

Vachana Sahitya

Vachana sahitya is a type of Kannada rhythmic composition (also known as Kannada poetry) which originated in the eleventh century and thrived throughout the twelfth century as element of the Sharana movement. Madara Chennaiah, an eleventh century cobbler-saint who lived in the time of the Western Chalukyas' rule and is considered as the "father of Vachana poetry" by certain researchers. "That which is spoken" is the literal meaning of the term "vachanas." These are easy-to-understand prose works.

Vachanas and Sharana Movement

The Vachanas of Basavaadi Sharana were their experiences in the journey of realising God. About 800 sharanas practised the method and recorded their interms of Guru (Unmanifest Chaitanya), Linga (Manifest Chaitanya), Jangama (True consciousness of Lingatattva in one's soul), Padodaka (closeness with the knower/source of Lingatattva), as well as, Prasad (becoming lingatattva). According to records, the sharanas exclusively exchanged experiences of God realisation in group conversation in Karnataka, primarily under the direction of Basavanna, Channa Basavanna Allama Prabhu, and Siddarameshwar. This has been ascribed to the movement's widespread appeal. There were about 200 Vachana authors (Vachanakaras) documented, with over thirty of them being women.

About Vachanas

Vachanas are short paragraphs that conclude with one or more local names by which Shiva is called or Pooja is performed. They are epigrammatical, parallelistic, as well as allusive in style. They reflect on wealth's vanity, the meaninglessness of ceremonies or book study, life's unpredictability, and Shiva Bhakta's spiritual advantages (worshiper of lord Shiva). The Vachanas urge men to abandon their desire for material prosperity and comfort, to live a lifestyle of serenity and dissociation from the world, and to seek shelter in Siva.

The manner of invocation of God (Basveshvara summons "Kudala Sangama Deva," whereas Allama Prabhu invokes "Guheshwara," Akkamadevi invokes "Channa Mallikarjuna," Siddhrama (Siddheshwar) of Solapur elicits "Kapilasidda Mallikarjuna") in the vachana can be used to identify the writer. The majority of current vachana readings are based on European interpretations of Indian traditions. There are over 22,000 vachanas available. Samagra Vachana Samputa was published in 15 volumes by the Karnataka government. Individual vachana authors' compilations have been released by Karnataka University Dharwad. The 'Adya Vachanakara' is Jedara Dasimaiah (The First Vachanakara).