making the Vidyapeetha at Mantralaya, a centre of excellence. Similarly in certain important branches of the Mutt, such Vidyapeethas are functioning. About thirty students are being imparted knowledge about traditional and general aspects at Sri Raghunandana Gurukula Vidyapeetha, a free residential institution at Nanjangud founded by the swamiji. For the benefit of poor students, the swamiji has established Kalpataru Institute Of Education at Karnataka’s cultural capital Mysore, a city acclaimed as the best centre for art and education. Also a reputed school at Jamkhandi with about five hundred students and fifty teaching and other staff has come into the fold of Mutt’s administration. The swamiji has created facilities for free computer education in a number

of places all over the country which reflects his far-sightedness. Every year the swamiji blesses great accomplishers in the field of education, music, art and social service with honours and awards.

Swamiji's continued endeavour towards the propagation of Sri Gururaja's message, the culture and history of India is remarkable. The manner in which he has ensured the publication of the Kannada cultural monthly 'Gurusarvabhoma' started by his guru in other languages like Sanskrit, English, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi mirrors the commitment of the swamiji. Especially the Kannada monthly '**Vijayasampada**', the swamiji has started to popularise the Haridasa literature, has come as a great boon to many. In addition to annual free distribution of Panchanga to the disciples of the Mutt, the swamiji has introduced a scheme for printing and offering books on Stotras, Vratas, customs and traditions to be followed, etc at cheaper prices. In this direction, the swamiji has enriched the literary world by bringing out 'Dharmashastra Darpana', 'Vratha Mukthavali', 'Sthotra Mukthavali' and 'Sadachara Mukthavali'.

The deep solicitude the swamiji professes for the society at large needs no overemphasis. His providing financial aid ranging between Rs 50000/- & Rs 100000/- for restoration of those monuments of historical and traditional importance in condition of decay, mitigating through financial help the sufferings of the people reeling under internecine and ill-effects of manmade destruction and natural calamities; the likes of Kargil war, earthquake in Orissa, and Tsunami stand out as a hallmark of swamiji's social commitment.

While his accomplishments that have helped the society in different ways are great, the humility of the swamiji is ineffable. He always ascribes the unique fortune of his heading the Mutt and the success in all his divine endeavours to the special blessings of Sri Gururaja and those of his maternal grandfather Sri Suvratheendratheertha. It is not surprising if those acquainted with the swamiji since his poorvashrama find a parallel between him and Sri Jithamithratheertha who adorned the peetha even before Sri Gururaja did. When Jithamithra was Ananthappa in his poorvashrama, the clairvoyant saint Sri Vibudhendratheertha who appreciated innocence, realised Ananthappa's real worth reminiscing his great accomplishments in his previous births. That was why he decided that only Ananthappa was suitable to succeed

him and blessed him so. It may not be hyperbolic to say that similarly Sri Gururaja and Suvratheendratheertha in due recognition of Suprajnendracharya's accomplishments in his previous births and of his innate and latent divine traits in his present birth have blessed him with the divine position and have had him do such divine deeds as Sushameendratheertha. It can be definitely said that Sushameendratheertha is such a divinely ascetic soul.

Swamiji's innocence and heartiness can be compared to that of a child and that of the vastness of a sea. These rare traits fuse themselves into a smile on his spiritually radiant face, which the devotees kneeling before him find as nothing but assurance of divine grace. Must be because of his piety and extraordinary humility, the swamiji has become the most beloved for Sri Gururaja. Therefore that great saint does miracles and great deeds through the swamiji for the prosperity and welfare of humankind. As for the swamiji, his devotion for that '**Ocean Of Kindness**' is singular. Be the deed whatever and however great that swamiji does, such is the profundity of his devotion that he denies himself the credit for that, but resolutely and instantaneously declares it to be all because of Sri Gururaja's grace. It is the very same thing that inspired him to take up the task of getting a gold chariot, gold palanquin and a silver howdah prepared for Sri Gururaja. When these materialised, the swamiji's joy leapt beyond all bounds. His tears of joy that was conspicuous when these were dedicated to Sri Gururaja thrilled every devotee. The divine fortification Sri Mantralaya Prabhu had blessed the swamiji with was so impenetrable that even the God of death had to retreat and concede his defeat. The greatness of swamiji is such that he with the blessings of Sri Gururaja triumphed over death on two occasions. It is certain that the God of death dares not come near the swamiji for years to come. When Sri Gururaja has willed to bless every devotee with the fortune of taking part in the centenary celebrations of the swamiji, how can the God of death be daring enough to come near the swamiji?

The Mantrakshata with which the swamiji blesses fulfils all the wishes of his disciples and devotees. His word are as true as the Vedas for them. Thousands of devotees patiently standing in serpentine queues for Mantrakshata and to hear his word eagerly is a common sight. The swamiji, for his devotees is "**Sri Gururaja moving from place to place**". We are really lucky to have such a divine guru, and this makes our life a purposeful one.

Let us pray to Lord Hari-Vayu-Gururaja to bless the swamiji with long spiritual life so that he continues to fulfil our wishes and lead us to the path of nobility.

जीयात् श्रीसुशामींद्रसंयमिमणिः वेदान्तराज्ये चिरम् ॥

Suvidyendratheertha (2002-)

Guruvenkatacharya belonging to Bharadwaja Gothra, a disciple of the Mutt and a staunch devotee of Sri Gururaja is a scholar par excellence. After studying Shastras at Poornaprajna Vidyapeetha, Bangalore for twelve years and graduating in Vedantha and Nyayashastra, he got through Vidwath examinations in Naveena Nyaya, Alankara and Dwaita Vedantha and also did his Master degree in Sanskrit. Guruvenkatacharya who successfully finished the course in Nyaya Sudha in 1976 under the scholarly guidance of Sri Vishweshatheertha of Pejawar Mutt has received many honours and awards from several religious institutions in addition to being the recipient of the prestigious award 'Sri Raghavendranugraha' of Sri Raghavendraswamy Mutt in 2001.

Apart from editing several books, Guruvenkatacharya has compiled and translated into Kannada many rare books. If Anubhashya, Maha Narayanopanishad and Sadacharasmrithi are the books edited by Acharya on the one side, Chandogyopanishad Bhashya, Gurugunastavana, Papavimochana Stotra, Tatparya Nirnaya, Purushasooktha & Hiranyagarbhasooktha are works of his translation and Parimalasara Sangraha, a book of his compilation and translation on the other.

Guruvenkatacharya is as excellent in his oration as he is in his scholarship. Particularly his discourse on Bhagavatha and on Gurustotra composed by Appannacharya on Sri Gururaja takes the audience to ecstasy of devotion. So intensely transporting his verbal legerdemain is! complacence with no role to play; the insatiated Acharya has further endeavoured towards and succeeded in churning out many scholars of high rank through his teaching.

With due regard to excellence of his scholarship, Sri Sushameendratheertha decided that Guruvenkatacharya had all

the prerequisites to succeed him. Accordingly, the swamiji bestowed sanyasa on Acharya in 2002 in the sacred abode of Lord Krishna at Udipi in the august presence of Pejawar swamiji and swamijis of a few other Mutts, aptly renamed him 'Suvidyendratheertha' and declared him to be his successor. Suvidyendratheertha who in his poorvashrama greatly revered Sushameendratheertha, dedicated himself greatly to the Mutt and the swamiji and ably assisted his guru in all his tasks. Suvidyendratheertha professed great respect for and deep devotion in Suvratheendratheertha who had adorned the peetha of the Mutt in the past and had earned the everlasting fame of being a scholar of the highest rank and one who had won the honour from great scholars. Therefore as soon as he was nominated, Suvidyendratheertha pleaded with Sushameendra theertha about his intention to bring out in Kannada 'Srimathsuvratheendra Vijaya', a great Sanskrit composition of litterateur of high reputation, Udipi Ranganathacharya on Suvratheendratheertha. Delighted Sushameendratheertha readily consented to the proposal and wished him all success in this endeavour. Suvidyendratheertha gave his scholarly guidance to his students Dhananjaya and Gurumurthy for translating the book into Kannada. The translated book Srimathsuvratheendra Vijaya was published by the publication wing of the Mutt in 2003.

Thus Suvidyendratheertha stood solidly and reverentially with his guru by involving himself in all the festivities of the Mutt, conference of scholars and other programmes, held aloft the fame of the Mutt, devoutly worshipped Lord Moolarama, and dedicated himself to serve Sri Gururaja and his guru. But unfortunately he was severely injured in a car accident in 2004 and had to face the inevitability of undergoing surgery. He relinquished his position voluntarily considering that his condition came in the way of his sanyasa Dharma and earned the appreciation of all the right thinking people for showing such great respect for the sanctity of the seat. This incident has remained as a sad incident in the annals of the Mutt.

The scholarship of Suvidyendratheertha is unmatched. Amongst the Madhwa saints of the present day, only a few might possess versatility of his class. Perhaps to say there is none will not amount to an overemphasis! Must be because of this, though he has relinquished the position, Suvidyendratheertha has chosen to

continue in sanyasa and serve in the realm of education. It is the earnest wish of all that Lord Hari-Vayu-Gururaja greatly bless him to shine in the world of literature and education for many more years and enable him to spread the fame of Dwaitha philosophy all over.

Suyatheendratheertha (2006-)

Susheelendracharya was the name of Suyatheendratheertha in his poorvashrama. It was in Pete Alur of Mundargi taluk in Gadag district where Susheelendracharya was born to the pious couple Ananthacharya and Yamunabai of Gouthama Gothra in the sacred 'Beegamudre' family of the poorvashrama lineage of Sri Gururaja. Susheelendracharya, after completing his primary and middle level education at Pete Alur prosecuted his high school education at Mundargi and secured his B.sc degree from Karnatak university, Dharwad. Aspiring for higher education, Acharya came to Bangalore and did his B.Ed. He also completed AMIE Certificate course which is equivalent to Bachelor's degree in Engineering.

Susheelendracharya had the ambition of studying Shastras. It was then an opportunity arose for him to study Sahitya and Veda under the able guidance of Sri Suyameendratheertha. Further he was taught Sri Nyaya Sudha and other Shastras by Archak Ramacharya, a scholar at the Mutt.

After completing his education, Susheelendracharya joined Bharatheeya Samskruthi Vidyapeetha, one of the prestigious educational institutions in Bangalore where he served in the capacity as a teacher for thirty years with dedication. In recognition of his excellence, he was elevated as the principal of the institution. During his tenure, Acharya became popular as the principal who steered the institution towards its all round development with his administrative abilities. Thus he served the institution for six years as principal and left it on superannuation.

After his retirement, Susheelendracharya pledged rest of his life to the service of Sri Gururaja. The extreme devotion Acharya had for Sri Gururaja was highly appreciated by Sushameendratheertha and he appointed him as Dharmadhikari at the Seethapathi Agrahara branch of the Mutt in Bangalore. Acharya

served there for six years. Impressed by Acharya's sincerity and devotion, Sushameendratheertha summoned him to Mantralaya and appointed him as the Dewan of the Mutt. He addressed himself to the tasks in this capacity for a year with intense devotion, probity and commitment.

Susheelendracharya of multifaceted talent is a great exponent of Rangoli art and a fine orator. Acharya is known for his discipline and honesty. His loyalty to the Mutt is simply exemplary. Sushameendratheertha has great affection for Acharya for his nobility.

On 4-7-2006, there was a sudden decline in the health of Sushameendratheertha. With a view to ensure the continuity of poojas and other rituals to Lord Moolarama, the swamiji nominated Susheelendracharya as his successor by bestowing sanyasa on him and renaming him as '**Suyatheendratheertha**'. It was a grand spectacle of the birth of a new star in the history of the Mutt. The disciples and the devotees of the Mutt heaved a sigh of great relief as Sushameendratheertha showed signs of recovery with the blessings of Sri Gururaja.

Suyatheendratheertha whose devotion for Sri Gururaja is so intense, has his interest wedded to the hoary tradition and customs of the Mutt. He is so resolute that he will not tolerate even the slightest deviation in their pursuit. In just a year of his tenure, he has been successful in spreading the fame of the Mutt all over by serving his guru and giving his support to his guru in all the activities of the Mutt. It is a matter of great delight for all the disciples that the Mutt could have such an able successor in Suyatheendra theertha. All the devotees and disciples of the Mutt pray to Lord Hari, Vayu and Sree Gururaja to shower their grace on Suyatheendratheertha that he may carry out such onerous responsibility successfully for long.

जीयात् श्रीसुयतींद्रसंयमिभरुः वेदान्तराज्ये चिरम् ॥

। श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु । ।
