

**Knowledge Dialogues -  
*A 3-day Convention on Knowledge in Society.***

Kuvempu University, Shivamogga  
20-22<sup>nd</sup> Feb , 2025.

*Pre-Convention Publication*

**Summary of sessions being held**

*and*

**papers being presented**

*Organised jointly by*

Kuvempu University Shivamogga

*<http://www.kuvempu.ac.in/eng/>*

*and*

the Journal of Dialogues on Knowledge in Society.

*[www.ppstindia.in](http://www.ppstindia.in)*

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## *Foreword*

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that Kuvempu University is hosting this event: **Knowledge Dialogues - a 3-Day Convention on Knowledge in Society**. The Dialogues aim to engage seriously in presentations, discussions, and conversations among various representatives of the Knowledge Systems and traditions, including common people, artisans, practitioners of indigenous knowledge, universities, and modern institutions.

A central question that ties together all the themes being discussed at the Convention is: Modern Science and modes of Industrial Production and Technology have been in place in India for over 100 years. Post-independence, the Indian nation embraced the benefits of modern science and technology, hoping to bring positive changes to its citizens by alleviating poverty and raising health and living standards. Yet today, a vast majority of Indians remain poor and without access to basic provisions that would ensure a better life for them. Often, the reasons for the failure of such benefits reaching every citizen are attributed to economics or poor governance. In this convention, we pose the question whether the problem may also be fundamentally epistemic in nature. Is there a mismatch between the knowledge base founded on the principles and practices of modern science and technology, largely Western in origin, and the knowledge base that our common folk depend on for carrying out their lives? More importantly, one must recognize that across India, a large section of society without access to modern tools and technology continues to live and survive, sometimes with a sense of well-being and peace probably. They also possess forms of knowledge, although these may not be recognized in dominant Western knowledge systems or are placed lower in a hierarchy of knowledge. Examining this proposition involves bringing practitioners of these diverse knowledge systems together in one forum. Such dialogue, in its truest sense and spirit, must shun any implicit assumptions regarding hierarchies that grade these knowledge systems by placing so-called authoritative formal knowledge above people's or folk knowledge.

The convention will deliberate on a wide range of issues concerning knowledge choices made in various sectors and their consequences. The sessions will address poverty in India and its possible relation to these knowledge choices, and discuss the idea of Swaraj and its meaning in the current context. To exemplify the diversity of knowledge prevalent in India, a separate session on Kannada

Knowledge Traditions is also being held. Much has been written about the philosophy of Arts and Aesthetics, and a session on knowledge systems pertaining to Indian Art and Music is included, along with lecture demonstrations from the Dhrupad tradition. No discussion on knowledge can occur today without considering the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in knowledge creation and dissemination, especially the philosophical, ethical, and social consequences of increasing dependence on AI. The Convention has a Session on AI. A separate session is devoted to India's role as an emerging power from the Global South as seen in the domain of Knowledge.

It will be interesting to see whether dialogue from different knowledge systems is possible, as it requires people to "talk to" rather than "talk at" each other. Are these diverse knowledge systems incommensurable? It is hoped that discussions and dialogues will occur at this Convention without succumbing to mere "standpoint views" or relativism. I am confident that Kuvempu University will witness three intense and intellectually exciting days!

Prof. Sharath Ananthamurthy

Vice Chancellor, Kuvempu University

Convention Chairman

## Preface

We are happy to present to you this compilation of the programs and events that are scheduled to take place in the Knowledge Convention being held in the Kuvempu University, Shivamogga, during 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2025. This Convention is unique in many ways, as it is the result of the coming together of a Public University and an Online Journal being run by a group of intellectuals, thinkers and activists from diverse disciplines. The role played by Kuvempu University in making this happen clearly brings out the remarkable vision of its leadership, faculty and students; our universities are badly wanting in this readiness to dialogue with sections from the larger society whom it is ultimately meant to serve. The same holds true for the other party to this collaboration, viz. Journal of Dialogues on Knowledge in Society, who has abandoned the normally prevalent cynicism and negative views regarding public universities, especially those belonging to the State system, and come forward to work closely with Kuvempu University. We hope that this will get taken note of widely, and more efforts of this kind involving universities and various other players in the larger social space will happen, leading to a resurgence of meaningful intellectual pursuits on a large scale.

This work had started in the beginning of June 2024, and involved intense remote working and meetings among around twenty persons from both sides and living at far away places – the first and last face to face meeting of the Convention Organising Committee (COC) is happening only on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025! Technology has played a key role, both for its possibilities as well as limitations, in the organisation of this Convention.

Much of what is presented in this document are already available on the Convention websites (<https://www.ppstindia.in/convention> or <http://www.kuvempu.ac.in/eng/KnowledgeConvention.php>) other than the paper summaries which have reached us only a few days back. There are over 60 contributing participants from diverse disciplines and backgrounds, participating in eight subject sessions, as described in detail later here, in addition to popular lectures and cultural events during the evenings and nights. There would also be many Registered participants, especially young scholars, teachers, students and activists, and we hope that they would actively participate in the deliberations, both inside the convention hall as well as outside.

Even though this compilation itself would be found wanting in many respects because of the time constraints under which it had to be produced, especially so in the case of the Papers/Abstracts included here, we propose to bring out a book later containing the selected and edited full papers presented here, with some possible additions as needed. The same would also be uploaded to our websites.

Of equal interest to the participants should be the 9<sup>th</sup> and last session on Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> morning on where do we go from Shivamogga in the intellectual journey that the Convention would be launching.

The key to whatever has been achieved here is the role played by the eight Session Conveners and their Working Groups, something that is deeply appreciated and acknowledged. The manner in which the University administration, faculty and students responded and supported have also been phenomenal, and should strongly dispel many of the misconceptions and prejudices harboured about the intellectual environments in our state level universities, especially those that are away from the metro centres.

It is our pleasure to acknowledge the support that we have received from the IKS Division of AICTE and Chanakya University, Bengaluru, towards the conduct of the Convention.

In this work, we are privileged to have had the guidance of the Convention Co-Chairman Shri Sunil

Sahasrabudhey, Founder President of Vidya Ashram, Varanasi. The activist-philosopher has spent over three decades dwelling on the issue of Knowledge in its connections to the individual and society. The concept of Knowledge in Society pioneered by him has considerable potential in evolving a more humane society.

The role played by the Chairman , Prof. Sharath Ananthamurthy, Vice Chancellor of the host university, has been the single most decisive factor behind the successful holding of this Convention. His support to the idea has been unstinting and unflinching all along, which has enabled the CoC to go about its work in full freedom to take things this far. We do hope that the intellectual courage and vision shown by Prof. Sharath would inspire others who occupy similar high positions of authority and leadership in the academic and intellectual world in our country.

We hope all the participants would have an exciting intellectual experience in the lovely wooded campus of the university in the Sahyadri region, named after an illustrious poet and thinker who has had a deep impact on Kannada society and beyond.

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## **Announcing the Convention**

*(<https://www.ppstindia.in/>)*

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey**

President, Vidya Ashram Varanasi

Convention Co-Chair

**Sharath Ananthamurthy**

Vice Chancellor, Kuvempu University

Convention Chair

The focal theme of the Convention is ‘Knowledge in Society’ and the convention proposes to bring it into all discourses – economic, political, philosophical, cultural etc. As an epistemic idiom it should also be able to enter the discourses in the formal institutions of knowledge like the universities, on the internet and in places of spiritual persuasion – the three major organized locations of knowledge and knowledge activity today. Terms like traditional knowledge, local knowledge, indigenous knowledge, ethnic knowledge etc. would all be included in the term knowledge in society.

The science and technology discourse of the previous era has changed into a knowledge discourse largely after the Information Revolution. What was earlier categorized as skills and practices of the people at large has come to be recognized as knowledge in the present era. The domain of knowledge therefore stretches from one end in artisanal-peasant communities to the other end of artificial intelligence. Searl’s Chinese Room experiment has reappeared in a new guise.

This has far reaching consequences, for now different ways of thinking and doing, which unlike modern science do not abhor the ethical and aesthetic considerations, have a common address ‘Knowledge in Society’. ‘Knowledge in Society’ does not prioritize between the material, ethical, aesthetic, spiritual etc. So, now men and women are rational not just because they can construct analytical and scientific arguments, but also because they can, equally well, construct sound arguments for ethical, aesthetic and spiritual understandings and undertakings. This could liberate human rationality from the European yoke.

Through Knowledge in Society, the proposed convention hopes to address the entire width, and with a sense of non-hierarchy and equity built into it. The peasants and artisans are not inferior knowledge beings compared to the professionals from the university.

The convention shall explore the knowledge question and knowledge choices involved in the processes of nation building and development and also in people’s movements. We shall explore whether and how knowledge issue enters the realm of art and are also inclined to conceive a new political imagination, may be an idea of ‘swaraj’ suited for the contemporary times. There will be dialogue on regional/ cultural/linguistic knowledge traditions, specifically focused on Kannada traditions of knowledge. Put together this Knowledge Dialogue is at the same time also about ethics and aesthetics, not leaving out metaphysics, and about matters of language, policy and governance. It can take us to a new concept of emancipation, at the same time both political and philosophic. India should be a reasonably well suited land for heralding some such new idea and practice thereof, and this Convention should open doors for it.

## *Convention Flier*

The Convention on Knowledge in Society is an open forum to critically examine the Knowledge question, including the Science and Technology question, in the light of our developmental and nation building experience of over 75 years. It would investigate whether the choices that have been made, and are being made, in the domain of Knowledge in our country have themselves contributed to our present state where the majority of the people continue to live under conditions of poverty, deprivation and indignity.

Though the role of Modern Science and Technology in development has been a subject of debates for long, the knowledge component of other spheres of human activity, such as economics, politics, social sciences, arts, philosophy, social organisation, family etc., have not received much critical examination. While the issue of Knowledge has so far not appeared as significant as those of Equity, Freedom and Sustainability, it is becoming apparent that in many cases of contending standpoints there is likely to be an underlying question of Knowledge and its foundations, going beyond those of preferences, interests and power. It has not been recognised widely that different societies and cultures through history have developed different knowledge systems and practices that suited their civilisational goals and purposes, and that the Modern systems and practices that have had their origins in the West are only one of them.

Knowledge and its practices pertaining to different fields of concern to most people ( food, nutrition, health, housing, transportation, agriculture, water management, textiles, rural industries, social organisation, arts, family etc) still exist in a widespread and distributed manner in our society. This is distinct from the centralised modern institutional forms of knowledge organised hierarchically through universities, laboratories, academies etc. This "Knowledge in Society" transcends categories of Modern/Traditional, Western/Indigenous, Organised/Folk etc, and is a living and ever evolving entity, with values and culture appropriate to it embedded into it.

The journal "Dialogues on Knowledge in Society" (<https://www.ppstindia.in/>) that has evolved out of the earlier work of the PPST ( <https://www.ppstindiagroup.in/>) is devoted to such a pursuit, and the Convention is expected to take the dialogue forward in an open and inclusive manner. Kuvempu University (Kuvempu.ac.in) in Shivamogga (erstwhile Shimoga) is born out of University of Mysore, and has been pursuing education and research in certain areas (Bio-Diversity in Western Ghats, Indigenous Nyaya Panchayats, Cultural Differences, Folklore, Local Traditions, Pluralism and Coexistence) that have a bearing on the indigenous/local aspects of the knowledge question.

### *Some themes for the Convention.*

One of the main purposes of the Convention is to examine the Knowledge choices, including S&T choices, that had been made in the development process in our country, the reasons thereof, and their impact on the outcomes in different sectors.

#### *Knowledge choices made in some core sectors of our economy.*

Following are some of the key sectors whose inadequate performance has been very hurtful to the vast majority of our people: Food and Nutrition; Drinking Water; Toilets and Sanitation; Agriculture, Irrigation and Animal Husbandry; Land and Forests; Housing and Habitats; Health and Medicines; Clothing and Textiles; Household Energy needs; Industrial Development; Environment and Ecology; Literacy and School Education; Local Self-governance; Etc. In the Convention, we will get knowledgeable and experienced persons in each of these fields to speak on the kind of Knowledge choices that were made in their field from the time of independence, the reasons thereof, and how the process of selecting/rejecting among them was carried out. They will also tell us if any of these choices are still available to us, and if so, whether they should be examined and adopted even now.

#### *Some foundational issues underlying the different Knowledge systems*

In the Indian context at the time of independence, there were two broad contending systems or traditions of Knowledge : those that originated in the West around the 18th century and got introduced into our country as a part of the colonization project, and those that were of 'local' origin and which had been supporting the society and economy of this region for long periods of time. Efforts will be made in the Convention to bring out the differences in the epistemic foundations between these two Knowledge streams or traditions, and to what extent these differences may be responsible for the consequences that followed from the choices that were made.

It is also known that these two systems differ significantly in the way they get organised in society. "Knowledge in Society" seems to be the way indigenous Knowledge traditions get organised, with their embedded-ness in society enabling them to keep renewing themselves to whatever extent the circumstances permit. Did the differences in their organisation within society, especially under an aggressively centralizing and hostile state, also contribute to their differences in performance? Does the idea

of Swaraj have a role while making choices in the Knowledge domain even today?

Knowledge and its connectedness.

There are other aspects of Knowledge that the Convention should examine, such as its relationship with Power. Relationships with Arts, Films and the Media and Role of Knowledge in social relationships, family etc should also be discussed. What is the Knowledge basis of movements like the Ecological Movement, Farmers' Movement, Women's Movement, Tribal's Movement, etc?

Going forward

The central concern of the Convention should be on the initiatives in the knowledge domain that needs to be taken to address the central issue of largescale poverty that still exists in our country. We need to see how and to what extent the Modern Knowledge, including its S&T components, can be re-organised and adapted to meet the needs of the Indian people and the Indian nation in a more effective and just way. This should take into account, among other things, the shifting grounds of knowledge in the Digital and Internet age, as well as new developments like Artificial Intelligence. A similar exercise should be done on the Knowledge systems of Indian origin (called Indian Knowledge Systems, or IKS) and their value and relevance to the developmental processes to be freshly assessed. How can the emphasis be shifted from preservation to renewal? How can the idea of a partnership between the two traditions be formulated and promoted? Examination of IKS should also go beyond the domain of the material world, and encompass the social, cultural, artistic, moral, ethical and family dimensions. We should also examine a view existing in our society that IKS was elite knowledge in some kind of adversarial relationship with ordinary people's lives and their knowledge.

A New Knowledge Academy?

Do we need a new kind of Academy to pose the questions of knowledge, theoretical and practical, in a new way and support other initiatives which do so? The Convention may explore the setting up of such an institution.

Prof. C.N.Krishnan

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Journal of Dialogues on Knowledge in Society

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Note: DKS stands for Dialogues on Knowledge in Society.

## **Convention Program**

Dates: 20-22 Feb 2025 Venue: Convocation Hall, Kuvempu University.

### **Day-1 (Thursday 20th Feb)**

8.30 – 9.45 AM Registration and Tea

9.45 – 11.00 AM Inaugural Function

11.00 AM – 1.00 PM **Session-1: Knowledge in Society –**

***The Foundation for an Equitable and Just Society*** Convener: Avinash Jha

1.00 – 2.00 PM Lunch

2.00- 4.00PM **Session -2: Poverty and the Knowledge question – *the role of Indigenous /***

***Traditional Knowledge (Panel Discussion)***

Convener: Veena Joshi

4.00 – 7.00 PM **Session-3: Kannada Knowledge Traditions (in Kannada)**

***(Includes live cultural programs)***

Convener: Meti Mallikarjuna

6.30 – 7.30 PM Popular Lectures:

**High points of Indian Astronomy and Mathematics (in Kannada/English): M S Sriram**

7.30 – 9.00 PM Dinner

8.30 – 9.30 PM Cultural Program

### **Day-2 (Friday 21st Feb)**

9.00 – 11.15 AM **Session -4: Imagining Swaraj in the 21 st Century –**

***Some Knowledge issues. (Presentation and Panel Discussion)*** Convener: B V Rama Prasad

11.15AM – 1.30PM **Session-5: Knowledge in Development Discourse and Peoples' Movements**

**(Presentation and Panel Discussion)**

Conveners: Umashankari N and Ramasubramanian O

1.30 – 2.30 PM Lunch

2.30 – 4.00 PM **Session-6: Artificial Intelligence and the Knowledge Question**

**( Panel Discussion)**

Convener:Rajeev Sangal

4.00 – 7.00 PM **Session-7: Art and the Knowledge Question**

**(Includes live cultural programs)** Conveners: Sushruthi Santhanam and A Sashikanth

6.00-7.00PM Popular Lecture:

***Artificial Intelligence – An introduction : M Sasikumar***

7.30 – 9.00 PM Dinner

8.30 – 9.30 PM Cultural Program: *Film by A.Sashikanth*

*Day-3 (Sat 22nd Feb)*

9.00 – 11.00 AM *Session-8: India as a voice from the Global South –*

***the Knowledge Dimension.*** *Convener: A V Balasubramanian*

(Panel Discussion)

11.15 AM – 12.45PM *Session-9: Taking the Shivamogga Dialogues forward --*

***a New Academy and a Journal?***

(Panel Discussion)

12.45 – 1.15PM: **Formal Closing Function**

1.15 – 2.15: PM Lunch

**Details of the Sessions , including papers/abstracts presented**

Session-1:

**Knowledge in Society – *The Foundation for an Equitable and Just Society***

Working Group: *Avinash Jha(Convener), J K Suresh, R.Goswami, A Shanmukha, Meti Mallikarjuna,  
Sunil Sahasrabudhey*

Summary: The term ‘Knowledge’ today is used to refer to formal and specialized knowledge which is transmitted and learnt in educational institutions like schools, colleges and universities and produced in research institutes. The existence of knowledge amongst ordinary people is considered knowledge only in a qualified sense – traditional knowledge, folk knowledge, local knowledge etc. Even when acknowledged, such knowledge in society is explained away as aphorisms and techniques learnt by imitation, rote, practice, or as unscientific folk wisdom etc. However, this knowledge in society continues to provide sustenance to a majority of ‘uneducated’ Indians by equipping them to serve large numbers of people in areas as diverse as indigenous medicine, agriculture, transport, construction, restaurants and food etc. Management of enterprises based on small and very small capital is an important part of knowledge in society. So is the knowledge that is evident in life patterns and aesthetic activities of ordinary people.

Moving away from the paradigm which considers ‘science’ and its cognates as knowledge per se and the rest as knowledge in an inferior sense, this session seeks to stress the significance and vitality of knowledge in society which might have its own organizing principles for acquiring, renewing and practicing knowledge in ways not always anticipated by the practitioners of formal and specialized knowledge.

## **Background**

As human beings we are largely products of our learning and the ability to transmit our learning to the next generation, which also serves to distinguish us from all other animals. Hence, it is a truism to say that all human beings are knowledge beings. It is this endowment of knowledge in human society that makes possible the building up of human civilizations over millennia.

This trivial truth is in itself not very useful in understanding or explicating the nature and evolution of societies across centuries. Although as knowledge beings we all are equal, it must also be clear that there have been hierarchies in human societies and hence also of knowledge. No knowledge is innocent. Our knowledge has not only given us the power to dominate nature and control it to serve our needs but also to dominate other human beings. That knowledge is power is not only a Baconian or Western concept but was perhaps a larger understanding of human societies everywhere. However it must also be recognized that knowledge serves as a major resource providing strength to people to resist external domination and oppression in society.

In terms of their spread, various types of knowledge – of tools and machines, materials and minerals, agriculture, horticulture, behavior and interactions, social life, economics, arts, administration and politics, philosophy, spirituality etc. – that served the evolving needs of societies over time in history were situated partly within the society at large and partly within specialist groups. In terms of diversity, each region possessed its own version of knowledge types that best suited its environment, both human and natural. Interactions between communities enabled their development even as differences between them persisted. A common feature of knowledge was that it was not beyond social scrutiny and control, i.e., social norms would determine the scope and limits of its practice. For example, the village commons or forest patches would not be completely denuded even if it was an economically attractive proposition; open and strip mines would not be massively exploited so as to render the land around it infertile or degraded. And so on. In a distributed and de-centralized society such as pre-modern India, it is evident therefore that knowledge in society was diverse and multi-dimensional, while being largely governed by its endogenous values.

## **Today’s Scenario**

An important development of the previous two hundred years is the growth of a nexus between power and knowledge. Power and knowledge were perhaps largely independent in pre-modern society.

However, from the time of the industrial revolution, they have attained a growing degree of affinity. Over time, every major development in the sphere of knowledge has come to be co-opted by power, whilst every new affirmation of power leads to a greater control over the process of knowledge creation and use. Power as we understand it, goes beyond political power symbolized by the State and its institutions. It constitutes in addition an ecosystem that is driven by the logic of Capital and utilizes instruments mediated by knowledge for social, economic and cultural influence and control.

The separation of human knowledge from its location advanced rapidly during and after the industrial revolution in Europe along with the capability to embed a progressively larger amount of complexity (i.e., knowledge) into machines; this capability gradually extended to areas such as large scale manufacture of iron, textiles, steam and machine tools in the 19th century and to mass manufacturing of cars in the 20th, enabling the reduction of human effort to mere manual labor to a large part. In the 21st century, global manufacture and services have triggered the development of vast, hyper-real and virtual devices to feed the demand for their production. Together, they have created a new global empire, whose knowledge intensive hubs exercise complete control over societies which in theory are independent and sovereign, but are subservient to the demands of consumption and progress, as exemplified by the empire and its physical and knowledge capital.

The consequences of the above developments are two-fold: one, a weakening of knowledge in society that leads to the society's inability to control the distribution of the fruits of its knowledge; which in turn leads to a general de-skilling and de-education of the majority. Two, it enables a few to monopolize the knowledge development process, overturn all norms in society and create great disruptions and inequities in society in their drive to maximize the return on Capital, which has become the ruling mantra of the World.

### **What this Session aims to do**

How is Knowledge in Society constituted, what are its strengths and dynamics, how does it help fight oppression, can it help us envisage a society where a life of dignity and fulfillment is created for all without (much) capital are the central questions that will be explored in this session, in the form of the following topics:

- a) What do we mean by Knowledge in Society? How is it different from the Knowledge in the University, or of specialist groups, etc.?
- b) What are the organizing principles of this knowledge?
- c) How does it relate to the foundations of different knowledge traditions in society?
- d) How does Knowledge in society resist external domination and internal oppression?
- e) What is the relationship between Knowledge in society and modern political, social and economic processes?

### The Session Program

Moderator: **Prof. G. Sivaramakrishnan**, Bangalore University (Retd.)

Speakers:

1. **Shri. Sunil Sahasrabudhey**, Vidya Ashram, DKS Journal; Formerly with Gandhian Institute of Studies, Varanasi.

Topic: *A Statement on Lokavidya - The Knowledge in Society*

“Knowledge in society, with the people, is called lokavidya. It cannot be held or stored in a book, caste, village, family, religion, library, university or computer. It is ‘living knowledge’ with the people.”

2. **Prof. Rajaram Hegde**, Visiting Professor, Chankya University, Bengaluru. Former Professor of

History and Archeology, Kuvempu University.

**Topic: Configuration of Learning and Indian Knowledge System: What has gone wrong in our understanding**

“In his theoretical framework, Balagangadhara conceives of cultures as configurations of learning and posits a hypothesis that India and the West embody distinct learning configurations. According to this framework, the Western configuration prioritizes theoretical knowledge, while the Indian configuration is predominated by practical or performative knowledge. Indian rituals and traditional learning methods predominantly rely on this practical knowledge. Consequently, normative texts are notably absent in Indian traditions, where practices are transmitted across generations through mimetic learning. In this context, stories, rather than theories, play a pivotal role in instructing individuals on how to devise new actions.”

3. **Prof. Madhulika Banerjee**, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi.

**Topic: Pluriversal Knowledges as a Frame for Understanding Knowledge in Society**

“...power resides not only in the dominant spaces of society, but outside of it, in myriad forms. And knowledge has been generated, innovated upon and practised by people in those spaces in every kind of society. Either in the context of oppressive dominant structures, or in maintaining local sanctity, the role of collective action from these spaces provides subversive power.”

4. **Prof. Sasidharan P K**, Sankara University, Kalady, Kerala

Topic: Emerging Talk of Epistemic Justice , yet another injustice.

## Papers/Summaries Presented in Session-1

### **I. A Summary Statement on *Lokavidya* – The Knowledge in Society**

Sunil Sahasrabudhey

1. Knowledge in society, with the people, is called *lokavidya*. It cannot be held or stored in a book, caste, village, family, religion, library, university or computer. It is ‘living knowledge’ with the people.
2. Everybody is knowledgeable in the sense that everybody possesses *lokavidya*, which is his/her knowledge life-line. Everybody lives with autonomy of decision making based on what he/she learns through lived life (informally as *lokavidya* and formally in school/college). That is to say that *lokavidya* is ubiquitous both in space and time.
3. Those who have not been to college or university are not ignorant people. They go through an elaborate learning process, in the family, peer group, village, community and the larger society, in and through their life activity. Markets, governance, work site, cultural phenomena, games, schools and places of knowledge dialogue may be specially mentioned where people learn.
4. Farmers, artisans, adivasis, service providers, small retailers, artists and generally women acquire their knowledge in society. They earn their livelihood and manage all their affairs by *lokavidya*, so they may be said to constitute *lokavidya samaj*.



5. Although lokavidya -samaj is composed of poor people, mainly in the former colonies, it should be noted that the professional classes also possess *lokavidya* and mostly their lived life (different from the professional earning life) is governed by *lokavidya*. This applies to professional classes across the world, be they in former colonies or in the Western Europe, England, USA, Japan, Australia.
6. People's way of thinking, manner of abstraction, methods of argumentation, social values, thoughts about and methods of organization, relations among themselves and with nature, information they command, skills they possess, their art and their *darshan* (philosophy), all put together constitute a world of knowledge, which may be called *lokavidyaloka*.
7. *Lokavidya* is fresh every day, for in response to their needs, people incessantly improve upon the given, by their genius and based on their experiences and fresh experimentation.
8. The source of people's strength is in *lokavidya*. It is on the basis of *lokavidya* that they earn their livelihood, build their relationships with other people and with Nature, distinguish truth from falsehood, right from wrong, confront injustices and build their worldview.
9. *Lokavidya* does not separate physical labor from the mind and its activity. From the *lokavidya* standpoint there is nothing that is done by labor alone and everything is done by coming together of the required labor and knowledge. In other words, in the *lokavidya* way of thinking, nobody is a mere worker, everybody is knowledgeable.
10. Talking about society: the social and the economic disparity can be eradicated only when *lokavidya* fetches economic returns equal to that obtainable by university knowledge and is accorded the same social respect as is given to university knowledge.

Lokavidya Jan Andolan is the knowledge movement of the *Lokavidya-samaj*. Its objective is to obtain an equal status for *lokavidya* and *lokavidya-samaj* in the world of knowledge and society.

## II. Configuration of Learning and Indian Knowledge Systems – *what has gone wrong in our understanding?*

Dr. Rajaram Hegde

Modern research and thought within the realm of human knowledge are predominantly theoretical. By "theoretical," I mean that knowledge is principally regarded as a pathway to uncovering truths about the world. This form of knowledge is categorized as 'propositional knowledge,' 'declarative knowledge,' or 'knowledge-that' within the field of knowledge studies. It encompasses information about the world and meta-knowledge (knowledge of knowledge), consisting of three elements: 1. justifiable, 2. truthful, and 3. belief-based. The distinction between the act of knowing and knowledge itself lies in the fact that the former represents a subjective perception while the latter embodies an objectively structured or deeper understanding. Knowledge studies also acknowledge other types of knowledge, such as acquaintance knowledge or a posteriori knowledge, acquired through personal experiences and engagement with the world. Implicit knowledge, also referred to as 'knowledge-how' (or procedural or practical knowledge), and tacit knowledge, which stems from personal experience, are also recognized. Additionally, a priori knowledge, disseminated through logical reasoning such as in mathematics, plays a crucial role.

These forms of knowledge can broadly be classified into theoretical and practical or performative categories, or as 'knowledge-how' and 'knowledge-what' within the theories of knowledge. However, it is

essential to recognize that theories regarding all other types of knowledge primarily reflect a theoretical stance, considering these other forms as subsets of theoretical knowledge. For example, these theories often do not regard human action as a form of knowledge. Actions devoid of theoretical knowledge may appear irrational or anti-intellectual, as they do not inherently contain knowledge units unless accompanied by theoretical reflection.

Numerous cultures regard practical knowledge as a form of knowledge in its own right, independent of a foundational basis in reason. This perspective was notably held by ancient Roman sceptical thinkers. With the ascendancy of religious worldviews, theoretical knowledge came to predominate the Western intellectual landscape. In contrast, pagan and non-religious traditional cultures have continued to emphasize the importance of practical knowledge.

In his theoretical framework, Balagangadhara conceives of cultures as configurations of learning and posits a hypothesis that India and the West embody distinct learning configurations. According to this framework, the Western configuration prioritizes theoretical knowledge, while the Indian configuration is predominated by practical or performative knowledge. Indian rituals and traditional learning methods predominantly rely on this practical knowledge. Consequently, normative texts are notably absent in Indian traditions, where practices are transmitted across generations through mimetic learning. In this context, stories, rather than theories, play a pivotal role in instructing individuals on how to devise new actions.

The Indian state, society, and its institutions were profoundly shaped during the British colonial period, emerging as products of colonial rule. These entities are deeply rooted in the Western understanding of India. The theories of Western knowledge have significantly influenced their analyses of the cultures they encountered. Consequently, this analytical framework shaped their comprehension and portrayal of Indian culture, its knowledge traditions, and learning methodologies during the colonial era. The colonial intellectuals, steeped in theoretical learning, struggled to comprehend the Indian traditional practices and learning systems, which appeared irrelevant and primitive to them. This perspective played a decisive role in the misinterpretation and misunderstanding of Indian knowledge traditions.

The colonizers tirelessly worked to provide rational foundations intended to enhance Indian political and social life as part of their 'civilizing mission.' The introduction of English education, the application of Western social science concepts and theories, the establishment of Western social, political, and legal institutions, and administrative experiments such as the panchayat raj system, exemplify such efforts. These policies, institutions, and experiments encountered significant challenges within the context of a culture that traditionally lacked the tools to manage these unfamiliar impositions.

Exploring the aforementioned differences in the configuration of learning proves extremely productive for social scientists who aim to understand and explain the current crises and failures of modern institutions in India. The dominance of practical and performative learning within Indian culture,

markedly distinct from Western configurations centered on theoretical learning, suggests that if this indigenous system continues to prevail, it may precipitate a crisis in the contemporary theoretical learning-based system. It is expected that individuals immersed in this cultural context might struggle with, or have difficulty adapting to, this new system, potentially leading to performance failures or the distortion or corruption of practices when traditional knowledge resources are inaccessible.

This line of inquiry, grounded in cultural differences concerning knowledge, can also establish a productive foundation for research aimed at elucidating current practices and the literary information transmitted from ancient times. Moreover, it allows for an analysis of misconceptions about Indian culture during the colonial period. The present paper endeavors to highlight these aspects with appropriate references and detailed elaborations, supplemented by suitable examples.

### **III. Pluriversal Knowledges as a Frame for Understanding Knowledge in Society**

Madhulika Banerjee

In this paper, I will present aspects of my work that have responded to the questions being raised in this session. I will first problematise the terms ‘traditional knowledge’, ‘already existing knowledges’ (another term that I have used before) and explain why ‘pluriversal knowledges’ make more sense, both in terms of history and epistemology. Second, I will present how locating knowledges in their political-economic contexts, help us understand their materiality--- in pre-capitalist, capitalist and non-capitalist space and time. Used for different kinds of production for society’s needs—whether for growing crops, building homes, managing water, weaving cloth, making medicines-- the materiality of their practice draw from the dominant philosophical and conceptual frames at one end, and the political-economic mechanisms of the society at the other. It is when we link the two that we can understand how the theory and practice of knowledge is linked and when transformations happen, what exactly changes and how and that too, within different structures of power in society.

This brings me to the third argument of my paper, which is, that power resides not only in the dominant spaces of society, but outside of it, in myriad forms. And knowledge has been generated, innovated upon and practised by people in those spaces in every kind of society. Either in the context of oppressive dominant structures, or in maintaining local sanctity, the role of collective action from these spaces provides subversive power. Yet we need to remember that social inequities and injustice are hallmarks of all three aspects and have to be recognised and dealt with, if knowledge is to provide a foundation for a just and equitable society.

### **IV. Emerging Talk of Epistemic Justice, yet another injustice**

P K Sasidharan

In recent times, there has been emerging a new variety of knowledge movement in Europe, which highlights and calls for the recovery of non-western knowledge practices and cultural traditions, specifically the healthcare traditions. Though there is hardly anything new in the critique of western thought forms and cultures, either from within or outside, the present trend seems to be distinctive for its admission that the non-western knowledge systems are equally be characterised as or qualified enough to be treated as epistemologies. Thus goes the expressions such as 'traditional epistemology', 'indigenous epistemology', 'folk epistemology', 'ethnic epistemology', 'South epistemology', etc.

Such a critical stance, which is being imitated at global level, by way of resistance against the western mainstream structures of knowledge production, dissemination, and application, gives an impression of being capable to be more radical in resisting the western hegemony that has penetrated at the subtle and intimate spheres of individual and collective life of people everywhere. Consequently, it is perceived to be the emergence of new resistance against epistemicide (killing of knowledge systems and practices, which fall outside the western systems) from within the west, especially against the hegemonic conception of modern medicine with the biomedical model of health care and healing.

Those critical-knowledge movements seem to have their common point of target against the European epistemic framework as such, and impresses us by being able to counter it radically by replacing non-western, non-biomedical models of health care practices. However, if we go by the ways in which this perceived critical perspective gets operated at the accessible point of non-western medical practices, what gets revealed cannot be seen as making much difference from the hegemonic models. Instead of non-western practices being recognized as such, they are still being subjected to epistemic justification and scientific validation. The epistemic justice or equality of non-western medical practices seems to have been recognised only at the level of a dialogical intervention from the epistemic framework of modern medicine. The so-called epistemological research projects in the domain of health care and healing are still found to be carried out only within the integration scheme. Hence, the non-western medical epistemology perspective and research programmes operate mainly in the interest of seeking what is to be scientifically validated from non-modern traditional medical practices.

The so-called inclusivist programmes, such as ‘integrated medicine’, ‘complimentary medicine’, ‘alternative medicine’, ‘wholistic medicine’ have been floated from the side of modern medicine, and the non-modern traditions are being scrutinised for making the science proper. It is these scientific aspects within the non-modern practices that are conceived to be their ‘epistemological foundation’ as well. Here, the tenability of the idea of ‘epistemology’ to characterise the cognitive or knowledge features of non-western practices becomes a matter of dispute. Because, as per the western philosophical project, epistemology presupposes a methodological thinking through which rational and universal justification of any belief to be true knowledge. Thus, for both the western philosophy and science non-justifiable beliefs and non-rational practices cannot become knowledge. They would be falling outside the purview of what philosophy privileges as episteme (knowledge) against doxa (opinion). This seems to be the juncture in which concerns on the epistemological status of non-western practices have become crucial. The process of epistemizing of non- knowledge practices is seen largely in the area of medical and health care practices. To be specific, the talk of epistemic justice, equality, alterity, integration, inclusiveness, wholism, etc., has a critical stance of engaging with the continuing strategies of colonial policies of Europe over Afro Asian countries. Therefore, it becomes imperative to ask whether the recently emerging non-western epistemology movement could really be termed as counter-epistemology or alternative epistemology? If the cognitive potentials of non-modern medical practices are now found to be matters of recognition, why do they need to be counted on their epistemic status or scientific validity? Hence, what seems to matter is cognitive justice, rather than epistemic justice, as it has been made out to be in the discourse on non-western epistemologies.

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Session -2:

**Poverty and the Knowledge question – *the role of Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (Panel Discussion)***

Working Group: Veena Joshi (Convener), Umashankari, Rahul Goswami, C N Krishnan

While mass hunger may be a thing of the past, poverty and deprivation exist in India on a mass scale – large sections of people lacking in adequate food, nutrition, drinking water, healthcare, housing, education, transport, employment and wages, environment, etc. These sectors where poverty is still rampant are in reality our “core sectors” as far as the well-being of the people are concerned, and addressing this requires large scale investments going into them, and not merely into 'infrastructure' projects like airports, highways, harbours, bullet trains etc. Significantly, not much of these investments need to go into capital and energy intensive inputs like high technology, large machinery, high science etc, most of which anyway have to be imported. These investments need to go primarily into (i) employing much larger numbers of people in most sectors with reasonable levels of salaries and job security, along with appropriate training programs for them (ii) protecting our natural resources and assets and utilising them in a just and sustainable manner. The awareness, knowledge and skills available with the ordinary people, supplemented wherever needed with specialised knowledge, technology and training, would mostly be adequate to address the pressing problems of poverty in our country. This knowledge base available in the society, referred to as Knowledge in Society in this Convention, is composed of elements from both the Traditional/Indigenous and the Modern/ Western streams, created through a continuous process of experimentation, innovation, absorption, and integration practiced by the people in their day to day lives.

#### A Panel Discussion on

**“The knowledge base needed for removal of mass poverty is largely available with the ordinary people and the small-scale sector”**

The Panel will address this proposition from different stand points and taking different domains, highlighting how a partnership between the Traditional/ Indigenous and the Modern/ Western can effectively combat poverty and its consequences.

. India today is host to perhaps the largest share of world's poor --

- ill-fed and malnourished people, especially women and children
- heavy burden of disease and ill-health
- poor housing and unhygienic habitat conditions
- education that does not lead to secure jobs with decent wages.
- poor quality and unsafe means of public transport
- poor quality of governance practices, including justice delivery.
- degraded environment leading to poor quality of water, air, soil and vegetation

This is the reality that is clearly visible to anyone and gets mapped into figures like our country ranking 125th in terms of GDP (PPP), 104th in terms of Hunger Index. Etc.

2. Mass poverty and unemployment can be eliminated by significant investments going into ensuring
  - food and nutritional security with full coverage of the population

- essential healthcare needs, especially primary healthcare, with full coverage.
- proper housing, drinking water and sanitation for all
- school education that enables everyone to earn an adequate living after 12 years of schooling.
- affordable road and rail transport that is safe and comfortable for everyone.
- accessible and responsive system of governance, including security and justice delivery.
- Environmental and Ecological health and sustainability for all.

As has become amply clear by now, poverty removal targets are not achievable through a trickle-down process resulting from huge infrastructure investments, along with some acts of state charity that converts citizens into beneficiaries.

3. The most important part of this investment needed for poverty removal would go into, not advanced technologies, materials or machinery, but into large scale employment of people at different levels in all these sectors. For example, hiring and training teachers in large numbers, with reasonable salaries and job security, and with appropriate training is the key component of improving our school education system. The same applies to the other areas that are central to poverty removal. This single step also helps address the problem of unemployment to a good extent, and the resulting increased purchasing power will also expand the markets for manufactured goods and services.

4. None of the steps mentioned above for the removal of mass poverty need significant amounts of high science, technology or management, especially of the type that needs to be imported. The knowledge, skills and awareness available with the ordinary people can be the foundation on which this can be done, supplemented wherever needed with specialised knowledge, technology and training. This knowledge base available in the society is made out of elements from both the Traditional and the Modern streams, through a continuous process of experimentation, innovation, absorption and integration practiced by the people in their day to day lives.

The session is in the form of a Panel Discussion where the panellists having specialised knowledge and expertise in their own domains will comment on and discuss the following proposition:

**“The knowledge base needed for removal of mass poverty is largely available with the ordinary people and the small-scale sector”**

The Panellists:

Healthcare: **Darshan Shankar** (Bengaluru) and **Mangalath Prasad** (Thrissur)

Agriculture: **A V Balasubramanian** (Chennai) and **Krishna Prasad** (Mysuru)

Water: **Ravindra Kumar Phatak** (Gaya)

Textiles: **Samyukta Gorrepati** (Hyderabad)

Rural Industries: **Pradeep Sharma** (Raipur)

Discussion Moderator: **Veena Joshi**

About the panellists:

**Darshan Shankar** is the Founder-Vice Chancellor of the Trans Disciplinary University, Bengaluru, as

well as the recipient of many awards like the Padma Shri Award, Normal Borlaug Award for contributions to conservation of medicinal plants, etc.

**Vaidya Mangalath Prasad MD (Ayur)** is the Director and Chief Physician at Sunethri Ayurvedashram and Research Centre, Thrissur. The Research Centre specialises in the field of autism, and they have developed the Sunethri Protocol for Autism treatment.

**A V Balasubramanian** is a Biologist by training. Since 1982 he has been involved in exploring the current relevance and potential of various aspects of Traditional Indian Sciences and Technologies. He is the Founder- Director of the Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems (CIKS), Chennai. The CIKS is devoted to exploring the contemporary relevance and applications of Indian Knowledge Systems particularly in the area of sustainable agriculture.

**Krishna Prasad** is the Founder Director of Sahaja Samrudha, Desi Seed Producers Company, Sahaja Samrudha Organic Producers Company. He is an Ashoka Fellow and is known as Rural Karnataka's Native Seed Man. His organisations network with organic farmers, promote exchange of knowledge, information, and seeds.

**Ravindra Kumar Phatak** was Professor of Pali and Buddhist Studies, Magadh University, Bodhgaya. He has a special interest in traditional science, technologies and philosophy in different sectors, water being one of them. He leads a civil society group called Magadh Jal Jamaath which studies and advocates on water related issues in the Magadh region near Gaya.

**Samyukta Gorrepati** is a textile designer and a theatre actor. She works with Chitrika Foundation, Hyderabad. Her primary work is with weaver producer organizations in Andhra Pradesh in the domains of design and production, including capacity building. Her current work is with cotton spinners of Ponduru, Andhra Pradesh to take the craft experience to the public. She has authored the book "Learning the Heart's way".

**Pradeep Sharma** is ex Advisor to Hon. Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh. He is currently a mentor at the Rural Renaissance Innovative Solutions. The rural renaissance centres comprise of rural industrial parks and Gauthans to strengthen the rural livelihood activity wherein knowledge and knowledge holders are seen in a flow with minimum structural constraints.

## Papers/Summaries Presented in Session-2

### **I. BUILDING ON LOCAL RESOURCES, KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM FOR STRENGTHENING FARMERS LIVELIHOODS AND INCOME: SHARING SOME EXPERIENCES FROM TAMILNADU**

**A.V.Balasubramanian**

*"Everything else can wait, but not agriculture" – Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, 1947.*

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made this famous remark in the context of the Bengal Famine of 1942–43 and the acute food scarcity prevailing in the country in 1947. It has been said for several years now that agriculture in India is in a state of crisis. This is tantamount to saying that India is in a crisis since about 70% of our population is still in rural areas with agriculture as their main livelihood source. This crisis manifests itself as increasing impoverishment of the farmers and lack of options for rural



non-farming employment. There is an alarming degradation of the resource base of agriculture, specially of soil, increased pressure and demand on land from non-agricultural activities, erosion of biodiversity in terms of both species and varieties of cultivated crops and decline in cattle population. This has led distress migration to the cities and caused scarcity of labour in rural areas for agricultural activities.

The Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems (CIKS) has been working since 1995 in an attempt to build on local resources, knowledge and wisdom to enhance livelihood and food security based on sustainable agriculture. The three essential elements of the material resource base required for agriculture are – soil (fertility), water and sunshine as well as seeds. The Indian subcontinent is a region of extremely high biodiversity of plants and in fact, two of the twelve global “biodiversity hotspots” are currently situated in India. It has been estimated by the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) of the Government of India that currently there are 75,000 to 100,000 landraces of paddy available in India. According to Dr. Richaria who was one of our outstanding rice scientists about 400,000 rice varieties existed in India during the Vedic period. He estimates that even today about 200,000 rice varieties exist in India — a truly phenomenal number. This means that if a person were to eat a new rice variety every day of the year he could live for over 500 years without reusing a variety! In every nook and corner of India farmers have nurtured and cultivated varieties suitable to those areas.

There are two broad categories of reasons why such diversity is important — agronomical as well as nutritional / therapeutic. In different parts of India paddy shows variation with respect to crop age (short, medium and long duration), resistance to pests and diseases, requirement of water, suitability to various seasons, capacity to grow in different attitudes (ranging from the Himalayan heights to lands below sea level) and in different kinds of soil (sandy, clayey and so on). This has ensured that a rice crop be harvested in almost every party of India through various times of the year.

A few indigenous rice varieties with interesting agronomic properties from Tamil Nadu illustrate this:

- *Sigappukuruvikar* – pest- and disease-resistant
- *Koomvazhai* – flood-resistant
- *JilJilVaigunda* – drought-resistant
- *Kullakar* – provides excellent straw for the roofs
- *PanangattuKudaivazhai* – good fodder.

There are also rice varieties suited for various types of soils — sandy, clayey, saline, etc. The value of indigenous varieties to act as insurance during times of distress and calamities was dramatically illustrated during the 2004 tsunami disaster in Tamil Nadu, when thousands of hectares of land under paddy were under sea water for a brief period along the coast of Nagapattinam district. This rendered the soil saline and no high-yielding or modern paddy varieties could be cultivated. However, an excellent solution was provided by the use of an indigenous paddy variety called *Kalarpalai* (literally meaning a

variety that grows in *Kalar* – salty soil) which can withstand soil salinity. It is also a hardy variety resistant to pests and diseases and provided an excellent solution to tsunami-affected farmers. During this period we found that even *Kalanamak* – an indigenous variety from northern India known to perform well in saline soil could be cultivated in these areas.

CIKS has been involved in the following activities namely-

1. *In situ* conservation of over 150 Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) both in its own conservation farm and in farmers fields.
2. Producing and distributing TRV seeds widely to farmers in Tamilnadu.
3. Building the capacities of individual farmers as well as farmers groups in seed production as well as organic cultivation of TRVs.
4. Facilitating linkages of farmers with consumers with respect to marketing of TRVs.
5. Undertaking studies on Nutritional and Therapeutic properties of selected TRVs and making authentic information available to farmers and consumers.

### **Catering to the requirements of Sustainable Agriculture**

We see this activity as part of a larger framework to cater to the requirements of Sustainable Agriculture. Today if a farmer wants to take up chemical cultivation then all the inputs required by him are readily available in the market and they can be purchased such as – hybrid / modern seeds, chemical fertilizers, chemical pesticides/weedicides, etc. However, for sustainable agriculture the inputs required are not available in sufficient quantity or satisfactory quality. It is in this context that we have made efforts to set up micro/small scale units in rural areas that can provide the required inputs and also livelihood opportunities for farmers. Some of these activities are –

- ✓ Production of Traditional varieties of seeds for crops.
- ✓ Production of compost and vermicompost
- ✓ Production of biopesticides.
- ✓ Production of neem seed powder/cake units.
- ✓ Production of green manure seeds

We see our effort in the area of TRV seeds in this larger context.

## **II. Poverty and Knowledge: The Role of Indigenous/Traditional Knowledge in Agriculture**

G Krishna Prasad

Farmers are scientists in their own right, with traditional agricultural knowledge passed down from their ancestors playing a pivotal role in the successful implementation of agricultural activities. From sowing to harvest, this knowledge, rooted in experience, experimentation, and environmental observation, proves indispensable. Women farmers, in particular, contribute significantly to this body of knowledge. For instance, practices

such as timing sowing with particular rain star patterns, based on generations of observation and experience, remain effective even amid changing climatic conditions.

Farmers have historically adopted mixed cropping systems tailored to their soil, climate, and food requirements. By cultivating a combination of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, and vegetables, they ensured household food security. Traditional seed treatment methods ensured good germination and healthy plants, while pest and disease management practices relied on abundant, cost-free, natural solutions. However, the advent of modern cultivars and the commercialization of farming have made farmers increasingly dependent on chemical pesticides and weedicides. These dangerous chemicals harm both health and the environment, disrupting sustainable agricultural practices. In the past, seeds were effectively stored using traditional methods, ensuring their longevity and viability.

Traditional knowledge is inherently local, economical, and eco-friendly, enabling farmers to remain self-reliant and economical. Unfortunately, dependency on external chemical inputs has made agriculture expensive and inaccessible for small farmers, leading to crop losses, debt, and in some tragic cases, farmer suicides.

To reverse this trend and reduce rural poverty, documenting, experimenting with, and popularizing traditional agricultural practices alongside farmer-led innovations is essential. This approach can pave the way for prosperity and sustainability in farming communities.

### **III. Poverty and the Knowledge question – the role of Indigenous / Traditional Knowledge**

Darshan Shanker

Firstly, I have a few thoughts regarding the concept of poverty.

It amazes me that economists and social scientists continue to define poverty in terms of un just deprivation of large percentage of the global and Indian population. To my mind deprivation is a symptom of **systemic poverty** in all social classes specially the rich, promoted by a model of development that is designed to make the endowed richer and the deprived to continue in deprivation. The society needs to create an integrated index for measuring systemic poverty. Such an index would need to measure not merely economic and social deprivation but of obese excess and psychological traits. On the basis of such an integrated index of systemic poverty, the deprived would still get a relatively poor ranking but so would many other social groups. Systemic poverty solutions would not lie in focusing on the currently deprived alone. But need to also make radical systemic changes in the design of the political economy.

Secondly, I have a reflection on the education system

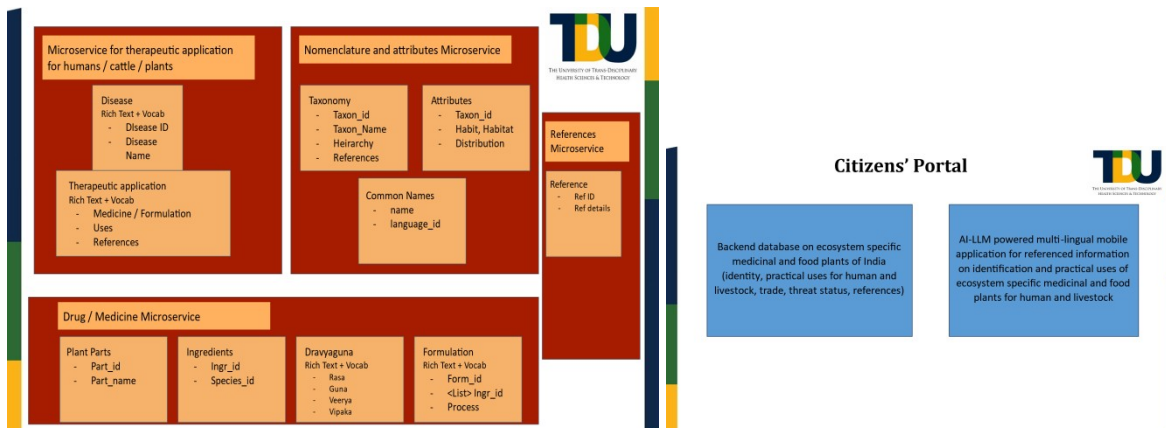
It surprises me that Indian intelligentsia has not even after major education commission, revised the core colonized **content** of school and university education as it functions even today. This was borrowed from UK and now from US and Europe. It continues to serve the development needs of western societies. The top cream of students from the education system in most parts of the world go to the west. The next level of students serve in institutions that are subsidiaries of western scientific, technological, financial and governance related institutions. The vast majority are lost

Thirdly I wish to strongly assert that in the healthcare space, there is no doubt, that in principle there is certainly potential to build both self-confidence and self-reliance in rural communities based on their own indigenous knowledge of ecosystem specific botanicals for health security of human and livestock, nutrition security and livelihoods. The society has over a million folk carriers of IK, around 5 lacs licensed indigenous medics, over 20,000 health knowledge texts for human, animal and food applications, over 7500 ecosystem specific species of botanicals distributed from the trans Himalaya to

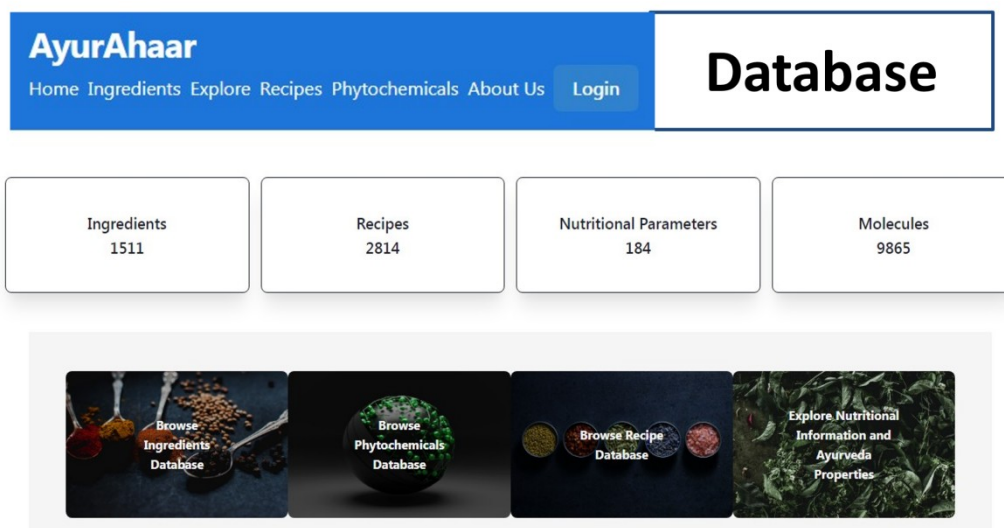
the coast.

In TDU we are building large Citizens Portal on ecosystem specific medicinal and food plants of India for human, livestock, food and livelihood security. We are engaging with AI-LLM experts to make this portal multi-lingual, multi-media and with applications that can be used by millions of citizens and communities for health security of human and livestock, nutrition security and livelihoods.

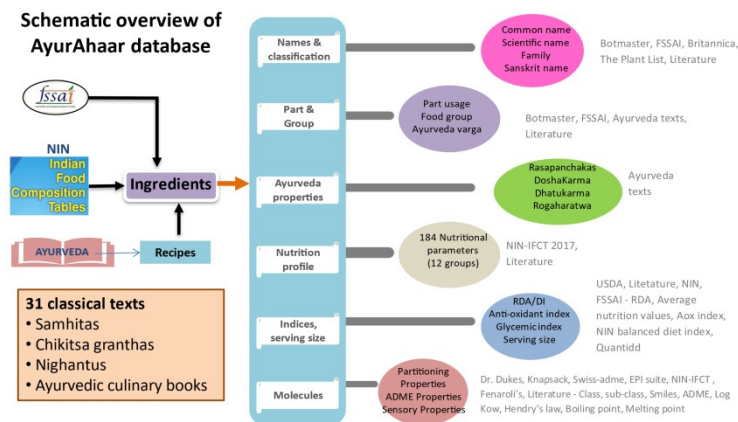
### Architecture of Citizens Portal



### Architecture of Ayur Ahaar



#### Schematic overview of AyurAhaar database



## IV. Poverty and the Knowledge Question - Uramarunnu: A Traditional Gut-Health Practice.

Gut health is fundamental to overall well-being, playing a crucial role in both prevention and cure. Modern science now emphasizes the microbiome and gut dysbiosis in the context of health and disease. Ayurveda has long acknowledged this, as reflected in the South Indian proverb: “**Udaram Vyadhimandiram**”—the gut is the abode of all diseases. Traditional healing interventions have always prioritized gut health, particularly in childhood.

### The Concept of Uramarunnu

In traditional South Indian communities, village physicians (Grama Vaidyas) and elders employed various methods to safeguard children's gut health. Among them, Uramarunnu was a widely practiced preventive approach, ensuring a strong digestive system from infancy. The term originates from “**ura**” (to rub) and “**marunnu**” (medicine), referring to the preparation method where medicinal herbs are ground into a paste and administered to infants in a very small amount.

### Preparation & Administration

Uramarunnu is introduced after the neonatal period (28 days onward). Herbs are rubbed on a dedicated grinding stone using a suitable medium such as **breast milk, honey, butter, or ghee** to create a fine paste. This is given to the baby in minuscule amounts (approximately a quarter teaspoon or less), followed by breastfeeding. Preventive administration is typically once or twice a week and can continue until the child is 2–3 years old. Therapeutic use varies based on the condition.

### Benefits & Common Uses

Uramarunnu is used to:

- Improve digestion and nutrient assimilation
- Relieve bloating and constipation
- Treat diarrhoea
- Induce restful sleep
- Enhance overall health and immunity

### Commonly Used Herbs

Herb Name	Botanical Name
Vacha	Acorus calamus
Yastimadhu	Glycyrrhiza glabra
Haridra	Curcuma longa
Pippali	Piper longum
Ela	Elettaria cardamomum
Sunti	Zingiber officinale
Kutaja	Holarrhena antidysenterica
Chandana	Santalum album
Jatiphala	Myristica fragrans
Harithaki	Terminalia chebula
Jyotishmati	Celastrus paniculatus
Rudraksha	Elaeocarpus ganitrus
Lashuna	Allium sativum
Vidanga	Embelia ribes
Mayaphala	Quercus infectoria
Avartaki	Cassia auriculata
Bakuchi	Psoralea corylifolia
Mustha	Cyperus rotundu

## Variations & Adaptations

While traditionally prepared fresh, Uramarunnu is sometimes made into pill form by grinding the herbs into a fine paste, shaping them into small pills, and drying them in shade for later use.

## Relevance Today

Uramarunnu is just one example of the rich, traditional gut-health practices found in village communities. Proper exploration and documentation of such methods could significantly contribute to **preventive and curative** paediatric care in India, offering natural and time-tested solutions for common childhood ailments.

## V. Poverty and the Knowledge Question: *Role of Traditional Water Management Systems*

Ravindra Kumar Pathak

### Gist of the paper in English:

I will first comment on the difference between *garibi* and *daridrata*. I will then explain how to understand local traditional knowledge in the framework of health, autonomy and happiness in ordinary life i.e. like *lok jeevan*. This will be then illustrated through the application of traditional knowledge in water use in Magadh. My conference paper is written in the language used by the farmers to inform the audience the method of traditional conversation. I conclude with the challenges faced in continuing the use of traditional knowledge in water use in Magadh.

मुझे भारत में गरीबी और उसके निवारण में पारंपरिक विद्या की भूमिका, उसमें भी खास तौर पर जल व्यवस्था की विद्या पर बोलने का अवसर मिला है। जल व्यवस्था की विद्या पर बोलने के पहले कुछ बातों को स्पष्ट करना जरूरी समझता हूं क्योंकि आज कई शब्दों के अर्थ और कुछ बातों की मूल समझ ही बदल गई है।

1 गरीबी की न कोई सही परिभाषा है, न समझ। संसाधनों की उपलब्धता अगर मुफ्त में मिले तो वही न्यूनतम राशि, धन या संसाधन सुखी रचनात्मक जीवन जीने के लिए संसाधनों की वही सीमा अनुकूल पड़ती है। गरीबी नहीं होती। अमीर लोगों में जो अति संचय की प्रवृत्ति है, वह उन्हें कम संपत्ति वाला महसूस कराती है और दुखी करती है। अतः हमारे यहां कन्या दान के समय समाज के बुजुर्ग लोग सिखाते हैं कि रोजगार वाले, कमाने वाले गरीब के घर लड़की देना उचित है न कि किसी दरिद्र के घर। दरिद्रता एक अलग बात है। वह तथ्यात्मक या भौतिक नहीं होती वह संस्कार जनित व्यक्तिगत, पारिवारिक या कुछ और बड़े दायरे वाली हो सकती है। बाजार लोगों के संसाधनों पर कब्जा कर रहा है। सरकारें पारंपरिक विद्या के उपयोग पर नियंत्रण करने के लिए उसे अप्रामाणिक बता कर, कुछ बहाना नहीं मिले तो विकास विरोधी बता कर गैर कानूनी घोषित कर प्रतिबंधित और विद्याधर समाज को दंडित करती हैं। गुड़ बनाना विकास विरोधी और चिकित्सा करना अप्रामाणिक है, जहां बाजार और कारपोरेट को असुविधा हो।

2 मेरी शिक्षा, अनुभव और समझ में विज्ञान और साइंस दोनों पूरी तरह अलग हैं अतः हिन्दी में मैं साइंस के लिए साइंस ही लिखता हूं, विज्ञान के लिए विज्ञान।

3 साइंस, देशी परंपरागत विद्या या ज्ञान के बीच सार्थकता और प्रासंगिकता की तुलना मशीन-सापेक्ष और उसकी पदावली में नहीं हो सकती। वह लोक जीवन के स्वास्थ्य, स्वतंत्रता एवं खुशी में ही देखी महसूस की जा सकती है।

अब मैं सीधा एक उदाहरण के रूप में मगध की एक परंपरागत विद्या जो सिंचाई हेतु जल के उपयोग की विद्या

है, प्रस्तुत कर रहा हूँ। यह अभी भी चलन में है लेकिन नासमझी और सरकारी दबाव के कारण के सीमित होती जा रही है। वह है “आहर-पईन-गोआम” पद्धति। वैसे तो यह विद्या वराह मिहिर की जल व्यवस्था वाली उदकार्गला के साथ पूरी होती है। उदकार्गला भूमिगत जल के अन्वेषण, कूप, बावड़ी तालाब के निर्माण तक को समेटती है। ठोटे जल भंडारों के निर्माण को कौटिल्य ने सेतुबंध कहा है। यह सोच ई.1960 तक लागू थी, जब तक राज्य सिंचाई कर के रूप में एक भाग आनुपातिक पद्धति पर अन्न के रूप में स्वीकार करता था। सिंचाई में कारपोरेट (इंग्लैंड वाले) बड़ी नहर, फिर अधिग्रहण के बाद सरकार और नगदी पद्धति लागू होते ही यह रिश्ता समाप्त हो गया। अभी भी “आहर-पईन-गोआम” पद्धति लागू है, उसकी संचालन प्रक्रिया को सामाजिक बनाने के लिए मगध जल जमात के संयोजक के रूप में मैं ने 2006 से 2024 तक श्रम किया है। उसके पहले वराह मिहिर की विधियों पर प्रयोग तथा अनुसंधान का काम 1992 से पत्नी डॉ प्रमिला पाठक के साथ किया, जो कालेजों में भौतिकी की शिक्षिका रही हैं। मैं जानबूझ कर किसानों के बात करने के तरीके वाली भाषा में आलेख भेज रहा हूँ ताकि यह भी पता चले कि परंपरागत वार्ता की शैली कैसी होती है।

### आहर-पईन संबंधी शंका-समाधान

आहर-पईन के महत्त्व को समझने के लिये जरूरी है कि इसके बारे में बनी गलत धारणाओं एवं सच्चाई से भी रूबरू हुआ जाय। इसलिये मैं शुरू में ही कुछ ऐसी बातें कर रहा हूँ ताकि अगर किसी के मन में कोई दुविधा या शंका हो तो मिट जाये। आदमी के मन में शंका हो तो पहले उसका समाधान करना जरूरी होता है। किसानों के मन में उभरे सवालों एवं शंकाओं का समाधान जरूरी है, तभी महसूस होगा कि यह काम करना सही है और जरूरी भी, और फलौं बात बेतुकी तथा बेकार है। आइए, ऐसी ही कुछ चर्चाओं, शंका समाधानों से हम भी परिचित होते हैं। हिंदी भाषी सामान्य जन शंका समाधान की शैली में आपसी पत्रों का उत्तर ढूंढते हैं इसलिये इस आलेख को उसी शैली में प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

विचारणीय विषय हैं

शंका समाधान 1 बोरिंग/नलकूप या आहर-पईन सस्ता कौन?

दूसरे की बीबी हो या बेटा? उसकी लालच करने या उससे तुलना कर दुखी होने से अच्छा है कि दूर का ढोल सुनना बंद कर अपने हाल को समझें। सरकारी इंजीनियर एवं ठेकेदार जानबूझकर गलत प्रचार करते रहते हैं कि - आहर-पईन बेकार है? बोरिंग बनाओ, स्वावलंबी बनो। इसमें डीजल किसकी जेब से लगेगा? धान की खेती में चार-पाँच बार तक पटवन देना होता है। जितने का बाबू नहीं, उतने का झुनझुना। आहर-पईन से ढाल आधारित बिना पंप के ‘मेलबानी’ पटवन होता है। इसकी व्यवस्था में मजदूरी भी कम लगती है। यहाँ-वहाँ पंपिंग सेट को ढोना भी नहीं पड़ता। जमीनी पानी की तुलना में ऊपरी पानी से पौधों का बहुत फायदा देता है। सतही जल में जैव कचरा-खाद भी रहता है। इससे जमीन की ऊर्वरा शक्ति बढ़ती है। पंप भी तो तभी न चलेंगे जब जमीन के भीतर लेयर (जल स्तर) ठीक रहेगा और आप किसान लोग लेयर भागने (नीचे जाने) की समस्या से अच्छी तरह परिचित हैं।

हमलोगों ने बहुत अच्छी तरह कई पइनों पर हिसाब लगाया तो पाया कि सामान्य रख-रखाव के लिए प्रति बिगहा एक लीटर डिजल की कीमत का खर्च बैठता है और मरम्मत के लिए 3 लीटर की कीमत प्रति बीघा का खर्च अधिकतम आता है। आप ही सोचिए, सस्ता कौन हुआ? अगर सरकारी सहयोग मिल जाय तो खर्चा केवल एक लीटर का आता है। पानी के बँटवारे भव (मुँह) बाँधने, खोलने का खर्च अगर पईन पर जोड़ें तो इधर भी तो पंपिंग सेट लाने, ले जाने, चोरी जाने की समस्या रहती ही है। निगरानी कहाँ नहीं करनी पड़ती? और खर्च इसमें भी कम नहीं है।

शंका समाधान 2 आगे कौन आए?

पहले तो जमींदार लोग गोआमी (आपसी सहयोग से निर्माण, मरम्मत, देखभाल और जल के बंटवारे में सहभागिता की पारंपरिक व्यवस्था) कराते थे और कभी-कभी जोर जर्बदस्ती भी होती थी। अब किसान लोग

अंग्रेज और जमींदार दोनों से मुक्त हो गए हैं। हर आदमी अपना मालिक खुद है। इस प्रकार एक ओर तो हम आजादी का सुख भोगना चाहते हैं और दूसरी ओर यह भी चाहते हैं कि कोई दूसरा आदमी हमें डंडे से जानवर जैसा हाँके या कोई संत या मशीहा आए और जो काम हमें करना है, उसे वह कर दे। यह तो ईमानदारी नहीं हुई। आजाद और जिम्मेदार आदमी पहल भी खुद ही करता है और लोकतंत्र में जिम्मेदारी जब सबकी है, फायदा सभी उठा रहे हैं तो भार भी सबको लेना होगा। हाँ, पहल कोई भी कर सकता है अगर कोई पहल करे तो, उसे जिम्मेदारी तो उसकी क्षमता के अनुसार ही देनी चाहिए और अपना कंधा भी लगाना चाहिए। इसी तरह की कई बातें और भी हैं। इन बातों पर साफ-सुथरी समझ बनानी चाहिए।

शंका समाधान 3 अधिकार एवं कर्तव्य

आहर-पड़न एवं गोआम (उसकी रखरखाव एवं पानी के बँटवारे के लिए समुदायिक सहभागिता की परम्परा) नई बात नहीं है। आज भी लोग आहर-पड़न से सिंचाई कर रहे हैं। गोआम के बारे में नए लोगों को लगता है कि यह ठीक नहीं है। सरकार को ही व्यवस्था एवं बँटवारे की जिम्मेवारी लेनी चाहिये और पूरा धन उसे ही खर्च करना चाहिये। परंतु इस मामले में वे भूल जाते हैं कि नहरों से सिंचाई पर शुल्क लगता है और उसका दर भी सरकार ही निर्धारित करती है। आहर-पड़न से सिंचाई पर तो शुल्क लगता ही नहीं और पानी का बँटवारा भी लोग परंपरानुसार आपस में ही करते हैं। यह परंपरा कोई गुप्त या रहस्यमय बात नहीं है। बाकायदा आबपाशी रजिस्टर में गाँवों के अधिकार एवं कर्तव्य वर्णित रहते हैं। आज किसान आहर-पड़न से सिंचाई पर आबपाशी अधिकार तो अपना मानते हैं पर कर्तव्य दूसरे का, चाहे वह सरकार हो या गाँव का ही दूसरा व्यक्ति, यह तो सरासर बेईमानी है।

आधुनिक पढ़ाईवाले लोगों ने, चाहे गाँव का बेरोजगार नौजवान हो या सरकार में बैठे कर्मचारी-अधिकारी उन्होंने अपने मन से ही मान लिया है कि संपत्ति केवल दो ही प्रकार की होती है - सरकारी या निजी। जबकि संपत्ति कई प्रकार की आज भी होती है जैसे व्यक्ति की संपत्ति, परिवार की संपत्ति, जाति की संपत्ति, ट्रस्ट की संपत्ति। तब गाँव की संपत्ति क्यों नहीं होगी? और जब रखरखाव की जिम्मेवारी के समय आहर-पड़न गाँव की संपत्ति नहीं है तो उसके पानी का उपयोग करने के लिए कैसे गाँव या किसी किसान को मुफ्त में हक मिलेगा। आहर-पड़न एवं उसमें बहने वाला पानी सामुदायिक संपत्ति है। कानूनन तो सरकार भी अगर इसका अधिग्रहण करे तो उसे मुआवजा देना होगा पर मांगता ही कौन है?

शंका समाधान 4 पानी कैसी संपत्ति है ?

अभी तक मोटे तौर पर हम चल एवं अंचल संपत्ति का बँटवारा जानते हैं जबकि नए जमाने में खाली जमीन, ज्ञान, तरंग आदि को भी संपत्ति माना जाने लगा है। पानी का स्वभाव चल संपत्ति वाला है। यह गाय-भैंस जैसा है। पानी स्वयं निर्जीव है, पर इसमें अनेक सूक्ष्म एवं घड़ियाल जैसे बड़े जानवर भी रह सकते हैं। आहर-पड़न में आसमानी वर्षा से जल आता है। जंगल, पहाड़ या किसी पठार, ठाट जैसी ऊँची जगह या बहते हुए नाले या नदी से गुजरते हुए जल को आहर में संग्रह किया जाता है। आहर में संग्रह हेतु परंपरा से निर्धारित ऊपरी स्रोत के जल एवं आहर में संग्रहित जल दोनों को लोग अपनी संपत्ति मानकर व्यवहार करते हैं। आहर से पानी खेतों में जाता है और खेतों से बाहर निकलता हुआ नीचे की ओर बहता है। आहर का संचित पानी अगर किसी की संपत्ति है तो आहर-पड़न टूटने पर उस पानी से होने वाली क्षति की जिम्मेवारी भी संपत्ति मानने वाले किसान को लेनी होगी। गाय हमारी, दूध निकालें हम, और फिर गाय को दूसरे का खेत चरने को छोड़ दें, यह न्याय पूर्ण नहीं है। धार और निगार पानी के संरक्षण, भंडारण वितरण एवं उपयोग के मुद्दे भारत में वैदिक काल से आज तक अनेक कारणों से विवाद में रहे हैं। वैदिक कथाओं के अतिरिक्त भगवान गौतम बुद्ध के गृहत्याग का मूल कारण बूढ़ा, बीमार और शव नहीं उनके कुल शाक्य एवं पड़ोसी कोलिय के लोगों के बीच नदी जल उपयोग को लेकर प्रतिवर्ष युद्ध एवं भारी संख्या में नौजवानों की मौत की संख्या बढ़ रही थी। वे किसी को समझा नहीं पा रहे थे। जब वे स्वयं परिवार, गोत्र, एवं राज्य की सीमा से विराट व्यक्तित्व पाये तब समाज को समझा सके और उसमें भी अपने



परिवार के सदस्यों को तो नहीं ही समझा सके, न अनुशासित कर सके। मगध के लोगों ने इसे सुलझा लिया क्योंकि रहना भी साथ है और खेती भी करनी ही है।

दक्षिण बिहार में धार एवं निगार दोनों शब्द व्यापक रूप से देहात में लोगों को ज्ञात हैं। पानी का अपना स्वभाव यात्री का है। वह रास्ता मिलते ही चल पड़ता है, गुरुत्वाकर्षण के बल पर समुद्र की ओर और केशिकाकर्षण, वाष्पीकरण,, वायुमंडलीय दबाव आदि के बल पर आसमान की ओर, भूमिगत जलभृतों से पेड़ की फुनगी की तरफ और समुद्र से हिमालय की ओर। पानी की बड़ी यात्रा जलचक्र कहलाती है - समुद्र, बादल, पहाड़, नाले, नदी, और फिर समुद्र। इस बड़ी यात्रा के साथ-साथ पानी छोटी-छोटी यात्राएँ भी करता है। वाष्पीकरण, पेड़-पौधों, जीवों के शरीर के भीतर की यात्रा, आकाश में ओसकण बनने-बिगड़ने की यात्रा, भूमि की सतह एवं उसके भीतर जलभृतों की यात्रा, जमीन के भीतर-भीतर अंतःस्त्रावी सरिताओं की यात्रा। ऐसी अनेक यात्राओं के द्वारा जल प्रकृति में जीवन को स्थिरता एवं गति दोनों देता रहता है।

पानी के साथ मनुष्य का रिश्ता बड़ा विचित्र है। पानी सबको चाहिए और वह भी सीमित मात्रा में क्योंकि अधिक मात्रा में तो आदमी डूब जाता है। इसके लिये पानी की धारा का उपयोग उसके सामर्थ्य की सीमा में होना जरूरी है। इसके साथ-साथ अधिक पानी एवं उपयोग किये गये पानी दोनों का निकास भी जरूरी है। सभ्यता के विकास के क्रम में प्राकृतिक नियमों के अनुरूप चलने एवं वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था कर लेने की सुविधा ने मनुष्य को अहंकारी बनाया है। परिणामतः मानव कभी-कभी यह भी मानने लगता है कि वह प्रकृति के नियमों के विरुद्ध जा रहा है।

धार अर्थात् धारा, जो सहज ढाल पर बहेगी। जितनी अधिक वर्षा उतनी बड़ी धारा, जितनी अधिक ढाल, उतनी तेज रफ्तार, जहाँ ठहराव वहाँ जमीन एवं फसल के साथ क्रिया-प्रतिक्रिया। वर्तमान दक्षिण बिहार में जहाँ 100 से 150 से.मी. वर्षा होती हो वहाँ मात्रा भी प्रचुर है, दक्षिण से उत्तर-पूर्व की तरफ ढाल भी अच्छी है। पठार से मैदानी भाग की ओर जल-यात्रा पथ है। हाँ, यह औसत के हिसाब से या सीधी समान ढाल नहीं है। पठार एवं पहाड़ी के नीचे मैदान हैं। यहाँ मुख्यतः धान की खेती होती है, जिसके लिये खेतों में लगातार पानी बहते रहना चाहिए। 'बहते रहना' सुनने में जितना सरल है, इसकी शर्तें उतनी ही कठिन हैं। वर्षा हर समय तो होती नहीं है। वह अपने मनमिजाज से होती है तो जरूरी है कि खेत से ऊँची जगह पर जल का भंडार बनाया जाय, उस में उस जलभंडार से ऊँची जगह से पानी लाया जाय, जैसे - पहाड़ी, टीला, पठार या नदी का ऊपरी भाग आदि।

यह आदि भी कम मजेदार नहीं है, जिसमें बाढ़ के समय उफनती नदी का ऊपरी जल सम्मिलित है। यह एक तरफ से नदी से प्राप्त होनेवाला अतिरिक्त जल है। जलाशयों तक पानी आ जाय तो खेतों में बहे, वह भी ऊपर से नीचे तक सबके खेतों में। पानी अधिक आ जाय तो नीचे की तरफ बहकर चला जाय ताकि फसल बरबाद न हो। पानी के बाहर जाने की इसी व्यवस्था को निगार कहते हैं।

किसी ढाल पर स्थित ऊँचे खेत से नीचे के खेत में पानी जाना ही है तो क्यों न इसे ही सामाजिक नियम मान लें? लोगों ने मान लिया। इस व्यवस्था में सबसे ऊपरी और सबसे निचले खेत को कभी-कभी हानि हो जाती है फिर भी नियम यही मान्य है, काम इसी तरह चलता है। निचली खेत वाला भी निश्चिंत रहता है कि उसके खेत तक पानी आना ही है। हाँ, वह अधिक पानी ऊपर से नीचे छोड़ने पर रोक नहीं लगा सकता, इसीलिये खेती करने के मुद्दे पर आधुनिकता के नाम पर व्यक्तिवादी एवं सामुदायिकता विरोधी खेती के लिये सरकार एवं कंपनियों द्वारा दिये गये अनेक प्रशिक्षण बेकार हो जाते हैं क्योंकि वर्षा का पानी अपने प्रवाह एवं सामर्थ्य के अनुसार किसानों को सामूहिक निर्णय करने पर विवश कर देता है।

नदी सिद्ध कर देती है कि जल का वेग केवल ढाल की सीमा में रहकर समुद्र यात्रा तक बलवान होता है। वह समुद्र के पानी को भी नदी में घुसने नहीं देता और समुद्र के किनारे भी इन नदियों से मीठा पानी उपलब्ध हो जाता है। इस प्रकार धार एवं निगार की व्यवस्था प्राकृतिक रूप से प्रभावकारी रहती है।

समझदार लोगों ने वर्षों के अनुभव के आधार पर समझा कि मानव निर्मित जल भंडारों के या तो ढाल-प्रवाह पथ

से नीचे गढा खोदकर बनाया जाय जो तालाबों के रूप में सर्वाधिक सफल है या अगर छोटी-मोटी ऊँचाई वाला तटबंध भी बने तो प्रवेश (धार) एवं निगार (निष्काशन) की व्यवस्था सुदृढ़ रहे। इतने पर भी गाद की सफाई भी नियमित अंतराल पर चलती ही रहती थी, चाहे वह कुँआ ही क्यों न हो। आज के चिंतन में दुर्भाग्यवश न तो धार की चिंता है, न निगार की, न गाद की। उतरी बिहार के जलाशय एवं नदियाँ गाद की भयानक समस्या से ग्रस्त हैं।

शंका समाधान 5 नहर के आकर्षण का रहस्य

प्रायः पढ़े लिखे लोग यह पूछते हैं कि आहर-पइन नहर से बेहतर कैसे है?, जो आप नहर की जगह आहर-पइन के पक्ष में हैं? सच यह है कि नहर बेईमानी पर आधारित है। उदाहरण के लिये, सोन नहर दक्षिण बिहार की बड़ी नहर है। छत्तीस गढ़ की एक पूरी रियासत, सैकड़ों गाँवों को डूबोकर रिहंद-बान सागर जलाशय बने। वहाँ के किसान आज भी दुर्दशा में हैं। सोन नहर के किसान दूसरे इलाके के पानी पर निर्भर हैं और अब मध्यप्रदेश, उत्तरप्रदेश, झारखंड सभी सोन में पानी पहुँचानेवाली सहायक नदियों का पानी रोक रहे हैं और झगड़ा भी हो रहा है।

इससे भिन्न स्थानीय छोटी नदियों पर बनी नहरों एवं पइन में समानता यह है कि दोनों ही आस-पास की वर्षा पर निर्भर हैं, किसी संचित भंडार पर नहीं कि पानी की गारंटी रहे। पहाड़ी पइनों में आस-पास की पूरी वर्षा का सदुपयोग करने के लिए इसे खूब घुमावदार बनाया जाता है ताकि थोड़ी वर्षा में भी पइन चल सके। नहरों तो नदी में पर्याप्त पानी आने पर ही चलेंगी। नहर में जल प्रवेश का स्थान एक होता है जबकि पइन में अनेक। गया जिले की बरसाती नहरों से आहर-पइन बेहतर हैं क्योंकि पइन के साथ तो आहर रूपी जल भंडार है परंतु इन नहरों में भंडारण की व्यवस्था नहीं है। इन पर बने बैराज भी केवल जलस्तर को उठाने का काम करते हैं। आहर-पइन की मरम्मत हो जाए तो यह निर्माण एवं रख-रखाव की दृष्टि से कम खर्चीली है। आहर छोटा भंडार है। छोटी नहरों में तो भंडार होता ही नहीं इसलिए ये प्रायः असफल हैं या किसान इसका पइन की तरह उपयोग कर आहर में पानी भर लेते हैं। आहर-पइन पर हमारा परंपरागत कानूनी अधिकार है। इसके लिए सिंचाई शुल्क नहीं देना पड़ता। अब नहर से सिंचाई के लिए शुल्क लगातार बढ़ता जा रहा है और निजीकरण (जो हो गया) के बाद अचानक नहर से सिंचाई का खर्च भी डीजल की कीमत की तरह बढ़ेगा तब तक मामला आपके हाथ से निकल चुका होगा। आहर-पइन के लिए अगर संगठन बना कर सिंचाई करें तो यह खर्च अपने नियंत्रण में रहेगा।

जिन पइनों में नई तकनीक का इस्तेमाल बिना सोचे समझे होता है, उसके मुहाने पर गड्ढा बन जाता है या बालू भर जाता है। इसमें दोष पइन का नहीं, बेदिमागी नकल का है। जब इंजीनियरों को आहर-पइन के बारे में पढ़ाया-सिखाया ही नहीं जाता तो वे क्या उपाय बताएंगे? दक्षिण बिहार के बाहर से आये पदाधिकारी और इंजीनियर आहर एवं तालाब का फर्क ही नहीं समझते। वे यहाँ तक मान लेते हैं कि आहर में रैयती जमीन ही नहीं होती और इसका पानी समय पर निकालना भी जरूरी नहीं होता है।

नहर केवल इसलिए बेहतर नहीं हो सकता कि हमें तो फायदा हो दूसरों का नुकसान हो, तो हो। इसी तरह की नीयत से जब सभी बेईमानी करने लगे हैं तो अब समय पर तो पानी मिलता नहीं और जब जरूरत नहीं तब रिहंद बाँध का पानी बाढ़ लाता है। इसके उलटा आहर टूट भी जाय तो एकाध बीघे की फसल बरबाद होती है, जान-माल का भारी नुकसान नहीं होता।

शंका समाधान 6 आहर-पइन या नहर किसे बनाना आसान?

जो पइन किसी ऊँची पठारनुमा जगह, जिसे ठाट कहते हैं, या पहाड़ी नाले को मोड़कर निकाली जाती है, उसे सीधा बनाने की अनिवार्यता नहीं होती। पहाड़ी नाले के ही किनारे को कमजोर जगहों पर मजबूत कर देते हैं। बनने के बाद भले ही समझ में नहीं आ रहा हो लेकिन कई बार किसी-किसी प्राकृतिक नाले के बीच में ही आहर बना देते हैं। ऐसे में केवल आहर की दीवार बनाना पड़ता है। पइन तो 80 पतिशत तक प्रकृति से बनी-बनाई मिल जाती है।

उत्तर प्रदेश एवं कई अन्य राज्यों में पंप आधारित नहरें बनी हैं। दक्षिण बिहार में मुंगेर जिले में ऐसी नहरें बनीं

पर सफल नहीं हुईं क्योंकि बिजली ही नहीं तो पंप कैसे चले? मतलब कि ढाल आधारित सिंचाई को छोड़ अन्य सिंचाई कृत्रिम ऊर्जा पर निर्भर रहेगी और मँहगी पड़ेगी। मुफ्त या चोरी के माल का गणित नहीं होता चाहे बिजली ही क्यों न हो।

शंका समाधान 7 नलकूप क्यों नहीं?

हाँ, नलकूप की सिंचाई स्वार्थी व्यक्तिवाद को बढ़ावा देती है, जिसमें जल संरक्षण की चिंता या प्रयास नहीं होता। फसल में लगनेवाले रोग, पानी की गुणवत्ता, जानवरों-पक्षियों से रक्षा आदि कई महत्वपूर्ण मामले में सामूहिक खेती में आसानी से हल हो जाते हैं। दक्षिण बिहार का इतिहास एवं परंपरा हजारों साल की है। यहाँ अनेक प्रकार की सामाजिक व्यवस्थाएँ बनती बिगड़ती रहीं। जरासंध से लेकर ब्रिटिश जमींदारी तक सिंचाई व्यवस्था सुदृढ़ थी। अच्छी फसल और संतुष्टि दोनों थी। उसके बाद 1967 का अकाल क्या पड़ा। पूरा समाज ही दिग्भ्रान्त हो गया?

राजा या सरकार की नजर में आहर-पइन राजा का सब पर स्वामित्व है और राज्य है ऊपरी तौर पर लोक कल्याणकारी और अंदरूनी तौर पर पूँजीपतियों के हितों का संरक्षक। केन्द्र राज्यों में झगड़े करवाता है। प्रांतीय सरकारें जल स्रोतों की बंदोबस्ती, लोकहित ही नहीं दलित हित में कर रही है। राजस्व उसका, मछली उसकी, मरम्मत दूसरे की। ऐसी कथाएँ अनेक हैं। ब्रिटिश राज में भी जो तालाब, आहर, पइन आदि जमींदारों के कब्जे या सामूहिक अधिकार में थे उनकी मरम्मत जमींदारों की पहल पर हो जाती थी। अंगरेजों की नहर का पानी सिंचाई के लिए कम परिवहन के लिए अधिक जरूरी होता था। अंगरेज विरोधी कई क्रांतिकारी गाँव हर साल नहर काटते और सामूहिक जुर्माना भरते थे। आहर-पइन के मामले में बात उलटी थी। जमींदार इसके लिये प्रायः तत्पर रहते थे। जिस जमींदार के इलाके में दानाबंदी की परंपरा थी अर्थात् कर के रूप में राजस्व नगद न ले कर फसल के एक भाग के रूप में लिया जाता था वहाँ जमींदार इस बात के लिये स्वयं तत्पर रहता था कि फसल अच्छी हो और अच्छी फसल के लिये खेतों तक समय पर पानी भी पहुंचे। पानी संबंधी विवाद होने पर किसान एवं जमींदार दोनों साथ रहते थे। ऐसे विवादों एवं मुकदमों की कथाओं से कानून की किताबें भरी पड़ी हैं। नगद राजस्व लेने की परंपरा आते ही जमींदारों की रुचि कम होने लगी फिर भी लोकप्रियता बहाल रखने के लिये वे तत्पर न रहने पर भी समर्थन करते थे।

इस समय जो कानून लागू है, उसमें सारी समस्याओं तथा उलझनों को सुलझाने की जिम्मेवारी जिलाधिकारी पर डाल कर सरकार ने अपनी जिम्मेवारी से पिंड छुड़ा ली है। जिलाधिकारी को यह अधिकार दे दिया गया है कि वह जिस किसी भी एजेंसी को किसी भी आहर-पइन की जिम्मेवारी सौंप दे। यह प्रावधान खतरनाक है एवं भविष्य में निजीकरण को बढ़ावा देने की नीयत से बनाया गया है।

पारिभाषिक शब्द

आहर - एक मौसमी, मुख्यतः खरीफ की फसल के लिए बना जलाशय, जिसका पानी निकाल कर रबी की खेती की जाती है।

पइन - जल प्रवाह के लिए बनी नाली, छोटी-बड़ी, गैर सीधी रेखकीय, जिससे जल के संचय एवं वितरण दोनों काम लिए जाते हैं।

गोआम- सहभागिता की सामाजिक व्यवस्था

आपाशी - आबपाशी सिंचाई का हक

चाहें तो देख सकते हैं-

1 कौटिल्य के अर्थ शास्त्र में सेतुबंध संबंधी निर्देश

2 सी.एस.डी.एस से प्रकाशित डाइंग विज्डम

3 पुराने संयुक्त प्रांत- बिहार, बंगाल उड़ीसा के विभिन्न गजेटियर

4 प्राइवेट इरिगेशन ऐक्ट्स

5 बिहार जल अधिनियम एवं नियमावली

## **VI. Poverty and the Knowledge Question: *The Handloom Sector***

Samyuktha Gorrepati

India accounts for 95% of the world's handwoven fabric, easily making it the handwoven capital of the world. This can also mean that it is also the 'handwoven knowledge' capital of the world. However, the custodians of this knowledge live in a different reality. As per the handloom census 2019-20, there are 35.22 lakh handloom workers in the country, of which 26.73L (75%) are weavers and 8.48L (24%) are allied workers, doing pre and post-loom work. Among the handloom weavers, 72% are women. 67% of weavers earn less than Rs. 5000/-per month!

What needs to be done for these knowledge bearers to lead a dignified life with decent incomes? How can artisans move from mere wage earners, enjoy greater realization of the market pie and take charge of themselves? For over 75 years now, various experiments have been done, both by the State, organizations from the civil society with varying degrees of successes and failures. The handloom industry itself has many micro realities, based on region and the economic-socio-cultural contexts of different weaver communities. It is indeed difficult to treat this sector simply as just 'one whole' and offer simplistic solutions.

However, there are certain over-arching sectoral challenges plaguing the industry. Competition from other powerloom and mill-made imitations, poor implementation of Government Acts, failure of many state institutions like the State Handloom Cooperative Societies, lack of timely, affordable access to raw material, credit and market know-how being some of them.

Today there is talk of sustainability. India is endowed with possibilities to be the torch bearer because the knowledge to create products from textiles to almost everything sustainably already exists within our artisan community.

Despite our large domestic market segment, the market that consumes authentic handloom has become narrower. Awareness is also severely lacking on what is authentic and how to recognize it. Handloom cloth seems pricier than other available seemingly cheaper alternatives. However, that itself may not translate into greater realization for the weaver. Empowering weavers and creating an enabling ecosystem across the handloom value chain so that the entire sector along with its allied workers has maximum realization from handloom trade is important. This has been Chitrika's endeavour.

Chitrika Foundation, an NGO based in Hyderabad, Telangana has been working with handloom weavers for almost two decades in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in three clusters. Its main approach has been to collectivise weavers and train them in various aspects of managing and running their own enterprises. It believes that a greater control of the value chain in the hands of the producers leads to greater bargaining power and market realization for the producers.

Chitrika's experience on working on this premise has been a mixed one. Today, Chitrika works with over 200 weaver households in three clusters in AP and Telangana. The weavers, largely women, are stakeholders of the Chitrika Artisan Producer Company with a combined turnover of over Rs. 3 Cr. What has worked and what has not - shall be discussed as a microcosm of the larger scenario and challenges confronting the community. Thoughts on the role of the state and the society at large in actively sustaining and supporting the artisanal ecosystem shall be put forward for discussion.

## **VII. Rural Industrial Parks (RIPA) :**

### **A Unique intervention of rural industrialization in Chhattisgarh**

Pradeep Sharma

PPST should be given credit to motivate us to identify 'Farmer' in the different context

altogether. A farmer is not only a producer but also an innovator and a communicator too. In reality farmer has always donned multiple hats depending on the season going from being a kisan to kaarigar to a kalakaar (agrarian-artisan-artist). As a result, India has traditionally been a producer country whose villages were always a hub of resources, innovation and skills.

Supporting these endeavors of the farmer were the producer guilds, trading guilds and ancillary cottage industries, all of which ensured that villages became holistic production ecosystems leading to prosperity. While the villages served as production centers, urban areas were the main centers of consumption and trading. However, in contemporary times, a decline in the production systems combined with a severe depletion of natural resources as well as underutilization of livestock has led to large-scale migration and livelihood issues in the villages.

Second important thing is to identify 'Resources' as base instead of only 'Natural resources'. NRM was a world bank led concept which reduces our vast base resources to comparatively small natural resources. Knowledge systems, cattle populations, medicine, music, production skill sets and theology is few example which is highly negated once we only focus on NRM. For example- A vibrant rural cluster is one where cattle graze peacefully in designated areas called Gauthans. Revival of Gauthans into organic fertilizer production centers is one such example in Chhattisgarh we did. After their morning rounds, with their waste being transformed into fertile compost. Complementing this activity a specifically developed production zone where employment is available for local inhabitants. This potential future is woven from the threads of two innovative rural development initiatives –

### **Gauthans and Rural Industrial Parks (RIPA).**

Gauthan is a common place in the village where the cows take rest during the daytime after grazing. This routine allows them to return home during the evening (Godhuli Bela). The idea for such a place is to allow for judicious utilisation of cattle in the villages, as well as scientific enhancement of the agricultural land productivity, based on the traditional inter-dependent chain of 'Jan-Jantu-Jeev' (Life-Creature-People).

Indian agriculture has traditionally been based on bio-manure. Gauthan is thus envisaged as a

center where cow dung and cow urine can be collected to be utilized in production of vermi-compost, Jiv-Amrut etc. At the same time it can also provide a resting center where the cattle can gather in the daytime after grazing. This place not only provides water, shelter and nutritious fodder but also facilitates the delivery of veterinary services such as vaccination, artificial insemination etc.

Rural Industrial Park (RIPA), is a center which not only helps villagers upgrade their existing skills and learn new trades, but also convert their skills into products of local needs through entrepreneurial activities. It is a dynamic and innovative village production zone and served as an extension of Gauthan. RIPA aims to foster a vibrant production and distribution ecosystem through decentralized, cost-effective modern technology and an inclusive, participatory governance mechanism.

### **Key features of RIPA**

1. **Community-based Technology Transfer:** RIPA emphasises need-based community-oriented technology transfer, tailoring production and facilitation services to address specific challenges of traditional occupational communities and meet demand and supply requirements

2. **Entrepreneurship:** RIPA encourages individual and group entrepreneurs to produce goods or provide services that contribute to the village economy. Beyond traditional employment, RIPA units aim to create diverse business opportunities that leverage the unique skills, values, and leisure time of village members. This approach fosters entrepreneurship and economic diversification

3. **Hub for Multiple Villages:** RIPA units are strategically situated to serve as central hubs in a hub and spoke model, catering to the economic needs of 5-6 Gram Panchayats or villages. This regional approach allows for the efficient aggregation of resources and economic activities

4. **Enterprise support facilities:** Provision of support facilities such as worksheds, electricity and water connection, training and capacity building, credit support, marketing and branding, WiFi connection be provided through convergence of Union and State Government schemes

5. **Wide variety of enterprises:** Supporting a range of enterprises such as traditional village crafts, FMCG and daily utility goods, input goods for larger industries, Service enterprises, Digital/ IT-enabled enterprises

6. **Software Hub for Innovative Ventures (SHIV):** Hub for supplying Technology-driven services to the local and global market in form of Rural BPOs, Analytics centers etc

The synergy between Gauthans and RIPAs is potent. Gauthan-produced biofertilizers fed RIPA incubated agro-processing units, thereby creating a closed-loop system that nourishes both land and livelihoods. RIPA's technical expertise is modernizing Gauthan operations, while Gauthans provide a ready workforce and organic resources for RIPA ventures.

This harmonious integration extends beyond economics. Both Gauthans and RIPAs prioritise community participation. Gauthan management can be seamlessly woven into a cluster of village governance systems, while RIPA's inclusive approach ensures local voices are heard in determining production priorities and market development.

Gauthans and RIPAs can craft a new narrative for creative and enterprising rural India. A narrative where villages combine traditional wisdom and technological innovation, where prosperity blooms from fertile fields nourished by healthy cattle, and where communities thrive in a vibrant ecosystem of shared purpose.

### **Experiences in Chhattisgarh**

Gauthans and Rural Industrial Parks (RIPA) were launched in Chhattisgarh as part of an expansive

program of rural economic rejuvenation called Narwa, Garwa, Ghuruwa, Badi (NGGB).

Under the state-wide initiative, the Government of Chhattisgarh set up more than 10,000 Gauthans, which became the hubs for cow dung procurement, at Rs 2/ kg, as well as production of various dung-based products such as vermi-compost, Gobar paint etc. Over 130 lakh quintal of cow dung was procured for which Rs 260 crores reached 3.6 lakh cattle farmers in the form of direct benefit transfer. Further, 31 lakh quintal of vermi-compost was prepared in Gauthans which was sold to farmers and cooperative societies for Rs 310 crores,. The resultant profit of Rs 50 crores was shared among the Self-Help Groups involved in the functioning of these Gauthans. Over the last 3 years, this initiative has also increased the milk production in the state by 5 lakh litres. This endeavour has motivated cattle farmers and dairy owners to continue keeping their non-milching cattle with them, as opposed to earlier practice of abandoning them or keeping them in Gaushalas.

Government of Chhattisgarh also set up 300 Rural Industrial Parks across the state which led to creation of 1,400 enterprises, giving direct employment to around 11,000 households. These enterprises, over a period of 6-8 months, generated revenues of Rs 10.4 crores and profits worth Rs 2.5 crores.

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Session-3.

**Kannada Knowledge Traditions (Kannada - ಕನ್ನಡ)**

*Working Group: Meti Mallikarjun (Convener), J. K Suresh, GSR Krishnan, A. Shanmukha and  
Veena Joshi*



Kannada is a unique, classical and heritage language. The distinctive epistemological traditions that are rooted in Kannada have given birth to unique knowledge systems over times which are different from those of other languages in India. These differences stem from socio-cultural dimensions peculiar to the people and their environments. They are culturally rich and specific to Kannada. The core of each epistemological instance can be understood through an exploration of its expression in Kannada language, literature, history and culture.

A key focus of Kannada Knowledge Tradition Session is to ask broad questions about discursive formations of epistemology and traditions in relation to language, culture and power. The idea of knowledge is relying upon simultaneously knowledge, politics and power. Ways of thinking about social structure, knowledge traditions, politics of pedagogy and cultural practices are taken into consideration to address the pertinent questions regarding the politics of knowledge in the Kannada context. Both Indian (Bharatiya) and western dominant forms of rationality, have long been part of patriarchal power and control over Kannada knowledge traditions. As a result, Bhakti movements, Folk epics and traditions emerged as alternative knowledge traditions to draw their own experiences to guide lives and sociopolitical actions in Karnataka. All in all, in this particular session, the ways in which social relations of knowledge production and the types of knowledge produced are being focused to understand the totality of Kannada Knowledge Traditions within the framework of epistemologies and knowledge traditions.

## **A Proposition**

If India is to be considered a civilization and not a mere nation, its history must lie in the story of the evolution, assimilation and interactions of its languages, and therefore, of various knowledge systems that they represent. Linguistic variety is central in shaping the diversity of beliefs, world-views, cultures and destinies of communities. In this multi-verse, when a language dies, a world dies along with it.

In our pre-occupation with development since independence, it appears that India has not been very serious in engaging with the speedily changing world through the socio-cultural-philosophical tools that language provides us in order to enable us accommodate and assimilate world-views, technologies or constructs that come from across borders; to all sectors that are critical to our society, viz., economics, arts, thought, entertainment, communication and trade. The examples of China and Japan may suffice in illustrating our failure in this task. This failure has also led to a mind-set that is apathetic to the death of languages, based on a mistaken belief that greater uniformity aids the process of nation-building.

How may we approach this task? In contrast with sub-continental Nationalism, languages grounded in the knowledge traditions of the region may bind people more cohesively through shared experiences, beliefs, mores and values in all walks of life. When viewed in the context of society, they offer a promise of enabling the development of a collective identity that can meet the challenges posed by evolving modern economics, social structures, and technological changes through continuous and creative assimilation and accommodation. In this session, we intend to investigate the experiences of the Kannada Desha as an exemplar of how regional knowledge traditions, as reflected by their linguistic expressions – both in their written and oral forms - have faced the challenges posed by social change, unrest, political uncertainty, natural and man-made disasters and sudden changes over time. Some examples of these may be found in the Santa parampare of the Kannada Desha (before, during and after the

Bhakti movement), the pre-modern eras of Buddhism, Jainism and multi-dimensional Hinduism; in the times of Colonialism, the nature of the language of ordinary life in the era of Kannada imperial conquest (Chalukya, Rashtrakuta, Sevuna, Hoysala and Karnata Samrajya periods), the Karnataka unification project, anti-Hindi agitation, Farmers' movements, Gokak agitation, etc.

We also seek to explore the promises offered by knowledge traditions such as of Kannada in resolving the vexatious relationship that has come to be between language and social development (e.g., in education), and well-being and justice for all (e.g., jobs for locals).

**In addition to the above, there is a need to look at some questions that may be addressed in the session:**

There are three broad questions that we ask at the beginning and all of them have relevance for not just Kannada but any of the Indian languages. The questions are as follows:

1. What should be the nature of the knowledge that we receive through Kannada?
2. Should the knowledge that we receive through Kannada be similar to the one we derive from English, Sanskrit or any other language?
3. Is there a need to also import the frameworks through which we receive knowledge, that is, should we also borrow the troughs in which knowledge is contained?

These questions also focus upon some significant thrust areas of Kannada knowledge traditions and philosophies. These areas are correlated to Kannada language, literature, culture, society, politics, Agriculture, Development, Folklore, Science, Technology, and other relevant areas;

**Suggested topics for the session:**

What are considered to be the core knowledge traditions of Kannada?

What are the different shapes these traditions have taken over the last two millennia to face challenges posed by political economics, wars and mass movements? What lessons do they hold for today?

Do the shared history, culture, practices and beliefs of a region, embodied in its language, promote a collective identity that can aid equity and justice?

What can young men and women do to learn from their language and knowledge traditions in order to carve out their own space in today's global village?

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4. What can young men and women do to learn from their language and knowledge traditions in order to carve out their own space in today's global village?

## **The Program**

This session is consisting of keynote address, presentations and panel discussions. The tentative schedule as follows:

**Keynote: Kannada Knowledge: Philosophy of Interdisciplinarity – K V Narayan**

### **Panel discussion 1: Language, Classicism and Orality**

- 1. Knowledge, Power Folk – Krishnamurthy Hanuru**
- 2. Towards a new imagination of 'Knowledge and Language' – K V Akshara**
- 3. Gender as alternative Discourses –Ashadevi M S**
- 4. Social Phenomena in Bhakti Traditions – Basavaraj Kalgudi**
- 5. Idea of Karnatak Studies – K Y Narayanaswamy**

These cultural theorists have already discussed the ways in which epistemological discourses function as a medium for social voices. That is, knowledge discourse is the means by which notions of caste, religion and gender are structured and reproduced within society. It is necessary to reestablish epistemological discourses of Kannada. The issues will be raised here are of such scope that they are the relevant discourses of native perspectives that evolved from various sociocultural contexts.

The relation between Kannada and Sanskrit is very ancient. The negotiation between modernity, English and Kannada is also paramount of important Dialogues that could be taken into consideration in order to deal with traditions of Kannada Knowledge. However, it is not possible to discuss all the changes, development, and negotiations in the relationship. Nevertheless, some important debates can be floated here.

### **Panel discussion 2: Exploring/uncovering the possibilities**

1. Crises in the Perspectives of Social Science – Chandra Pujari
2. Knowledge Question and Cultural Hegemony – Rajaram Tolpadi

3. Alternative Discourses –Jayaprakash Benjagere
4. Knowledge of Oppressed Communities – Du Sarswathi
5. Social Phenomenon and Idea of Social Knowledge – Santhosh Naik

In a complex and rapidly changing sociopolitical environment, social scientific study examines how we produce ideas, knowledge, and perceptions to negotiate with this environment. This primarily focuses on communicating and implementing modalities, modes of governing ourselves to understand our socio-cultural environments. The methods that we adopt to solve the problems we face in the organization of social relations and processes. This session (panel) provides a basic overview of how social science contains deeply embedded sociocultural realities, assumptions and outlines the important relationship between philosophical thinking and practical implications in the research methods of social sciences.

*Brief Profile of the Contributors to the Session (in alphabetic order)*

**K V Narayan:** Professor (retired) and Renowned linguist and cultural theorist. He is an intellectual and educator in Karnataka, known for making his insights accessible in the areas of language, linguistics, literary criticism and cultural theories to a broad audience, including teachers, academics, students, and general public. KVN has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various reviewed.

**Krishnamurthy Hanuru:** Professor of Kannada (retired), renowned creative writer and cultural theorist. He has worked primarily in the areas of tribal studies, ancient and medieval literature to organize knowledge in order to understand the collective phenomenon of Kannada knowledge traditions and its practical implications. His literary insights and creative writings help us to develop the poetics of Kannada. He has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various reviewed journals.

**Chandra Pujari:** Professor (retired), renowned social scientist and director, higher education academy, Dharwad. His research focuses on the areas of development, cultural politics, and hegemony. His ideas are very significant to promote the pursuits of social science and the idea of just society. He has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various national and international journals.

**Rajaram Tolpadi:** Professor (retired), renowned political scientist, Lohiaite socialist and former director of Nehru studies centre, university of Mangalore, Mangalore. His research focuses on the areas of lohiaite socialism, secularism and liberal democratic values. His ideas are so relevant to promote the political philosophy and sustainable lives. He has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various national and international journals.

**Basavaraj Kalgudi:** Professor of Kannada (retired), literary critic, cultural theorist, member, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. He has made significant contributions to Kannada literature and cultural studies. He holds a doctorate in an interdisciplinary subject on Medieval Mystical Poetry and Historical Sense. Dr. Kalgudi has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various national and international journals. Some of his important works include A Study of Sathi System and Mysticism: As a Study of Cultural Problem and Search for New Existence.

**K V Akshara:** He is a renowned theatre director, cultural theorist, and playwright in the Kannada language. He is a prominent scholar in the contemporary Kannada theatre. Akshara presently heads Ninasam, the theatre group and institution in Heggodu, Karnataka, founded by his father K V Subbanna. Ninasam is one of the premier theatre institutions which played a

prominent role in developing theatre culture in Karnataka. He has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various previewed journals.

**Banjagere Jayaprakash:** He is a prominent Kannada poet, cultural theorist, critic, columnist, translator, and former Chairman, Kannada Book Authority, Govt. of Karnataka. He has been actively involved in various literary and cultural movements for the past three decades. Jayaprakash has served as the editor of the literary monthly magazine Honnaru Sahitya Maas and has contributed as a columnist for several other publications. He has published numerous books, research papers, and articles in various previewed journals.

**K. Y. Narayanaswamy:** He is a well-known Kannada poet, playwright, and scholar. he has made significant contributions to Kannada literature and theatre. He is currently a Kannada professor at the Maharani Cluster University in Bangalore. KYN is the author of several popular Kannada plays, including 'Kalavu, Anabhigna Shakuntala, Chakraratna, Huliseere, Vinura Vema. He has also translated Kuvempu's Shudra Tapaswi into Telugu and adapted Kuvempu's Malegalalli Madumagalalu into a 9-hour play. One of his play Pampabharatha which is considered a milestone in modern Kannada theatre. His plays are known for their experimental approach and contemporary relevance.

**Du Saraswathi:** She is a prominent Kannada Dalit feminist writer, theatre artist, and activist. She has been actively involved in the Women's Movement and the Dalit Movement for over five decades. Du Saraswathi is well-known for her plays, particularly the Sannthimmi plays, which feature a rural woman character who addresses various social issues such as gender, sexuality, and economics. Her plays have been staged across Karnataka and beyond. Some of her notable works include "Henedare Jedananthe Jeeva Sampige", Neera Daari, Eegen Maadeeri (an autobiographical narrative), Baduku Bayalu (a Kannada translation of A. Revathi's "The Truth About Me: A Hijra Life story).

**M. S. Ashadevi:** She is a distinguished Kannada literary critic and feminist. She has made significant contributions to Kannada literary criticism feminism and gender studies. Ashadevi is currently Professor of Kannada at Maharani Cluster University in Bangalore. Some of her notable works include streematavanu uttarisalaru, Belakiginta Bellage, Naduve Suliva Atma and also published numerous research papers, and articles in various reviewed journals.

**Santhosh Naik:** He is an Associate Professor at the Department of Studies and Research in Sociology at Karnataka State Open University (KSOU) in Mysuru. He has been a part of the faculty since 2012 and has a strong academic background with degrees in Philosophy, Sociology, and a Ph.D. from Gulbarga University. Dr. Naik specializes in Rural and Urban Sociology, Majority and Minority Relations Work, Family, and Gender, and Social Justice. He has also been involved in various research projects, including a study on urbanization and alcoholism in Mysuru city. Additionally, Dr. Naik has contributed to documentary films and has been involved in content creation for documentaries depicting the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on various communities.

## Papers/Abstracts Presented in Session-3

### **ಭಾಗ -1: ನುಡಿ, ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಮೌಖಿಕತೆಯ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳು ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳು**

ಪ್ರೊ. ಕೆ ವಿ ನಾರಾಯಣ

೧. ಕನ್ನಡ ನುಡಿಗೇ ಒಂದು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಇದೆಯೇ? ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಅಥವಾ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂದು ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸಬೇಕೋ. ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿದರೆ ಅದು ಈಗ ನಾವು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಎಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಿರುವ ಭೌಗೋಳಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದನ್ನೂ ದಾಟುತ್ತದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂದು ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸಿದರೆ ಆಗ ಅದು ಕೇವಲ ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಸಿರುವ ಹಲವು ನುಡಿಗಳನ್ನಾಡುವ ಜನ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳಿಗೂ ಸೇರಿಸಿ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂದಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

೨. ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂದರೇನು? ಜನರು ತಮ್ಮ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಳಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳೋಣ. ಇದು ಯಾವ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿರುತ್ತದೆ? ಅಂದರೆ ಹೇಳಿಕೆಗಳ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವುದೋ ಅಥವಾ ಆಚರಣೆಯ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವುದೋ? ಈ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೂ ಸಲ್ಲುವಂತೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೋ ಅಥವಾ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೋ? ಸಮಾಜವೇ ಹಲವು ಬಗೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಮಾನಾಂತರವಾಗಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಲಂಬಾಂತರದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಡೆದುಹೋಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಎಲ್ಲ ವಲಯಗಳಿಗೂ ಈ ಜ್ಞಾನವೆಂಬುದು ಸಮಾನವಾಗಿ ಇರುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವೇ?

೩. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದುದೋ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಹಲವು ನುಡಿ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ತಾನೂ ನಂಬಿ ತನ್ನದೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದುಕೊಂಡಿದೆಯೋ? ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ನೋಡೋಣ. ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ರಚನೆಗೊಂಡಿರುವ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಕೃತಿಗಳು ಹಲವಾಗಿವೆ. ಗಜಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಹಯಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ವಿಷಾಪಹರಣ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ (ಖಗೇಂದ್ರಮಣಿ ದರ್ಪಣ) ಸಾಪ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ಮುಂತಾದ ವಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲದೆ ಲೋಕೋಪಕಾರ, ಮಾನಸೋಲ್ಲಾಸ (ಇದು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ರಚನೆಯಾಗಿದೆಯಾದರೂ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಲ್ಲ) ಶಿವತತ್ತ್ವ ಚಿಂತಾಮಣಿ, ಶ್ರೀ ತತ್ತ್ವನಿಧಿ ಮುಂತಾದ ವಿಶ್ವಕೋಶ ಮಾದರಿಯ ರಚನೆಗಳು ಮಂಡಿಸುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಕನ್ನಡ ನೆಲೆಕೇ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದುದಾಗಿರಲಾರದು. ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಅನ್ಯ ಮೂಲದಿಂದ ಪಡೆದ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಕನ್ನಡ ನುಡಿಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಂಡಿಸುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಈ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಕೇವಲ ಕನ್ನಡಕ್ಕೆ, ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರಿಗೆ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕಕ್ಕೆ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

೪. ಎರಡು ಬಗೆಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ. ಒಂದು ಬಗೆಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗೆ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ನೆಲೆಯೊಂದಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ದೈನಿಕ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ಅನ್ವಯಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಬಗೆಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಹೀಗೆ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲವಾಗದೆಯೂ ತನ್ನೊಳಗೇ ತಾನು ಒಂದು ಸಂವಾದವನ್ನು ಬೆಳೆಸುತ್ತಾ ತನ್ನನ್ನೇ ತಾನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ರೈತರು, ಕುಶಲ ಕರ್ಮಿಗಳು ತಮ್ಮತಮ್ಮ ಉತ್ಪಾದನಾ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳ ಸಂಬಂಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ನೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಆ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳು ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲವಾಗದಿದ್ದರೆ ನಿರುಪಯುಕ್ತವೇ ಆಗಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಎರಡನೆಯ ಮಾದರಿಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಚಿಂತನೆಗಳು ಬೌದ್ಧಿಕ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚರ್ಚೆಗೆ, ವಿಮರ್ಶೆಗೆ, ವಿವರಣೆಗೆ ಒಳಗಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ತತ್ತ್ವ ಪದಕಾರರು, ಶರಣರ ನೂರಾರು ವಚನಗಳು, ಕೀರ್ತನಕಾರರ ರಚನೆಗಳು ಹೀಗೆ ಬಲವರ ಮಾತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಸ್ತಾರಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಆ ರಚನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿತವಾಗುವ ಸಂಗತಿಗಳು ಜೀವನಕ್ರಮದ ಭಾಗ ಆಗಿರಲೇ ಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಒತ್ತಾಯಗಳೇನೂ ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಈ ಎರಡನೆಯ ಮಾದರಿಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳು ಭಾಷಿಕ ನೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಮಾತು ಇಲ್ಲವೇ/ಮತ್ತು ಬರಹಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೈದಳಿದಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಮೊದಲ ಮಾದರಿಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳು ಕೂಡ ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಪ್ರಮಾಣೀಕರಣಗೊಂಡಾಗ ಭಾಷಿಕ ನೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುವುದುಂಟು. ಆಧುನಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಾಭ್ಯಾಸದ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಯ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕ್ರಿಯೆಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ರವಾನಿಸುವ ಬದಲಿಗೆ ಮಾತು/ಬರಹಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ರವಾನಿಸುವ ನೆಲೆಗಳು ರೂಪುಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತವೆ. ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನವೇ ಮೊದಲಾಗಿ ಹಲವು ಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಖೆಗಳು ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡಿರುವುದೇ ಈ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಲ್ಲವೇ?

೫. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಗ್ರಹಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಷಿಕ ನೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲವಲ್ಲದೆ, ತಂತಾನೇ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯು ಭಾಷಿಕ ನೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯದೆ, ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಿಂತ ಮೇಲು ದರ್ಜೆಯದು ಎಂದ ನಿಲುವು ಜಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಬೌದ್ಧಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ಭೌತಿಕ ಶ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ತರತಮ ಭಾವದಲ್ಲಿ ಇರಿಸುವ ನಮ್ಮ ದೈನಂದಿನ ನಡವಳಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದರೆ ಮೇಲಿನ ಮಾತಿಗೆ ಪುರಾವೆಗಳು ದೊರಕುತ್ತವೆ. ಇದು ಸರಿಯೋ ತಪ್ಪೋ ಎಂಬುದು ಈಗ ನಮ್ಮ ಚರ್ಚೆಯ ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲ. ವಸ್ತುಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸಲು ಈ ಸಂಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಬೇಕಾಯಿತು.

೬. ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ನೆಲೆಯ ಜ್ಞಾನಗಳು ಸದಾ ಕಾಲ ಸ್ಥಗಿತವಾಗಿರುತ್ತವೋ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತವೋ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ. ಈ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗೆ ಉತ್ತರವಾಗಿ ಎರಡು ಬಗೆಯ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿದೆ. ಒಂದು: ಇಂತಹ ಜ್ಞಾನಗಳು ಕಾಲ ಕಳೆದಂತೆ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿ ನಿಷ್ಕ್ರಿಯವಾಗುವುದು. ಎರಡು: ಕಾಲ ಕಳೆದಂತೆ ಹೊಸ ಸವಾಲುಗಳನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಲು ತನ್ನ ಸ್ವರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಮೊದಲನೆಯ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡೋಣ. ಆನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿದು ಪಳಗಿಸುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು

ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದವರು ಸೋಲಿಗರು. ಮೂವೆಂದರ್ ಎಂದು ಹೆಸರಾದ ಚೋಳ, ಪಾಂಡ್ಯ, ಚೇರ ದೊರೆಗಳ ಸೈನ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಆನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಿ, ಅವುಗಳಿಗೆ ತರಬೇತಿ ನೀಡಿ, ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದವರು. ಆದರೆ ಬದಲಾದ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಈ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗೆ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ನೆಲೆಯೇ ಇಲ್ಲವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈಗ ತಮ್ಮ ನಿತ್ಯದ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಆನೆಗಳೊಡನೆ ಜೀವಿಸಲು ಬೇಕಿರುವಷ್ಟು ಮಾತ್ರ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಜೇನುಕುರುಬರು ಪುನ್ನಾಟ ನಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗಾಧ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದ ಜೇನನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದರು. ರಾಜ್ಯ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯು ಆ ಜೇನನ್ನು ಸಮುದ್ರಮಾರ್ಗವಾಗಿ ಯುರೋಪಿನ ಕೆಲವು ನಾಡುಗಳಿಗೆ ರಫ್ತು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೀಗ ಜೇನು ಕುರುಬರ ಆ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗೆ ಇದ್ದ ಹೊರಚಾಚು ಇಲ್ಲವಾಗಿದೆ. ಅದು ತಲೆಮಾರುಗಳನ್ನು ದಾಟಿ ಉಳಿಯುವ ಸಂಭವ ಕಡಿಮೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದೆ ಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲವು ಕುಶಲ ಕರ್ಮಿಗಳ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯು ಅವರ ಜೀವನ ಕ್ರಮದ ಪಲ್ಲಟದಿಂದಾಗಿ ನಿರುಪಯುಕ್ತವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವುದನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ, ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯು ಗುರಿಯಾಗಿರುವ ಕರ್ಮಗಳ ನೆಲೆ ಒಂದಾದರೆ ಸೇವಾ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ನೆಲೆಗಳು ಈಗ ನಿರುಪಯುಕ್ತವಾಗಿವೆ. ಅಂತಹ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳೇ ಇಲ್ಲವಾಗಿವೆ. ಆ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿದ್ದ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳು ಈಗ ಬಳಕೆಗೆ ಬರಲು ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಮರು ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಈಗ ಅವಕಾಶಗಳೇ ಇಲ್ಲವಾಗಿವೆ.

೬. ಕೆಲವು ಬಗೆಯ ಉತ್ಪಾದನಾ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿದ್ದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಮುಚ್ಚಯವು ಕಾಲದ ಗತಿಯೊಡನೆ ಹೊಸ ಸವಾಲುಗಳನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ಸ್ವರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗತ್ಯವಾದ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಾಣಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಕೃಷಿ, ಬೇಟೆ, ಮೀನುಗಾರಿಕೆ ಮುಂತಾದ ವೃತ್ತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಗಿರುವ, ಆಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದರೆ ಈ ಸಂಗತಿಗಳು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗುತ್ತವೆ.

ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸೋಣ. ಈ ತಿಳಿವು ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ನುಡಿಯ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿರಬಹುದು; ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಜನರ ನಡವಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿಹೋಗಿರಬಹುದು. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಇದು ತನ್ನ ಅಂತಿಮ ಹಂತವನ್ನು ತಲುಪಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಬೇಡದ ತಿಳಿವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಡಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಂದು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯನ್ನು ನೋಡೋಣ.

ಬೆಳೆ ಇರುವ ಹೊಲಗಳಿಗೆ ಸುತ್ತಮುತ್ತಣ ಅಡವಿಗಳಿಂದ ಕಾಡುಹಂದಿಗಳು ನುಗ್ಗಿ ಬೆಳೆಯನ್ನು ತಿನ್ನುವುದೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಹಾಳುಗೆಡುಹುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ತಡೆಯಲು ಬೇಲಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಕುವುದು ಮುಂತಾದ ವಿಧಾನಗಳು ಕೆಲಸಕ್ಕೆ ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ರೈತರು ಈ ಹಾವಳಿಯನ್ನು ನಿವಾರಿಸಲು ಬೇರೊಂದು ದಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಕಂಡುಕೊಂಡದ್ದನ್ನು ಈಚೆಗೆ ನಾನು ನನ್ನ ಹಳ್ಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗಮನಿಸಿದೆ. ದಿನವೂ ಈ ಹಂದಿಗಳು ಬರುವ ದಾರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಒಳಗೆ ನುಸುಳುವ ಕಿಂಡಿಗಳು ಯಾವುವು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ರೈತರು ಗುರುತಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆ ಕಿಂಡಿಗಳ ಹೊರಗೆ ನೆಲದ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೇರ್ ಕಟಿಂಗ್ ಸಲೂನ್‌ನಿಂದ ತಂದ ತುಂಡು ತುಂಡು ಕೂದಲನ್ನು ಒತ್ತಾಗಿ ಹರಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ನೆಲ ಮೂಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬರುವ ಹಂದಿಗಳು ಒಳಕಿಂಡಿಯ ಬಳಿ ಬರುವಾಗ ನೆಲದ ಮೇಲಿರುವ ಈ ಕೂದಲಿನ ತುಂಡುಗಳು ಅವುಗಳ ಮೂಗಿನೊಳಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಆಗ ಅವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಉಸಿರಾಡಲು ತೊಂದರೆ ಉಂಟಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದರಿಂದ ದಿಕ್ಕು ತೋಚದಂತಾಗಿ ಹಂದಿಗಳು ಅಲ್ಲಿಂದ ದೂರ ಓಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಸುಳಿಯುವ ಸಂಭವ ಕಡಿಮೆ. ಇದು ಹಿಂದೆ ರೈತರ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಈಗ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯ ಒತ್ತಡದಿಂದಾಗಿ ಸೇರ್ಪಡೆಯಾದ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ನಾನು ಈ ಬರಹದಲ್ಲಿ ನುಡಿಯ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದೇನೆ. ಜನರು ಇದನ್ನು ಕೇವಲ ಆಚರಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಈ ಉಪಾಯವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಯಾರೊಡನೆಯೂ 'ಮಾತಾಡ'ಬಾರದು, ಈ ಉಪಾಯವನ್ನು ಯಾರಿಗೂ ಹೇಳಿಕೊಡಬಾರದು ಎಂಬ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯೂ ಆ ರೈತರಲ್ಲಿ ಇದೆ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಹಾಗೆ ಮಾತಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದನ್ನು 'ಕೇಳಿಸಿ'ಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಹಂದಿಗಳು ಮರುದಿನ ಬೇರೆ ಕಡೆ ಒಳಕಿಂಡಿಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುತ್ತವಂತೆ. ಅಂದರೆ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ನುಡಿ ರೂಪಕ್ಕೆ ಪರಿವರ್ತಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಷೇಧವೇ ಇದೆ.

೭. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಜನತೆಯ ಜೀವನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಭಾವಿಸುವ ಹಲವಾರು ಸಾಮುದಾಯಿಕ ಆಚರಣೆಗಳಿವೆ. ಈ ಆಚರಣೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ನುಡಿ ನೆಲೆಯ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗಳೂ ಇವೆ. ಆ ನುಡಿ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗಳಿಗೂ ಜನತೆಯ ಆಚರಣೆಗಳಿಗೂ ನೇರವಾದ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಇದೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಸವದತ್ತಿಯ ಎಲ್ಲಮ್ಮ, ಮೈಲಾರಲಿಂಗ, ಜುಂಜಪ್ಪ, ಮಲೆಯ ಮಾದೇಶ್ವರ, ಮಂಟೇಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಹಲವನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಸರಿಸಬಹುದು. ಕಾಲಗಣನೆಯ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹುಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಚಂದ್ರನ ಚಲನೆಯ ಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಅಧರಿಸಿದ ಆಚರಣೆಗಳೆವು. ಶಂಬಾ ಜೋಶಿಯವರು ಇಂತಹ ಆಚರಣೆಗಳು ನಮ್ಮ ಜನರ ಜೀವನವನ್ನು ನಿಯಂತ್ರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ, ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ತಾತ್ವಿಕತೆಯು ಚಾಂದ್ರ ಪಾತಳಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ್ದೆಂದು ವಿವರಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಈ ಚಾಂದ್ರಪಾತಳಿಯು ಕಾಲದ ಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಸದಾ ಪುನರಾವೃತ್ತಗೊಳುವ ವೃತ್ತಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧಿಸುತ್ತದೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಶಂಬಾ ಜೋಶಿಯವರ ಈ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯೆಯು ಕೇವಲ ವಿವರಣೆ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ; ಒಂದು ನೆಲೆಯ ಮೌಲ್ಯಮಾಪನವೂ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಈ ನೆಲೆಯ ಜೀವನ ಕ್ರಮವು ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಗಳಿಗೆ, ನಂಬಿಕೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಟ್ಟುಬೀಳುವಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ; ತನ್ನನ್ನು ತಾನು ವಿಮರ್ಶಾತ್ಮಕವಾಗಿ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ನಿರಾಕರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಜೋಶಿಯವರ ವಿವರಣೆ. ಈ ದಿಕ್ಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಚರ್ಚೆಗಳು ನಡೆದಂತೆ ತೋರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

೮. ದ್ರಾವಿಡ ನುಡಿಗಳನ್ನಾಡುವ ಕೆಲವು ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಚಾಂದ್ರಮಾನ ಕಾಲಗಣನೆಯನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸಿದರೆ ಮತ್ತೆ ಕೆಲವು ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಸೌರಮಾನ ಕಾಲಗಣನೆಯನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಅದೇನೇ ಇರಲಿ. ಬಹುಪಾಲು ದ್ರಾವಿಡ ನುಡಿಗಳನ್ನಾಡುವ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಕರ್ಮ ಮತ್ತು ಹಣೆಬರಹಗಳನ್ನು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಕಾರ್ಯಫಲಗಳನ್ನು ನಿಯಂತ್ರಿಸುವ ನೆಲೆಗಳೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಈ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳು ಅವರ ಬದುಕಿನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನವನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಈ ಎರಡೂ ನೆಲೆಗಳು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ವರ್ತನೆಗಳ ಪರಿಣಾಮಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗುವ ನಿಯಂತ್ರಕ ಬಿಂದುಗಳ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಹೊರಗೆ ಇರುತ್ತವೆ ಎಂದು

ತಿಳಿಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಈ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸುವ ಜೀವನಕ್ರಮವು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕ್ರಿಯೆಗೂ ಅದರ ಪರಿಣಾಮಕ್ಕೂ ಇರುವ ನೆಂಟನ್ನು ಕಾಲದೇಶಗಳ ಕಟ್ಟುಪಾಡಿಗೆ ನೀಮಿತಗೊಳಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಎಂದೋ ಯಾರೋ ನಿರ್ಧರಿಸಿದ ಸಂಗತಿಗಳು ಪರಿಣಾಮಗಳನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸುತ್ತವೆ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಯಲಾಗಿದೆ; ಹಾಗೇ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಗಳು (ಆದರಲ್ಲೂ ನ್ಯಾಯ ವಿತರಣಾ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ) ಯಾವುದೇ ಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅದರ ಪರಿಣಾಮಗಳು ಈಗ ಮತ್ತು ಇಲ್ಲೇ ನಿರ್ಣಯಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತವೆ. ಜನರ ಬದುಕು ಮತ್ತು ಅವರ ನಂಬಿರುವ ಮತ್ತು ಆಚರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಹೊಸ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯು ಅವರನ್ನು ಒತ್ತಾಯಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಅವರಿಂದ ಬಯಸುವ ಬದ್ಧತೆಗೂ ನಡುವೆ ಬಿಕ್ಕಟ್ಟೊಂದು ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾದಂತಿದೆ.

## ಜ್ಞಾನ - ಅಧಿಕಾರ - ಜನಪದ

ಪ್ರೊ. ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿ ಹನೂರ

ಮೇಲಿನ ವಿಷಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಸಮಾಜ ರಚನೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದಿತು ಎಂಬುದು ತಿಳಿದ ಸಂಗತಿ. ಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ಕೂ ಅಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೂ ತಕ್ಕಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಕಾಲಾನುಕಾಲದ ಹೊಂದಾಣಿಕೆ ಇದ್ದು, ಇವೆರಡಕ್ಕೂ ಜನಪದ ಜಗತ್ತಿಗೂ ಅದೆಷ್ಟು ಸಂಬಂಧವಿದ್ದಿತೋ ಹೇಳಲಾಗದು. ಜನಪದ ಲೋಕ ತನ್ನ ಎಂದಿನ ವ್ಯವಸಾಯ ಮತ್ತು ಇನ್ನಿತರ ಕಸುಬುಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಬದುಕಿ ಬಂದಿವೆ. ಆದರೂ ಅರಮನೆಗಳಿಗೂ, ಅಗ್ರಹಾರಗಳಿಗೂ ಅಗತ್ಯವೆನಿಸುವ ಆಹಾರ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದುದು ಗ್ರಾಮಸಮಾಜಗಳೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದು ಒಮ್ಮೊಮ್ಮೆ ಈ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹಿಂಸಾಕೃತ್ಯಗಳೂ ನಡೆದಿದ್ದಿರಬಹುದು. ಗ್ರಾಮಸಮಾಜಕ್ಕೆ ರಾಜಸತ್ತೆಯ ಕುರಿತು ಭಯವಿದ್ದು, ಅಗ್ರಹಾರಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಅರಿವೇ ಇಲ್ಲದಂತೆ ಬದುಕಿ ಬಂದದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಬಹಳಷ್ಟು ಪುರಾವೆಗಳು ದೊರೆಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಆದರೂ ಜನಪದರ ನಡುವೆ ಅಕ್ಷರ ಬಲ್ಲವರ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳು, ಇನ್ನಿತರ ಸಂಗತಿಗಳು ಪ್ರಚಲಿತವಿದ್ದು ಅವು ಆ ಸಮೂಹಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇಕಾದಂತೆ ರೂಪ ಪಡೆದು ಮುನ್ನೂರು ಬಗೆಯ ರಾಮಾಯಣ, ಭಾರತ ಬಗೆಗಳಾದದ್ದು ಹೇಗೆ ?

ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಜೈನಯುಗ ಅಥವಾ ವೀರಯುಗ , ವಚನಯುಗ ಅಥವಾ ಶರಣ ಚಳುವಳಿ ಯುಗ ಎಂದು ಆ ಮುಂದಿನದನ್ನು ಭಕ್ತಿಯುಗ ಎಂತಲೇ ಕರೆಯುತ್ತ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ವರೆಗೆ ಅಷ್ಟಾಗಿ ಗಮನಕ್ಕೆ ಬರದೇ, ಅರ್ಧ ಶತಮಾನದಿಂದಷ್ಟೇ ತೆರೆದುಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಜನಪದ ಮೌಖಿಕ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಇರುವ ವಸ್ತು ವಿಷಯ ವಿಂಗಡಣೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾಣಬಹುದೇ ? ಹಳಗನ್ನಡ ರಾಮಾಯಣ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳು ಮೊದಲಾಗಿ ಇನ್ನಿತರ ಪಂಡಿತರ ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳು ಅರಸೊತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಪಾರಮ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತೇ ಹೇಳಿರುವುದಾದರೆ, ಜನಪದ ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳು ತಮ್ಮ ನೆಡುವಣ ಸಂತರನ್ನೇ ಕುರಿತು ಕಥೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿ ಹಾಡಲು ಕಾರಣಗಳೇನು? ಇವು ಅಧಿಕಾರದ ವಿರುದ್ಧವೇ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟವು ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಇವೆ. ಹಾಗೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಕವಿರಾಜಮಾರ್ಗ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಬಂದ ಕನ್ನಡಮೆನಿಪ್ಪಾ ನಾಡಿನ ತುಂಬ ಪ್ರಚಲಿತವಿದ್ದ ಜನಪದ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ನುಡಿಗಳು ಕಡಿಮೆ ಇದ್ದವೇ? ಹಾಗೇನೂ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲ ಎನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಾಗಾದರೆ ಅರಮನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಇದ್ದ ಹೊಂದಾಣಿಕೆ, ಜನಪದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಇದ್ದಿರಬಹುದಾದ ಸಂಬಂಧಾಂತರ ಇದರ ಕಾಲ್ಪನಿಕಗಳು , ಅಲ್ಲಿಯ ಭಾಷಾಕ್ರಮ ಯಾವ ಸ್ವರೂಪದವು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳೊಡನೆ ಗಮನಿಸಬೇಕಾಗಿದೆ...

## ಭಾಷೆ ಮತ್ತು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ

ಪ್ರೊ. ಬಸವರಾಜ ಕಲ್ಗುಡಿ

ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಶುರುವಾಗುವುದೇ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂದರೇನು ಎನ್ನುವ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯಿಂದ. ಅದನ್ನು ಹೇಗೆ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಬಹಳ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣವಾದಂತಹ ವಿಚಾರ. ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ/ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಾಧಕರನ್ನು ಕುರಿತ ವ್ಯಂಗ್ಯದ ಮಾತುಗಳು ಇವೆ. "ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಾಧಕರೆಲ್ಲ ಕಳವಳಿಸಿ ಹೋದರು" ಎನ್ನುವ ಅಲ್ಲಮನ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾದ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ, ಲೋಕದ ಅರಿವು, ಮತ್ತು ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ನಾವು ಅರಿಯುವ ವಿಧಾನ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಯುವುದಾದರೆ ಅದು ಒಂದು ಭಾಷೆಗೆ ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟವಾದುದೇ ಎನ್ನುವ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ ಒಂದು ಭಾಷೆಗೆ ಒಂದು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಇರಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಧ್ಯವೇ ಇದ್ದರೆ ಅದು ಸ್ವಾಯತ್ತವಾದುದೇ ಎನ್ನುವುದರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಚರ್ಚೆಗಳು ನಡೆದಿವೆ. ಭಾಷೆ ಒಂದು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಬಹುಶಃ ಪಶ್ಚಿಮದ ಮಾಡೆಲ್ ನ ಯೋಚನೆ ಎಂದು ನನಗೆ ಅನಿಸಿದೆ. ಭಾರತೀಯ ದೇಶಿ ಭಾಷೆಗಳ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಷೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಏಕರೂಪಿಯ ಮಾದರಿಯಲ್ಲ. ಭಾಷೆ ಮತ್ತು ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗೆ ಇರುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಯಾದೃಚ್ಛಿಕವಾದದ್ದಿರಬೇಕು. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಸಮುದಾಯದ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳು ಬಹುಪಾಲು ಆಯಾ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ನಂಬಿಕೆ ಆಚರಣೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಗಳ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟತೆಯನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿ



ರೂಪಗೊಂಡಿರುತ್ತದೆ ಇಂಥ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗಳು ಭಾಷೆಯಿಂದ ಆಚೆ ಇರುವ ಅನುಭವ ಲೋಕದ್ದು ಆಗಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನವು ನಾದ ಸಂಗೀತ ಮಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಯ ನಾಟ್ಯಮಯತೆ ಇವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡು ಒಂದು ಮೆಟಾ ಭಾಷೆಯನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಡುವುದು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಮುದಾಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಗಳ ಒಂದು ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟತೆ. ಕನ್ನಡಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆಯು ಈ ಮಾತು ನಿಜ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಕನ್ನಡ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಹಲವು ಕನ್ನಡದ ವ್ಯವಿಧ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ತನ್ನದೇ ಆದ ಅನುಭವಾತ್ಮಕ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇದು ಹೊತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಭಿನ್ನವಾಗಿದೆ ಅನೇಕ ಬಾರಿ ಈ ಜ್ಞಾನವು ಒಳಗಿನದಾಗಿದ್ದು ಹೊರಗಿನದನ್ನು ಅದು ಎದುರಿಸುವ ಒಂದು ಹೊಸ ಸಂವಾದವನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಬಲ್ಲದು.

ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಜ್ಞಾನವೆಂದು ನಾವು ಸಾಂಪ್ರದಾಯಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕರೆಯುವ ಅನೇಕ ವೈಚಾರಿಕ ಮೀಮಾಂಸೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮೂಲಭೂತವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸುವ ಅಗತ್ಯ ಇದೆ ಎಂದು ಅನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

### ಕನ್ನಡದ ಕಣ್ಣು ಅಕ್ಷರ ಕೆ.ವಿ.

ಭಾಷೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಕೇವಲ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳ ವಾಹಕವಲ್ಲ, ಅದೇ ಆಲೋಚನೆ - ಎಂಬ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಭಾರತದ ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸೆಗಳು ಬಹುಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿಸುತ್ತ ಬಂದಿವೆ. ರೂಪಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ, ಕನ್ನಡವೆಂಬುದು ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮವಲ್ಲ, ಅದು ಆ ಭಾಷೆಯನ್ನು ಬಳಸುವವರ ಸಾಮೂಹಿಕ ಕಣ್ಣು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದಲೇ ದೇಶಭಾಷೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲತೆಯು ಕೇವಲ ಅಭಿಮಾನ ಮತ್ತು ಅಸ್ಮಿತೆಗಳ ಫಲವಲ್ಲ, ಅದು ಆಲೋಚನೆಯ ಮಾರ್ಗ. ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಗಳು ನಷ್ಟವಾದರೆ ಅದರೊಳಗಿರುವ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳೂ ನಷ್ಟವಾಗುತ್ತವೆಯಾಗಿ ಅಂಥ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವು ಹುಡುಕಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸುವುದು ಇವತ್ತು ಉಪಯುಕ್ತ. ಇಷ್ಟರಮೇಲೆ, ವಸಾಹತುಶಾಹಿ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಆವರಣದಿಂದ ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಯ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳು ಉಸಿರುಗಟ್ಟುವ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನವೂ ನಮ್ಮ ವಾಸ್ತವದೊಳಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇರಿರುವುದರಿಂದ, ಇಂಥ ಚಿಂತನೆಯೆಂದು ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ ಕೂಡ.

ಈ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳು ಕನ್ನಡಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದೊಳಗೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿವೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಕೇವಲ ಒಂದೆರಡು ನಿದರ್ಶನಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಕಾಣಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಈ ಕಿರುಪ್ರಸ್ತುತಿಯು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಗೋಪಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅಡಿಗರ ಕೆಲವು ಮಾತುಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಪುತಿನ ಅವರ ಮಹಾಕಾವ್ಯದ ಒಂದು ಉಲ್ಲೇಖದ ಮೂಲಕ ಇಂಥ ಹುಡುಕಾಟಕ್ಕೆ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಕನ್ನಡದೊಳಗೇ ಇರಬಹುದಾದ ಕೆಲವು ಎಡೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಭಾಷಣವು ಸೀಮಿತ.

### ಕನ್ನಡ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗ್ನಿ-ಜಲಗಳ ತೊಡುಕು ಕೆ.ವೈ. ನಾರಾಯಣಸ್ವಾಮಿ

ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅರಿಯುವ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಆಕರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಲಮಾತೃಕೆಗಳು( ಆರ್ಕಿಟೈಪ್ಸ್) ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದವು. ಅಗ್ನಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಲದ ರೂಪಕಗಳು ಇಂತಹ ಆದಿಮ ಮೂಲಮಾತೃಕೆಗಳಾಗಿವೆ. ಇವುಗಳ ಕುರಿತ ಚಿಂತನೆ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ನಮಗೆ ಪುನರ್ ರೂಪಿಸಿಕೊಡುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆ ಇದೆ. ಅಗ್ನಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಲಗಳು ಮಾನವ ಬದುಕಿನ ಪ್ರಾಥಮಿಕ ಜೀವ ನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಗಳಾಗಿವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಈ ನೈಸರ್ಗಿಕ ವಸ್ತುಗಳು ಕನ್ನಡ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಎರಡು ಭಿನ್ನ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಸಂಕೇತಗಳಾಗಿ ರೂಪತಳೆದಿವೆ. ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕವಾಗಿ ಈ ಮೂಲದ್ರವ್ಯಗಳ ಸಾಂಕೇತಿಕ ಬಳಕೆಯ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸಗಳು ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದಿವೆ. ಅಗ್ನಿ-ಜಲಗಳ ನಡುವಣ ಕೊಡುಕೊಳ್ಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ವೈರುಧ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅಧ್ಯಯನಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಡಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷೆ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾ-ವಿಕಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಎದುರಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದ ನೆಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅರಿಯುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂದು ಮೌಖಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ಬರಹ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗಿರುವ ಅಗ್ನಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಲಗಳ ಕುರಿತ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಡಿಕೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿದರೆ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಒಂದು ಚಹರೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಅರಿವಿಗೆ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಅಗ್ನಿ ಜಲಗಳು ಎರಡು ಭಿನ್ನ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಸಂಕೇತಗಳಾಗಿವೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಮೊದಲಿಗೆ ಶೋಧಿಸಿ ತೋರಿಸಿದವರು ಶಂಬಾ ಜೋಷಿಯವರು. ಅವರ 'ಹಾಲುಮತ ದರ್ಶನ' ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿರುವ ಆಚಾರ್ಯ ಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಶಂಬಾ ಅವರ ಪ್ರಮೇಯವಾದ ಅಗ್ನಿ- ಯಾಜಕ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯನ್ನು ಜಲ-ಪೂಜಕ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಸಂಕೇತಗಳಾಗಿವೆ ಎಂದು ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಸಂಕೇತಗಳನ್ನು ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ತನ್ನ ಲೋಕದೃಷ್ಟಿಗಳನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ ಅವುಗಳ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸ್ವಾಯತ್ತೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾಯ್ದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಕೂಡ ಇವುಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿಮಾ ರೂಪಕ್ಕೆ ಬದಲಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿವೆ ಎಂಬ ಸೂಚನೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇವುಗಳ ನಡುವಣ ಮುಖಾಮುಖಿಗಳೇ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಚರಿತ್ರೆ ಇಷ್ಟತ್ತನೆ ಶತಮಾನದ ನಮ್ಮ ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳು ಯೂರೋಪ್ಪು ಪ್ರಣೀತವಾದ ತಾತ್ವಿಕತೆಯ ಆಧಾರದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ' ಎಂಬ ಏಕರೂಪೀಕರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಯಿತು. ಈ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಭಾರತದ ಅನೇಕ ಭಾಷಾ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಅನನ್ಯತೆಗಳು ಮರೆಮಾಚಲ್ಪಟ್ಟವು. ಆದ ಕಾರಣ ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅರಿಯುವ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಸಂಕೇತಗಳನ್ನು ಪುನರ್ ಅಧ್ಯಯನಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಡಿಸುವುದು ನಮಗಿರುವ ದಾರಿಯಾಗಿರುವಂತೆ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವಾದ ಆಯ್ಕೆಯೂ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗೊಂಡಿರುವ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಕೃತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗ್ನಿ ಜಲಗಳ

ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸುವ ಕಾರ್ಯವು ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಕಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಹಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಜನಪದ ಆಕರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಗುರುತಿಸುವ ಕಾರ್ಯವು ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರಮಾಣತೃಕವಾಗಿಯೇ ನಡೆದಿದೆ. ಎ.ಕೆ. ರಾಮಾನುಜಂ, ಪುರುಷೋತ್ತಮ ಬಿಳಿಮಲೆ, ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿ ಹನೂರು, ಮೂಗಲಿ ಗಣೇಶ ತರಹದ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಜನಪದ ಆಕರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಸ್ತವಾಗಿರುವ ಜಲದ ಸಾಂಕೇತಿಕ ನೆಲೆಗಳನ್ನು (ಭೂಮಿ-ಹೆಣ್ಣು-ಫಲವಂತಿಕೆ-ಮಾತೃಪ್ರಧಾನತೆ-ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ) ಗುರುತಿಸುವ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತನೆ ಶತಮಾನದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲ ಬರಹಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಅಗ್ನಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಲಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗೊಂಡಿರುವ ಲೋಕದೃಷ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಈ ಪ್ರಬಂಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಡುಕುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶವಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡ ನುಡಿಯನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲತೆಯ ವಾಹಕವಾಗಿ, ಕನ್ನಡ ಬಲ್ಲ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಬಳಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಆದರೆ ಅಗ್ನಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಲಗಳನ್ನು ಲೋಕಾನುಭವದ ಸಂಕೇತಗಳಾಗಿ ಸುವಾಗ ಕಥನದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಂಟಾಗುವ ಪರಸ್ಪರ ವಿರೋಧಿ ಪಲ್ಲಟಗಳನ್ನು ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಈ ಬರಹದ ಗುರಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಸೃಜನಶೀಲ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ ನಿಷ್ಠವೆಂಬ ನೆಲೆಯದಾದರೂ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾಪಾತಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶಾಲಿಯಾಗಿರುವ ಸಮುದಾಯದ ಸಮಷ್ಟಿ ನೆನಪು ಹೇಗೆ ಸೃಜನಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನವನ್ನು ಅರಿಯುವುದು ಈ ಶೋಧದ ಉದ್ದೇಶವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇಂತಹ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಸಾವಿರಾರು ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬರಲು ರೂಪಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ವಿವೇಕ-ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಸ್ವರೂಪವನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

## ಭಾಗ -2: ಸಮಾಜ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳು ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್ ಡಯಲಾಗ್ ಏಕೆ? ಎಂ.ಚಿAದ್ರ ಪೂಜಾರಿ

ಮೂರು ನಾಲ್ಕು ಕಾರಣಗಳಿಂದ ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್ ಡಯಲಾಗ್‌ನ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಇಂದು ತುಂಬಾ ಇದೆ. ಮೊದಲು ಡಯಲಾಗ್‌ನ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನನ್ನ ನಿಲುವನ್ನು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಪಡಿಸಿ ನಂತರ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಕುರಿತು ಹೇಳುತ್ತೇನೆ.

೧) ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವದ ಬುನಾದಿ - ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವದ ಉಳಿವು, ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಡಯಲಾಗ್ ಮೇಲೆ ನಿಂತಿದೆ. ಅಂದರೆ ಡಯಲಾಗ್ ಅಥವಾ ಚರ್ಚೆ ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವ ಬುನಾದಿ. ಇಂದು ಕಾರುಬಾರು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವ ಚುನಾವಣೆಗೆ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗಿರುವ ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವದ ಕುರಿತು ನಾನು ಮಾತಾಡುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಡಯಲಾಗ್‌ಗಿಂತ ಹೆಚ್ಚು, ದುಡ್ಡು, ಹಿಂಸೆ, ಜಾತಿ, ಧರ್ಮಗಳು ಮುಖ್ಯ ಪಾತ್ರ ವಹಿಸುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಅದರ ಬದಲು ಜನರಿಂದ, ಜನರಿಗಾಗಿ, ಜನರೇ ನಡೆಸುವ ಸರಕಾರ ಎನ್ನುವ ಅರ್ಥದ ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾತಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ. ಪ್ರಜೆಗಳು ಪ್ರಭುಗಳಾಗಬೇಕಾದರೆ ದಿನನಿತ್ಯದ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಭುಗಳಾಗುವ ಅನುಭವ ಆಗಬೇಕು. ಇದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಬೇಕಾದರೆ ದಿನನಿತ್ಯದ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ತೀರ್ಮಾನ ತಳಿಯುವ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಡಯಲಾಗ್ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಬೇಕು. ಡಯಲಾಗ್ ನಡೆಯಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಒಬ್ಬರಿಂದ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಜನರಿರಬೇಕು. ಒಬ್ಬರು ಮಾತಾಡುವಾಗ ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರು ಕೇಳಬೇಕು. ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಗಂಭೀರವಾಗಿ ಕೇಳಿ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರತಿಯಾಗಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವನ್ನು ಮಂಡಿಸಲು ಪರಸ್ಪರ ಗೌರವ ಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಡಯಲಾಗ್ ಕೇವಲ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಗಳ ವಿನಿಮಯ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರ ಇರುವಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸುವ ಮತ್ತು ಗೌರವಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಕೂಡಾ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಇದು ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವದ ಜೀವಾಳ.

೨) ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ರಾಜಕೀಯ - ಜನರೇನು ಓದಬೇಕು? ಜನರೇನು ಕೇಳಬೇಕು? ಜನರೇನು ನೋಡಬೇಕು? ಎಂದು ತೀರ್ಮಾನಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಥೂಲವಾಗಿ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ರಾಜಕೀಯದ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಗೆ ಬರುವ ವಿಚಾರಗಳೆನ್ನಬಹುದು. ಇಂದು ಜನರು ಓದುವ, ಕೇಳುವ, ನೋಡುವ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ಹತೋಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಪಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಸಂಘಟನೆಗಳು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಏಕೆ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಿವೆ? ಪಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಸಂಘಟನೆಗಳು ನಮ್ಮ ಸಮಾಜ, ಅರ್ಥ, ರಾಜಕೀಯ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಒಂದು ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಡುತ್ತಿವೆ. ನಾವು ಓದುವ, ಕೇಳುವ, ನೋಡುವ ವಿಚಾರಗಳು ಪಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಸಂಘಟನೆಗಳು ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಡುವ ನಮ್ಮ ಸಮಾಜ, ಚರಿತ್ರೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸಬಹುದು; ಬದಲೀ ಸಮಾಜ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿಡಬಹುದು. ಇವು ಜನರ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯ ಭಾಗವಾದರೆ ಪಕ್ಷ, ಸಂಘಟನೆಗಳು ತಮ್ಮ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವ ಕಳೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತವೆ. ಆದುದರಿಂದ ಇಂದು ಜ್ಞಾನದ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನ, ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಬಹುದೊಡ್ಡ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ರಾಜಕೀಯದ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರವಾಗಿವೆ. ಯಾವುದು ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್, ಯಾವುದು ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್ ಅಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಧಿಯರಿ ಆಫ್ ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್ ಅಥವಾ ಸಂಶೋಧಕರು, ತಜ್ಞರು ತೀರ್ಮಾನಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಅಧಿಕಾರ ತೀರ್ಮಾನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದೇ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಸರಕಾರಗಳು ಬದಲಾದಂತೆ ಪಠ್ಯಗಳು ಬದಲಾಗುವುದು, ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ನೀತಿಗಳು ಬದಲಾಗುವುದು ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಲೇ ಇವೆ. ಇಂತಹ ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್ ಡಯಲಾಗ್‌ಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎಂದರೇನು? ಅದರ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ ಹೇಗೆ? ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ ವಿಧಾನ ಏನು? ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಗಳ ಚರ್ಚೆ ಹಾಗೂ ತೀರ್ಮಾನಗಳನ್ನು ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳ, ಸಂಶೋಧಕರ, ತಜ್ಞರ ತೆಕ್ಕೆಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅಗತ್ಯ ಇದೆ.

೩) ಅಧಿಕೃತ, ಅನಧಿಕೃತ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳು - ಜನರ ಬದುಕಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲೂ - ಕೃಷಿ, ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ, ಉದ್ಯಮ, ಆರೋಗ್ಯ, ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಮತ್ತು ಅನಧಿಕೃತ ವಲಯಗಳಿವೆ. ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಎಂದರೆ ಸರಕಾರಿ ನಿಯಮ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ನಡೆಯುವ ಮತ್ತು ಅನಧಿಕೃತ ಎಂದರೆ ಸರಕಾರಿ ನಿಯಮ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ನಡೆಯದ ಎನ್ನುವ ಅರ್ಥ ಇದೆ. ಉತ್ತರ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ನೀರಾವರಿ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಕೆಲವು ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಜನರು ಕೃಷಿ ಮಾಡುವ ತಮ್ಮದೇ ವಿಧಾನ

ಕಂಡುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅದೇನೆಂದರೆ ಹೊಲ ಉತ್ತು ಬಿತ್ತನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ನಂತರ ಅದರ ಮೇಲೆ ಒಂದಿಬಿತ್ತನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮರಳು ಹಾಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದು ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಮಳೆ ಇಲ್ಲ, ನೀರವಾರಿ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃಷಿ ಯೋಗ್ಯ ನೀರು ಲಭ್ಯ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಬಿತ್ತನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ಹೊಲದ ಮೇಲೆ ಮರಳು ಹಾಸಿ ಬೆಳಗಿನ ಜಾವ ಬೀಳುವ ಇಬ್ಬನಿಯನ್ನು ಬಿಸಿಲಿಗೆ ಆವಿಯಾಗದಂತೆ ತಡೆದು ಕೃಷಿಗೆ ನೀರಾವರಿ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಮಾತ್ರ ಅವರು ಕಂಡುಕೊಂಡ ಮಾರ್ಗ. ಇದು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿಗಳು ಕಂಡು ಹಿಡಿದ ಮಾರ್ಗವಲ್ಲ. ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿ ಒಪ್ಪದಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಅದೊಂದು ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಧಾನದ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ ಪಡೆಯಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಧಾನ ಅಲ್ಲದಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ಲೋನ್ ಕೂಡ ಸಿಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇಂತಹ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಕೃಷಿ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ; ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ, ಉದ್ಯಮ, ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಇದೆ. ಕೃಷಿ, ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ, ಉದ್ಯಮ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೆಜಾರಿಟಿ (ಶೇ.೭೦ಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನವರು) ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳು ಬೋಧಿಸುವ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಸರಕಾರದ ನಿಯಮನುಸಾರ ಕೃಷಿ, ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ, ಉದ್ಯಮಗಳನ್ನು ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ಇವರನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಅನಧಿಕೃತ ಎಂದು ಘೋಷಣೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಸರಕಾರದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯಗಳಿಂದ ವಂಚಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇವರು ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಿಂದ ಬಂದ ಪರಿಣಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡು ತಮ್ಮ ವ್ಯವಹಾರ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅದರಿಂದ ತಮ್ಮ ಬದುಕಿಗೆ ಬೇಕಾಗುವಷ್ಟು ಆದಾಯ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇವರ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸಂವಾದ ನಡೆಸುವ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ? ಎನ್‌ಇಪಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂಡಿಯನ್ ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್‌ಸಿಸ್ಟಮ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖ ಇದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕೆಲವು ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳೂ ಇವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹುತೇಕ ವೇದ, ಉಪನಿಷತ್, ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಪಠ್ಯಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಇವೆ. ಶೇ.೭೦ಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿರುವ ಸಣ್ಣಪುಟ್ಟ ಕೃಷಿಕರು, ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ, ಉದ್ಯಮದಾರರ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ವಿಶೇಷ ಒತ್ತು ಇಲ್ಲ.

೪) ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎಂದರೇನು? - ಜನಿಫಯೇಬಲ್ ಬಿಲೀಫ್ ಅಥವಾ ಸತ್ಯವೆಂದು ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿಸಬಹುದಾದ ನಂಬಿಕೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಅರ್ಥದಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಕೂಡ ಒಂದು ನಂಬಿಕೆಯೇ. ಆದರೆ ಈ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯ ತಳಹದಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ, ಹಿರಿತನವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ, ಧರ್ಮ ಗ್ರಂಥವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಅದರ ಬದಲು ಈ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯ ಬುನಾದಿ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ, ಪರಾಮರ್ಶೆ, ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆ, ಅವಲೋಕನಗಳು. ಇವೆಲ್ಲ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗಳು ದಾಟಿದ ವಿಷಯಗಳಿಗೆ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಪಟ್ಟಿ ನೀಡುವುದರ ಪರ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಇದೆ. ವಿಜ್ಞಾನದ ವಿಧಾನವನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದ ಸಮಾಜ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಕೂಡ ಈ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನವನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದುದರಿಂದ ಅಧಿಕಾರದ ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದವರು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅಥವಾ ಧರ್ಮ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖವಾಗಿದೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ವಿಚಾರ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಪಟ್ಟಿ ಪಡೆಯುವುದು ಸರಿಯಲ್ಲ. ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ, ಪರಾಮರ್ಶೆ, ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಗಾಗುವ ಅಗತ್ಯ ಇದೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶವನ್ನು ಮಂಡಿಸಲು ಇಂತಹ ನಾಲೆಡ್ಜ್ ಡಯಲಾಗ್‌ಗಳ ಅಗತ್ಯ ಇದೆ.

## ಕನ್ನಡದ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳು: ಒಂದು ಪ್ರತಿಫಲನ. ರಾಜಾರಾಮ್ ತೋಳ್ಪಾಡಿ

ಈ ಮಂಡನೆ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾನವಿಕ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳು ಅಥವಾ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳು ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯಲ್ಪಡುವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ರೂಪದ ಕುರಿತು ಕೆಲವು ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನು ಆಡಲು ಬಯಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳ ನೆಲೆಗಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾದ ಈ ಜ್ಞಾನರೂಪ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಯಾವ ಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ಇರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಅರಿಯುವುದು ಅಥವಾ ಇರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿಲ್ಲವಾದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣಗಳೇನು? ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಅರಿಯುವುದು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಉದ್ದೇಶ. ಅಂತೆಯೇ ಸಾರ್ವಕಾಲಿಕವೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಮಾದರಿಗಳು ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಇಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾದ ಸಂಬಂಧದ ಸ್ವರೂಪವೇನು? ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಚರ್ಚಿಸುವುದು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಉದ್ದೇಶ. ಸಹಜವಾಗಿಯೇ ನಮ್ಮ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಶಿಸ್ತಿನ ಐರೋಪ್ಯ ಕೇಂದ್ರಿಯತೆಯ ಸ್ವರೂಪ, ನಮ್ಮ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ನೆಲೆಗಟ್ಟನ್ನು ನಮ್ಮ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟತೆಯ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಕಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುವ ತವಕ, ಯಥಾರ್ಥತೆ (ಅಥೆಂಟಿಸಿಟಿ) ಎಂದರೇನು?, ಇವೆ ಮೊದಲದ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತಿ ಎದುರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

## ದಮನಿತರ ಅನುಭವ ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಾಗಿ ದು ಸರಸ್ವತಿ

ಹುಟ್ಟಿನಿಂದ ಸಾಯುವವರೆಗೂ ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳು, ದುಡಿಮೆ ಮತ್ತು ಪರಿಸರದೊಂದಿಗಿನ ಒಡನಾಟದ ಅನುಭವದಿಂದ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅರಿವನ್ನು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿವರೆಗೂ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎಂದು ದಾಖಲಾಗಿರುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪಾರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ದಮನಿತ ವರ್ಗದ ಜನರ ದಿನಿ ಸಮರ್ಪಕವಾಗಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ದಮನಿತ ವರ್ಗ ಎನ್ನುವಾಗ ನಾನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸುವುದು ಜಾತಿ, ವರ್ಗ, ಲಿಂಗ, ಲಿಂಗತ್ವ, ಲೈಂಗಿಕತೆ, ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯು... ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ದಮನಿತರಾದ ಜನರನ್ನು. ಈ ದಮನಿತ ವರ್ಗದ ಜನರ ದುಡಿಮೆ, ಕೌಶಲ, ಅರಿವು ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಬಳಕೆಯಾದರೂ, ಉಪಯುಕ್ತವಾದರೂ ಅವರ ದಿನಿ, ಅನುಭವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗುವುದೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ದಾಖಲಾಗುತ್ತ ಹೋದಂತೆ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ವಿಶಾಲವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡದ ನೆಲೆವೆಂಬ ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟ ಭೌಗೋಳಿಕ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಆ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ನುಡಿ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ, ಕಲೆ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ, ರಾಜಕೀಯ, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಯನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಹಲವು ನುಡಿಗಳು, ಧರ್ಮ, ನಂಬಿಕೆ, ಪ್ರಭಾವಗಳು ಅದರೊಳಗಿವೆ.

ಕಳೆದ ಹಲವಾರು ದಶಕಗಳಿಂದ ಜಾತಿ, ಲಿಂಗ, ಲಿಂಗತ್ವ, ವರ್ಗ ಚಳುವಳಿಯ ರಾಜಕಾರಣದಲ್ಲಿ ನನ್ನನ್ನು

ತೊಡಗಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದೇನೆ. ಅದರ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ದಲಿತರು, ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು, ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರು, ಲಿಂಗತ್ವ ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರು, ಆದಿವಾಸಿಗಳು ಹೀಗೆ ಹಲವು ಜನರ ಒಡನಾಟದ ಅನುಭವವು, ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಹಿನಿ ಎನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ದನಿ ಕೇಳುವುದೇ ಇಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಮನದಟ್ಟು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಇಷ್ಟು ದೊಡ್ಡ ವರ್ಗದ ಜನರ ದನಿ ಸಮರ್ಪಕವಾಗಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗದೆಯೂ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಾಗಿ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿತವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ದನಿಗಳ ದಾಖಲಿಸಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನವು ಹಲವು ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳ ಲೋಕವನ್ನು ತೆರೆದಿಟ್ಟಿತು. ನನ್ನ ಮಿತಿಗೆ ಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ಆ ಲೋಕದ ಅನುಭವಗಳ ನನಗೆ ಗೊತ್ತಿರುವ ಬರವಣಿಗೆ, ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯ ಮೂಲಕ ದಾಖಲಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನವನ್ನು ಕೆಲವು ದಶಕಗಳಿಂದ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೇನೆ. ಗಾರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರು, ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರು, ಸ್ವಂ ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳು, ಕೃಷಿ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರು, ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿಸಿದ ರಂಗ ಶಿಬಿರಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ನಾಟಕಗಳು; ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಆಹಾರ ಪದ್ಧತಿಗೆ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ನೀಡಿರುವ ಕೊಡುಗೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಹಿಳಾ ವಸ್ತು ಸಂಗ್ರಹಾಲಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಕೆಲಸಗಳು ದಾಖಲಾಗದೆ ಮರೆಯಲಿ ಉಳಿದಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಪರಿಚಯಿಸಿತು. ಅವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಭಾಗವೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸುವೆ.

ದಾಖಲಾತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರಹ ಪ್ರಬಲ ಪಾತ್ರವಹಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಅಕ್ಷರ ಬರಹ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆ ಮರೆಯಲಿ ಉಳಿದಿದೆ. ಮತ್ತು ದಾಖಲಾಗದ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೂ ಅವರ ಅರಿವು ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಓದು-ಬರಹದ ಪ್ರಭಾವ ಎಂಥದ್ದೆಂದರೆ ಅದು ಬರದವರು ದಡ್ಡರು ಎಂಬ ಭಾವ ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಇದೆ. ಕೃಷಿ ಕುರಿತ ರೇಡಿಯೋ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ಒಂದು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನೆನಪಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಅಂದಿನ ಆಕಾಶವಾಣಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರದಿಂದ ಅದು ಪ್ರಸಾರವಾಗುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಆ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ಕೆಲವು ವಿಷಯಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿ ನಂತರ ರೈತರಿಂದ ಅದನ್ನು ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಅ, ಆ ಹೇಳಿಸುವಂತೆ ಮತ್ತೆ ಹೇಳಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ರೈತರಾಗಿ ಮಣ್ಣು, ಬೆಳೆ, ಮಳೆ, ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಕುರಿತ ಅವರ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಅವಕಾಶವಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಸುವ ಅಥವಾ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಪಡಿಸುವ ರೀತಿಯೂ ಸಹ ಪ್ರಾಬಲ್ಯದ್ದೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಒಂದು ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ, ವಿಧಾನದಲ್ಲಿ, ಪರಕಲ್ಪನೆಗಳ, ಪದಗಳ ಬಳಸಿ ಹೇಳಿದಾಗಲೇ ಅದು ಮೌಲ್ಯವನ್ನು, ಅಧಿಕೃತತೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಎಷ್ಟೋಸಲ ಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಅದನ್ನು ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತಪಡಿಸುವುದೇ ಪ್ರಾಮುಖ್ಯತೆ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡುಬಿಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಚಿಟ್ಟೆ, ಸ್ಯಾರ್, ಬೊಗ್ಗೆ, ತುಸ, ರೆವಷ್ಟುಗಳಿಗಿಂತ ಸೆಂಟಿ ಮೀಟರ್, ಔನ್ಸ್ ಕೆ.ಜಿ, ಗ್ರಾಂಗಳು ಆಥೆಂಟಿಕ್ ಆಗುವಂತೆ.

ಪೌರಕಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು, ಗಾರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು, ಕೃಷಿ ಮಾಡುವ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ಹೀಗೆ ದುಡಿದ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರೊಂದಿಗಿನ ಒಡನಾಟವು ಅವರೊಳಗಿನ ಅರಿವನ್ನು ಪರಿಚಯಿಸಿತು. ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣವಾದ, ಜಟಿಲವಾದ ವಿಷಯಗಳು ಅವರಿಗೆ ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಲ್ಲದೆ ಅವರು ಮುಂದಿಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಮಾತುಗಳ ಒಳಸುಳಿ ನನಗೇ ಅರಿವಾಗದೇ ಹೋದದ್ದು ಬಹಳಷ್ಟು ಇವೆ. ಅವರ ಭಾಷೆ, ಬಳಸುವ ರೀತಿಯೇ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣವಾದುದ ಅದ್ಭುತವಾಗಿ ಹಿಡಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದವು. ಅವರು ಬಳಸುವ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು, ಹೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ರೀತಿ, ಮುಟ್ಟಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ವಿಷಯಗಳೇ ನನ್ನ ಸಣ್ಣಮ್ಮಿ ಪುರಾಣಗಳ ಬರೆಯಲು ಪ್ರೇರಣೆಯಾದವು. ಪ್ರೀತಿ, ಗಡಿ, ಪುರುಷತ್ವ, ಬುದ್ಧ, ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ, ರಾಮಾಯಣದಂತಹ ವಿಷಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅವರ ಒಳನೋಟಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಪುರಾಣಗಳಾಗಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಆ ಪುರಾಣಗಳ ಒಂದು ಭಾಗವೇ 'ಸಣ್ಣಮ್ಮಿ ಪಕ್ಷಿ ಪುರಾಣ'. ಪಿತೃಪ್ರಧಾನತೆಯು ಹುಟ್ಟುಹಾಕುವ ಪುರುಷತ್ವದ ಮಾದರಿಯನ್ನು ಮುರಿದು ಕಟ್ಟುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನವನ್ನು ಈ ಪಕ್ಷಿ ಪುರಾಣ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ನಾನು ಮಂಡಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು 'ಸಣ್ಣಮ್ಮಿ ಪಕ್ಷಿ ಪುರಾಣ'ದ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನದ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾಡುವೆ. ಇದು ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಒಂದು ಸಣ್ಣ ರುಬಲ್ ಎಂದು ಭಾವಿಸುವೆ.

## ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆ

ಸಂತೋಷ್ ನಾಯಕ್ ಆರ್

ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಅನಾದಿ ಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ತನ್ನ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಬಗೆಗೆ ಕುತೂಹಲಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ಇದರ ರಹಸ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅರಿಯಲು, ನಿಯಂತ್ರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಪಡೆಯಲು ನಿರಂತರ ಶ್ರಮ ವಹಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ನಡೆಸಿದ ಹುಡುಕಾಟಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಅನೇಕ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಶಾಖೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕಂಡುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಸಮಾಜಗಳು ಹೇಗೆ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುತ್ತವೆ, ವಿಕಸನಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತವೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅವುಗಳ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತವೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನಗಳ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯು ಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಜಾತಿ, ಧರ್ಮ ಮತ್ತು ಲಿಂಗದಿಂದ ಹಿಡಿದು ಭಾಷೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಅಧಿಕಾರದವರೆಗಿನ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನಗಳು ಕೇವಲ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದಾದ ಘಟನೆಗಳಷ್ಟೇ ಆಗಿರದೆ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸುವ ಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳಾಗಿವೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನವು ಕೇವಲ ತಟಸ್ಥ ಅಥವಾ ವಸ್ತುನಿಷ್ಠವಲ್ಲ; ಇದು ಐತಿಹಾಸಿಕ, ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಗಳ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನವಾಗಿದ್ದು, ನಾವು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವಾಸ್ತವಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಗೆ ಗ್ರಹಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ, ಅರ್ಥೈಸುತ್ತೇವೆ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದರ ಮೇಲೆ ನಿಂತಿದೆ. ಒಂದು ಸಮಾಜವಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ಅರಿಯಲು ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನಗಳ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ನಡುವಿನ ಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ವಿಮರ್ಶಾತ್ಮಕವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಮತ್ತು ನಾಡಿನ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯನ್ನು ಸಮಗ್ರವಾಗಿ

ಅರಿಯಲು ಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟಿನೊಳಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ನಾಡಿನ ಅಂಚಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳನ್ನೂ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನಗಳನ್ನು ಕೂಡ ಒಳಗೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅಗತ್ಯ ತೀವ್ರವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಜ್ಞಾನವು ಕೇವಲ ಚಿಂತನೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಲಿಪಿ, ಬರಹಗಳಲ್ಲಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಬದುಕಿನ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ-ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ವಾಸ್ತವಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಳವಾಗಿ ಹುದುಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನವು ತಟಸ್ಥವಾಗಿ ಸಮಾಜದ ಪ್ರತಿಬಿಂಬದಂತೆ ಕಾರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಬದಲಿಗೆ ಅದು ಕ್ರಿಯಾತ್ಮಕವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಸಮಾಜವನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಸಹ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಜಾತಿ, ಲಿಂಗ, ಪರಿಸರ ಮತ್ತು ಧರ್ಮದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನಡೆದಿರುವ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ಚಿಂತನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮೌಖಿಕ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದಿಂದಲೂ, ಪರಿಸರ, ಕೃಷಿ, ಮೌಲ್ಯ, ಜೀವನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನಗಳನ್ನು ಜನಪದ, ಬುಡಕಟ್ಟುಗಳಿಂದಲೂ, ಸರಳ ಜನರ ಬದುಕಿನ ರೂಡಿಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಉತ್ಪಾದಿಸುವ, ರೂಡಿಬದ್ಧಗೊಳಿಸುವ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರಸಾರ ಮಾಡುವ ವಿಧಾನಗಳನ್ನು ವಿಶ್ಲೇಷಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಸಮಾಜ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳು ನಿರ್ಣಾಯಕ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ವಹಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ವೇಗವಾಗಿ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ-ರಾಜಕೀಯ, ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ಪರಿಸರದಲ್ಲಿ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಅಧ್ಯಯನವು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ತಮ್ಮನ್ನು ತಾವು ಆಳುವ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ-ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ರೂಪಾಂತರಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ವಿಧಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಕಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಿದೆ.

ಸಬಾಲ್ವರ್ನ್ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನವು ಅಂಚಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿಡುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರಬಲವಾದ, ಮೇಲ್ವರ್ಗದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ರಚನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸವಾಲು ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ದಲಿತ ಚಳವಳಿಯು ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಮತ್ತು ಪರ್ಯಾಯ ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಮತ್ತು ಬೌದ್ಧಿಕ ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಮರು ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿದೆ. ಅದೇ ರೀತಿ, ಜ್ಞಾನ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀವಾದಿ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನಗಳು ಆಂಡ್ರೊಸೆಂಟ್ರಿಕ್, ಪುರುಷಪ್ರಧಾನ ಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳ ವಿಧಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸುತ್ತವೆ.

ಆಧುನಿಕತೆಯ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ, ಇಂಗ್ಲಿಷ್ ಭಾಷೆಯು ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯನ್ನು ಇನ್ನಷ್ಟು ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಜ್ಞಾನ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜಾಗತಿಕ ಭಾಷೆಯಾಗಿ ಇಂಗ್ಲಿಷ್ ಪಡೆದಿರುವ ಪ್ರಾಬಲ್ಯವು ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಿ ಭಾಷೆಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಏಣಿ ಶ್ರೇಣಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದೆ. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎಂದರೆ ಅದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಪಠ್ಯಮಾತ್ರ ಎಂಬ ಭಾವನೆಯನ್ನು ಸೃಜಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಪರಂಪರೆಯು, ಕನ್ನಡ ನೆಲದ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ತಮ್ಮದೇ ಆದ ಜೀವನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನ, ಪರಿಸರ ಜ್ಞಾನ, ಸಮುದಾಯ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆ, ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಕಲೆ ಮೊದಲಾದವುಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾವಿರಾರು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಶ್ರೀಮಂತ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು, ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷಾ ವಲಯದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಲವಂತವಾಗಿ ಹೊದಿಸಿರುವ ತೆರೆಯನ್ನು ಸರಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಶಾಖೆಗಳು ಲಭಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಮತ್ತು ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಬದುಕಿನ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಶಾಖೆಗಳು ಬೆಳೆಯಬೇಕಾದ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದ್ದು ಇದರ ಮೂಲಕ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ, ಚಿಂತನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಹೊಸ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಸೃಜಿಸುವ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯತೆ ಇದೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ, ವಿವಿಧ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಅಂದರೆ ಬುಡಕಟ್ಟು, ಜಾನಪದ, ದಲಿತ ಮತ್ತು ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಿಂದ ವಿಕಸನಗೊಂಡ ಶ್ರೀಮಂತ ಮತ್ತು ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಗಳನ್ನು, ತಾತ್ವಿಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೆ ಅರಿಯುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಮಾಜದ ಹಿಂದಿನ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಂಡಾಗ ಇಂದಿನ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮುಂದಿನ ಬದುಕಿಗೆ ದಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಗೊಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಮುಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಿಗೆ ಬೇಕಾದ ಸಮಾನತೆಯ, ಸಮೃದ್ಧ ಸಮಾಜವನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿದೆ.

## ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ

ಡಾ. ಎ ಎನ್ ಪ್ರಭಾಕರ

ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಉತ್ತರಗಳು

೧. ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಹಾಗೆಂದರೇನು?

ಉತ್ತರ: 'ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ' ಎಂಬ ಪರಿಭಾವನೆ ತುಸು ತೊಡಕಿನದ್ದು. ಭಾಷಿಕ ಪರಿಸರದ ಅನನ್ಯತೆಯ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ 'ಕನ್ನಡ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ' ಎಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಿಬಿಟ್ಟರೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಇನ್ನಿತರ ಭಾಷೆಗಳ ಕೊಡುಗೆಯನ್ನು ಗೌಣವಾಗಿಸಿದಂತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ತುಳು, ಕೊಡವ, ಕೊರಗಿ, ಸೋಲಿಗ, ಫಣಿಯ, ಲಂಬಾಣಿ, ಜೇನುನುಡಿ, ಕೊಂಕಣಿ, ಹವ್ಯಕ ಮತ್ತು ಅಲೆಮಾರಿಗಳ ಮರುಗು ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿರುವ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆಯ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು

ನಿರಾಕರಿಸದಂತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದನ್ನು 'ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಭಾಷಾ ಪರಿಸರದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆ' ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯಬಹುದು. ಆಗ ಒಂದು ಭಾಷಿಕ ಗಡಿಯೊಳಗಿನ ಎಲ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಗಳ 'ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು' ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿದಂತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

೧. ಈ ಓದಿನ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಏಕೆ ಅವಶ್ಯವೆನ್ನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ?

ಉತ್ತರ: ಈ ಓದು ಅವಶ್ಯಕ. ಭಾರತದ ವಿವಿಧತೆಯು ಕೇವಲ ಭಾಷೆ ಮತ್ತು ಜನಾಂಗಗಳಿಗೆ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಾವಿರಾರು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳು ಭಾರತದ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸಿವೆ. ಈ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯತೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವು ಕೇವಲ 'ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ' ಪರಿಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷೆಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸೀಮಿತಗೊಳಿಸಿ ನೋಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಹಲವು ಜನಾಂಗ/ಸಮಾಜಗಳು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳ ಭಾರತದ ನೈಜ ಬಹುತ್ವವಾಗಿದೆ. ಭಾರತ/ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಬೌದ್ಧಿಕ ಅನನ್ಯತೆಯು ಈ ಹಲವು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳಿಂದ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಈ ಬಹುತ್ವದ ಅಂತರಂಗವನ್ನು ಗ್ರಹಿಸಲು ಈ ಹಲವು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳ ಓದು ಅತ್ಯವಶ್ಯಕ.

೨. ಈವರೆಗಿನ ನಮ್ಮ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಯನದ ಹಿಂದಿರುವ ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳ ಮೂಲಗಳು ಯಾವವು?

೧೪. ಓರಿಯಂಟಲಿಸ್ಟ್ ಮತ್ತು ಇಂಡಾಲಜಿಸ್ಟ್ ಕಟ್ಟಿದ ತಿಳಿವಿನ ವಲಯಗಳು ಕನ್ನಡ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಓದಿಗೆ ಮಾದರಿಯಾಗಬಲ್ಲವೇ? ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಗೆ ಬದಲಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು?

೧೫. ನಮ್ಮ ಅಧ್ಯಯನಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸಲು ಯುರೋಪ್ ಮತ್ತು ಅಮೆರಿಕಾಗಳ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳಿಂದ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಪಡೆಯಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇಕಾದ ಹೊಸ ರೀತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಗೆ ಅರಸುವುದು? ಅಥವಾ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳನ್ನು ನಮಗೆ ತಕ್ಕಂತೆ ಹೊಂದಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು ಎಂಬ ನಿಲುವನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿ ಮುಂದುವರೆಯ ಬೇಕೆ?

ಉತ್ತರ: ಅಖಿಲ ಭಾರತ/ಅಖಿಲ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪಶ್ಚಿಮದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಮೀಮಾಂಸೆಯ (Epistemology) ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಥೈಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಭಾರತದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಮೂಲಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇವಲ ವೇದ, ಉಪನಿಷತ್ತು, ಪುರಾಣ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಮೃತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸೀಮಿತಗೊಳಿಸಿ ನೋಡುವ ಪರಿಪಾಠ ಬೆಳೆದು ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಮ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ ಮುಲ್ಲರ್, ಮ್ಯಾಥ್ಯೂ ಆರ್ನಾಲ್ಡ್ ವಿಲಿಯಂ ಜೋನ್ಸ್ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಓರಿಯಂಟಲಿಸ್ಟರು ಈ ನೋಟಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯಗೊಳಿಸಿದರು. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಡಿವಿಜಿ ಮತ್ತು ದೇವುಡು ಈ ವಾದದ ಸಮರ್ಥಕರು. ಈ ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟು ಭಾರತದ ವೈದಿಕ ಬಲಪಂಥೀಯರಿಗೆ ರುಚಿಸಿದ ಕಾರಣ ಇವರು ಭಾರತದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ವೇದಮೂಲಗಳಿಂದ ಅರ್ಥೈಸುವ ಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಅಧಿಕ್ಯತಗೊಳಿಸಿದರು. ಈ ನೋಟಕ್ರಮವು ಅಭಿಜಾತವಾದದ್ದು (Classical) ಎಂದು ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಅನುಸರಿಸಿದರು. ಭಾರತದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸಿದ ರಾಧಾಕೃಷ್ಣನ್, ಹಿರಿಯಣ್ಣ, ಸುರೇಂದ್ರನಾಥ್ ದಾಸಗುಪ್ತ ತರಹದ ಲೇಖಕರು ಈ ಮಾದರಿಯನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸಿದರು.

ಆದರೆ ಇದೇ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾರತದ ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ವಿವಿಧ ವೈಚಾರಿಕ ಧಾರೆಗಳಿಂದ ಹುಡುಕಿ ತೆಗೆಯುವ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ನೋಟಕ್ರಮ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡಿತು. ಧರ್ಮಾನಂದ ಕೊಸಾಂಬಿ, ದೇವೀ ಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ಚಟ್ಟೋಪಾಧ್ಯಾಯ, ರಾಹುಲ ಸಾಂಕೃತ್ಯಾಯನ, ಡಿ. ಡಿ. ಕೊಸಾಂಬಿಯಂತಹ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಭಾರತದ 'ಅಲಕ್ಷಿತ' ಜ್ಞಾನಧಾರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮುನ್ನೆಲೆಗೆ ತಂದರು. ಲೋಕಾಯತ, ಬೌದ್ಧ, ಜೈನ, ಸಾಂಖ್ಯಾ ನಾಥ, ಕಾಪಾಲಿಕದಂತಹ ಶ್ರಮಣ ಮತ್ತು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಪಂಥಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡ ತತ್ವಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಸಮಾಜದ ಮುಂದಿಟ್ಟರು. ಈ ಎಡಪಂಥೀಯ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಭಾರತದ ತತ್ವಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವನ್ನು ನೋಡುವ ವೈಧಾನಿಕತೆಯನ್ನೇ ಬದಲಿಸಿದರು. ಈ ಪುರೋಗಾಮಿ ಚಿಂತಕರು ಭಾರತದ ಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡುವ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರು.

ಮುಂದೆ ಡಾ. ಬಾಬಾ ಸಾಹೇಬ್ ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ಅವರು ಈ ನೋಟಕ್ರಮಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇರೊಂದು ಚೌಕಟ್ಟನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರು. ಅಖಿಲ ಭಾರತ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಎಂಬ ಯಾವುದೇ ಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ರಮಗಳು ಸ್ವಯಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಅವು ವಿವಿಧ ಸಮಾಜಗಳ ಲೋಕಾನುಭವಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ರೂಪುಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತವೆ. ಬೌದ್ಧವು ಸಹ ಭಾರತದ ವಿವಿಧ ಸಮಾಜಗಳು ಒಗ್ಗೂಡಿ ರೂಪಿಸಿದ ತತ್ವಜ್ಞಾನ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಸಂವೇದನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅವರು ಒತ್ತಿ ಹೇಳಿದರು. ಭಾರತದ ಕೆಳಜಾತಿಗಳು, ಆದಿವಾಸಿಗಳು ಕಟ್ಟಿದ ಮಹಿಮಾ ಪಂಥ ಮತ್ತು ಸತ್ಯಾಮ ವೈಚಾರಿಕ ಧಾರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ಪದೇಪದೇ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸಿದರು. ಭಾರತದ ಇಂತಹ ಅಲಕ್ಷಿತ ಪಂಥಗಳ ಲೋಕದೃಷ್ಟಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಬೌದ್ಧ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಬೆಸೆದು ನವಯಾನ ಬೌದ್ಧವನ್ನು ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ರೂಪಿಸಿದರು.

೪. ಆ ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳು ನಮ್ಮ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಗೆ ಸರಿ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತವೆಯೇ?

೫. ಅವುಗಳಿಂದ ನಮಗೆ ಏನಾದರೂ ತೊಡಕುಗಳಾಗಿವೆಯೇ? ಅಥವಾ ಅವುಗಳು ನಮಗೆ ಯಾವ ರೀತಿಯ ತೊಡಕನ್ನು ಉಂಟುಮಾಡುತ್ತವೆ?

೧೦. ಇವುಗಳ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ.

೧೧. ನಮ್ಮ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕ್ರಮ ನಮಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿಕೊಡುವ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಮಾದರಿಗಳು ಯಾವುದು? ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿದರೆ ಉಂಟಾಗುವ ತೊಂದರೆಗಳೇನು?

ಉತ್ತರ: ಯುರೋಪಿನ ಅಭಿಜಾತ ನೋಟಕ್ರಮವು ನಮ್ಮ ಜ್ಞಾನಧಾರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕ ತೊಡಕುಗಳನ್ನುಂಟು ಮಾಡಿದೆ. ಈ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಈ ಅಭಿಜಾತ ನೋಟಕ್ರಮವು ನಮ್ಮ ಜ್ಞಾನಧಾರೆಗಳ ಅಂತರಾಳವನ್ನು ವಿಶ್ಲೇಷಿಸಲಾರದು. ಕಾರಣ ಈ ಯುರೋಪಿನ ಅಭಿಜಾತ ವೈಧಾನಿಕತೆಯು ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಸಂವೇದನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮಾಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ವೈದಿಕವಲ್ಲದ ಭಾರತದ ಇತರೆ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಂದು ಜ್ಞಾನಪರಂಪರೆ ಇದೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನೇ ಅದು ನಂಬುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ ನಂಬಿದಲ್ಲಿ, ಈ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯು ಶುದ್ಧಾಂಗವಾಗಿ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯವಾಗಿದ್ದು,

ಅದು ಸಾರ್ವಕಾಲಿಕವಾಗಲು ಅಶಕ್ತವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಅದು ಭಾವಿಸಿದೆ. ನಮ್ಮ ಶಾಲಾ ಪಠ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇದನ್ನು ಯಥಾವತ್ತಾಗಿ ಅಳವಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷಿಕರಿಗೆ ಅವರದ್ದೇ ಆದ ಒಂದು ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಇದೆ ಎಂಬ ವಾಸ್ತವಗಳನ್ನು ನಮ್ಮ ಪಠ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಚ್ಚಿಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ನಮ್ಮ ಪಠ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಖಿಲ ಭಾರತ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನೇ ಬೋಧಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇದರಿಂದಾಗಿ ಸಾವಿರಾರು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಕಾಲ ತಮ್ಮದೇ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ಲೋಕವನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದ ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಅಂತಃಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಅಲಕ್ಷಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬರಲಾಗಿದೆ.

೬. ಬೇರೆಬೇರೆ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳು ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣುವ ಬಗೆಗಳು ಹೇಗೆ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆಯಾಗಿವೆ?

೭. ಅವುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಯಾವ ಬಗೆಯ ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳಿವೆ?

೮. ಮೊದಲ ಸಹಸ್ರಮಾನ ಮತ್ತು ಎರಡನೇ ಸಹಸ್ರಮಾನದ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ನಾವು ತಿಳಿಯಲು ಇರುವ ಆಕರಗಳು ಯಾವವು? ಮತ್ತು ತಿಳಿಯುವ ಬಗೆಗಳು ಯಾವವು?

೯. ಇಂದಿನ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಇರುವ ರೀತಿಗಳು ಯಾವವು?

ಅ. ರಾಜಕೀಯವಾಗಿ, ಆ. ಆರ್ಥಿಕವಾಗಿ, ಇ. ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕವಾಗಿ, ಈ. ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕವಾಗಿ, ಉ. ಭಾಷಿಕವಾಗಿ, ಊ. ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕವಾಗಿ

೧೩. ಕನ್ನಡ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಯನವು ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ವಲಯವಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆಯಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಅದರ ಆಕರಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಅದನ್ನು ನೋಡುವ ಬಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಹೇಗೆ?

೧೪. ಕನ್ನಡ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಎಂಬುದೊಂದಿಗೇ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ವಲಯ ಬೆಳೆಯುವುದಾದರೆ ಅದನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿನ ತಲೆಮಾರಿನ ಓದಿನ ಮತ್ತು ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ಅಂಗವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಲು ಈಗ ನಾವು ಏನೇನು ಮಾಡಬಹುದು?

೧೫. ಕನ್ನಡ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಎಂಬುದೊಂದಿಗೇ ಓದಿನ ನೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿ ಬಳಸುವಾಗ ಎಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲಿ ತಪ್ಪುಗಳಾಗಬಹುದು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಮುಂದಾಗಿ ತಿಳಿಯಬಹುದೇ? ಅದು ಹೌದಾದರೆ ಅವನ್ನು ನಿವಾರಿಸಲು ಬೇಕಾದ ಎಚ್ಚರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಗಳು ಯಾವವು?

ಉತ್ತರ: ಕರ್ನಾಟಕವನ್ನೂ ಒಳಗೊಂಡಂತೆ ಭಾರತದ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಮಗ್ಗುಲನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸಲು ನಾವು ಬೇರೆಯದೇ ಆದ ಆಕರಗಳನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಲಾರಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಪ್ರಭುತ್ವ ನಿರ್ಮಿತ ಮೂರ್ತ ಆಕರಗಳಾದ ಶಾಸನ, ಸ್ಮಾರಕಗಳು, ಲಿಖಿತ ಪುರಾಣ, ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳು ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರತಾಗಿಸಿ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಅಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಿಕ' ಎನ್ನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಆಕರಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸುವ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದೆ. ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ, ಮೌಖಿಕ ಆಕರಗಳು, ಗ್ರಾಮಗಳಲ್ಲಿನ ಆಚರಣೆಗಳು, ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಅಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮಿಕ ಪಂಥಗಳ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಮತ್ತು ಜನಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಜೀವನ ವಿಧಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸುವುದರ ಮೂಲಕ ನಾವು ಸಾಂಪ್ರದಾಯಿಕ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟುಗಳನ್ನು ಮೀರಬಹುದು. ಇದರ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಚರಿತ್ರೆ ಬರವಣಿಗೆಯ ವೈಧಾನಿಕತೆಯನ್ನೇ ಸೈದ್ಧಾಂತಿಕವಾಗಿ ಮರುರೂಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದೆ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಮಾಕ್ಸವಿಸ್ಮಿಡ್‌ಗಳು ಬಳಸುವ ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕ ಭೌತವಾದವನ್ನು ಸಮಕಾಲೀನಗೊಳಿಸಿ ಬಳಸುವ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದೆ. ಆಗ ಮಾತ್ರ ನಾವು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ಗತಿತಾರ್ಕಿಕ ವಿಧಾನದ ಮೂಲಕ ಬರೆಯಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಬಹುದು.

೧೬. ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ಹಸನುಗೊಳಿಸಲು ನೆರವಾಗಬೇಕೇ ಹೊರತು ಒಟ್ಟಾರೆ ಮಾನವರ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಗೆ ಸೇರಿ ಹೋದರೆ ಸಾಕು ಎಂಬ ನಿಲುವನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದು ಸರಿಯೇ? (ನಮ್ಮ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಮನುಷ್ಯಕುಲದ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕಾರವಾದರೆ ಸಾಕು ಅದರಿಂದ ನಮಗೆ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವಾಗದಿದ್ದರೂ ತಪ್ಪೇನಿಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವ ನಿಲುವು ಸರಿಯೇ?) ಇದನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿದರೆ ಅಥವಾ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಒಪ್ಪಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರೆ ಅದರಿಂದ ಯಾವ ಅಪಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ?

ಉತ್ತರ: ಇದನ್ನು ನಾನು ಭಾಗಶಃ ಒಪ್ಪುತ್ತೇನೆ. ಆದರೆ, ಆಯಾ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಟ್ಟುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ತನ್ನ ಕಾಲವನ್ನು ತಕ್ಷಣಕ್ಕೆ ಹಸನುಗೊಳಿಸಿಬಿಡುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದು ಕಷ್ಟವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕಾಲಾನಂತರ ಈ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ತನ್ನ ಪರಿಸರವನ್ನು ತಿದ್ದುವ ಔಷಧದಂತೆ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡಬಲ್ಲದು. ಯುರೋಪಿನ ಪುನರುಜ್ಜೀವನ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ, ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ತಂದಿತು ಎಂದು ನಂಬುವುದಾದರೆ, ಆ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯ ಪರಿಣಾಮಗಳು ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲಿಕವಾಗಿದ್ದವು.

ನಮ್ಮ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಮನುಷ್ಯಕುಲದ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕಾರವಾದರೆ ಸಾಕು ಅದರಿಂದ ನಮಗೆ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವಾಗದಿದ್ದರೂ ತಪ್ಪೇನಿಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವ ನಿಲುವು ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿ. ಜ್ಞಾನವು ತನ್ನ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಪರಿಸರವನ್ನು ಮಾನವೀಯಗೊಳಿಸದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಅಥವಾ ಬದಲಾಯಿಸದೇ ಇದ್ದರೆ ಅದನ್ನು ನಾವು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗದು. ಜ್ಞಾನವು ಬೌದ್ಧಿಕ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಪರಿಸರದ ಗುಣಾತ್ಮಕ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಗೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಬೇಕು. ಹಾಗೆಂದು ಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಟ್ಟುವ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಕೇವಲ ಮಾನವ ಸಮಾಜದ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ಎಂದು ನಂಬುವುದೂ ಸಹ ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿ.

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### English Summary of Session 3: Kannada Knowledge Traditions

The central question for this session revolves around what **Kannada Knowledge Traditions** mean when we adopt different perspectives on the theme. For example, the connotation of *Knowledge*

and *Knowledge Traditions* changes when you view Kannada variously; as the language itself and the world-view that it entails; as something that denotes the cultural-social lives and beliefs of a people in a historical background of more than two millennia; as a signification of people who live within the cultural context of Kannada, of the past and the present; as an area influenced by the language, etc.

First, Prof. Krishnamurthy Hanur will raise a few questions for debate that are focused on how the literary landscape of Kannada provides a basis for understanding the relationship between knowledge of various kinds and its inter-relationships with society, polity and ideology of the State. Following this debate, Prof. Chandra Pujari will dwell on these questions in the context of the irrelevance of contemporary studies of political thought and political theories that are not located in the actual political history of Kannada regions of recent decades.

Over to the speakers.

## Theme 1

### **Kannada Knowledge Traditions: A Literary Perspective**

#### **Krishnamurthy Hanuru**

In the Kannada world, the relationship between the folk knowledge and authority (or the State) has always been uncertain and ill defined. On the other hand, the knowledge of the Agrahara was in a greater and frequent alignment with royal authority. As a consequence, it may be considered a matter of debate whether the Agrahara and royal authority had a hand in the preservation or growth of folk knowledge. Adikavi Pampa is perhaps a good example of this relationship, as evidenced by his lionization of his master, Arikesari, in his works.

It was perhaps only during the period of the Vachanas that an explicit opposition to this nexus came to be expressed, through a criticism of the excesses of power. Thus, when Akkamahadevi frees herself from the shackles of power, saying she came out by kicking royal authority and ridding herself of the royal splendor of the palace, or when KumaraVyasa avers, “When the King is a Rakshasa, the ministers tigers, the royal court a volt of vultures, the country burns and who can lend an ear to the laments of the poor”, there is an underlying sense of despair about the capacity of the links between royalty and the knowledge of the Agrahara to spin compelling narratives that formalizes the relationship between the rulers and the ruled to an extent where the poor are naturally forgotten or marginalized. In such a situation, *who can lend an ear to the laments of the poor*; viz., the poor folks who represent indigenous knowledge?

Stark differentiation of types of knowledge, in terms of their place in society, is also seen in the treatment of literature. While KumaraVyasa is justifiably acclaimed for his 8,000 Shatpadis (a type of meter in poetry), not many know that many unnamed women of folk literature have created stories with more than 10,000 tripadis (another type of meter). Stories from Kyatagana Giriyaaya are to be found in the Brihatkatha of Gunadya. But how well known are these facts?

Meanwhile, it may be noted that not all traditional knowledge evolved from social or economic necessities. The Hagevu system of preservation of grains in underground silos prevalent in some areas of Karnataka – much documented as an intelligent technique – is actually an outcome of the need to hide the grains from marauding armies of Kings bent upon wars and conquests. People abandoned villages when they were in the path of armies, settled elsewhere, and hid their grains



in these silos.

Kautilya's Arthashastra promotes such a loot of grains and other material from people in times of war. It also prescribes the use of various tactics to make people "Dharmic", e.g., collection of money from people after installing a statue that is claimed to have taken birth miraculously; and converting the skeptical by sending men up the trees at night to shout out that God resides here! The Karnata Kingdom (of Vijayanagara) regularly sent edicts to people to join their army promising them wealth in return, and such messages were carried by persons of religion and women who could add an element of "persuasion" to the appeals. It is no wonder that royal authority supported only those debates that provided such principles of Dharma as might serve as the ideology of the rulers which was almost always in opposition to the life of ordinary folks.

## **Akshara**

While there are many ways of understanding what knowledge is, I would like to focus on the aspect of dialogues that forms a central aspect of this convention.

It appears to me that literature and the arts are the true means for developing knowledge dialogues in society. In saying this, I assume that language is knowledge and knowledge is language, in an essential way. When I speak of Kannada in this context, it is not merely because it is my mother tongue, but because it is the lens through which I understand the world, interact with people in the world and know the protocols, rules, rituals and ways of dealing with the world.

An important aspect of carrying out a knowledge dialogue in our times is to inspect the idea of tradition in the Kannada world by rejecting, for the moment, the use of labels and characterizations of it that have come to us in recent decades. Tradition, in modern literature, has acquired a negative connotation and is accused of all sorts of bad social consequences perhaps from the 70's or 80's.

As an example, can we revisit the works of a Kannada writer who was often written off as an archetypal traditionalist in order to understand what he argued for, and reinterpret the nature of traditions through the logic he enunciates for them, and not merely through the idea that they represent blind beliefs?

An analysis of the works of Pu Ti Na (P. T. Narasimhachar) provides precisely such an opportunity, through his ideas of Prapti (basic attainment), Pratibhatane (rebellion) and Pragati (Progress) as the essential dynamic of life. He interprets attainment as a default set of circumstances - physical, mental, linguistic and ritualistic, etc. - that are presented to you at birth and which permeates the family, the community and the microcosm of the world that guides you through early life. Rebellion is an active process at some stage where you question the ideas that you acquire by default. It is evident that not all people rebel and therefore lead a life that in most ways continues with the default options that are acquired in society. When rebellion results in a change - of attitudes, action or understanding - that is when progress is achieved and the trajectory of life changes significantly. It is this process of owning the present, critiquing it and making changes that defines the logic of tradition.

Such an understanding is likely to help us understand tradition in better light and reduce the dismissive attitudes towards it. For, it is only in doing this that we come to terms with the past in order to look ahead.

## **Basavaraja Kalgudi**

It is rather ironic to observe that there have been no significant discussions on the theme of dialogues concerning knowledge in the previous two decades in our universities in Karnataka.

While one may perceive language makes possible multiple knowledge traditions, it is likely that knowledge precedes language in the context of its search. Language merely articulates a developed tendency to seek answers in people who want to inspect life in its minutiae. Yet, many of these traditions remain unrecognized because not many find favor with royal authority and its requirements.

Allama recognizes the foibles of the worship of knowledge by explicitly questioning the infructuous nature of knowledge that is derived from Shastras and not from experience. In fact, the entire phenomenon that led to Vachana literature may be considered a powerful tribute to the tradition of the people that labor that provided an understanding of society through the experiences of its majority; Knowledge and labor were inextricably connected through this intervention.

Meanwhile, when one reflects upon the period between the tenth and the fifteenth century CE, it may be noted that it is characterized as one of heroism. This is a telling comment of how royal authority created narratives that would ignore the concerns of the people while serving its own interests of lust for power, territorial expansion and imperial ambitions. While it is true that it was not confined to Karnataka alone in that period, the 25,000 hero stones (in memory of the fallen soldiers) and the 25,000 plus Sati stones (celebrating Sati) provide a picture of how the standpoint of the royalty was at complete variance with the interests of the commoners. Large armies were commanded all over South India of the time, with Sudras marshalled from society, for the greater glory of the kingdom. Life for these people was traumatic beyond words. Promises of wealth if they remain alive after conquering the enemy, and ministrations by celestial beauties in the heaven for the fallen brave (Veerawarga) if they die in battle, provided the basis for narratives (which by the way is found in no less than 20,000 of the hero stones) that privileged the bloodlust of competing Kings of the time. Kannada poetry of the time reflects these great tragedies of the time, where young women pine for their husbands who are at war, not knowing whether they will return or die in the battle. So do the Agam-Puram poets in Tamil.

The Avidic (or Non-Vedic) traditions of Karnataka, as elsewhere in Tamil and some Northern provinces, were perhaps a reaction to the excesses of this time. By considering the body and material existence to be the basis of life, it demanded a concern for life that transcended the concepts of heroism, sacrifice and violence as the means for an ideal human existence. By emphasizing that authentic life is one of values that cleanse the mind, it promoted a move towards self-reflection, peaceful collective existence, tolerance and non-violence as the essence of living. The famous (and mythical) tryst between Allama and Gorakhnath are indicators of the grand experiment that opposed the expansionist violence of the State of the period.

## **K.Y. Narayanaswamy**

An important issue that confronts us in our attempt to understand Kannada knowledge traditions lies in the identification and interpretation of the numerous philological and linguistic clues in our historical records that hold the key to a definitive account of the cultural history of the Kannada people over millennia. Such an account undoubtedly can provide strong and plausible explanations of the nature of society, its interactions, divisions, practices, rituals and world views etc. in a historical setting.

To start on this journey, we must begin with the works of Shamba Joshi, amongst the tallest of Kannada thinkers whose large body of work provides us with the earliest comprehensive understanding of not only the phonological, morphological and semantic differences that came into the language over time as a result of various influences, but also of their cultural and social impact which transformed the world-view of various sections of the Kannada society. It is to the credit of the scholastic rigor and imagination of Shamba that the representations, pointers, symbols, signs, signifiers which informed his semiotics were derived from across the vast spectrum of records of India such as the Vedas, Kannada and Sanskrit writings and folk knowledge captured in stories, epics and oral traditions that go back to millennia. It is to Shamba that we must turn to renew our search, with more sources available to us today than were to him, to better understand the hidden meanings of the fossilized references to aspects of the cultural and social lives of the Kannada people that may help us build on his hypotheses and conclusions. Parenthetically, it may be observed that it continues to be a mystery as to why the great work of Shamba has not found extension in the times that followed.

A central aspect of Shamba's work is his study of fossilized layers of references and referents in languages, whose interpretation provide useful clues to understand the social and cultural history of the Kannada people and their transformation over time. Consider for example, an important element of his findings, viz., the interplay between the Poojaka (of the Water traditions) and the Yajaka (of the Fire traditions) as pictured in our records. The Poojaka represents the Matrilineal (or Matrifocal) fertility traditions while the Yajaka represent the Aryavarta traditions as seen through the Water-Fire lenses. The treatment of this as a primordial relationship that shaped the language is an important conclusion arrived at by Shamba.

In the folk traditions, fire indicates destruction whereas water indicates a solution to the destruction as well as a means for reconstruction. For the Yajaka, fire is the means for communication of Earth (Men) with the Skies (Gods) while water acts as an alternate means for the same. This finds repeated reference in the classical works of Kannada too over a millennium and more, e.g., Pampa and the Vachanakaras.

Shamba shows that these were the two world-views that represented different lifestyles and traditions in our world. Expanding the scope of Shamba's work to include a much wider body of sources that we have access to presently, it might be possible to reconstruct the Kannada knowledge tradition in a much more robust way. The interplay between the imagery behind water and fire continues to echo in 20<sup>th</sup> century literature, where they play an important role in situations where a decisive twist is introduced into the flow of the story. It is interesting to observe that authors who are from an agricultural background seem to use fire as a substantive element of destructive change that shapes the narrative, whereas those from a Vaidika background use water as the element for decisive change.

The interplay between fire and water concepts forms an important aspect of the development of language, culture and expression in Kannada. It is only through a contemporary revisiting of the spirit of Shamba that one may understand their dialectic better.

## Theme 2

### **Kannada Knowledge Traditions: A Social Sciences perspective**

#### **Chandra Pujari**

It is stating the obvious that we sorely need knowledge dialogues from a social sciences perspective. However, a serious impediment to a dialogue is the fact that it requires mutual respect and tolerance which are lacking in society at large and therefore in our professions as well.

There is an atmosphere of violence, crime, corruption where caste, religion and power reign supreme today. For example, in the 2019 parliament, 47% of the representatives had a criminal background; in the state legislatures across India, the picture is no different. It is ironic that people's representatives who indulge in murder, loot, blackmail and kidnap speak about education, labor, commerce, law and order, etc.

We the intellectuals listen to all this unperturbed. That is because we have distanced ourselves from the ordinary people and their travails. This has created an environment where dialogue is extremely difficult to have. The freedom to disagree – e.g., to say that cow urine cannot cure diseases – is almost impossible to exercise today.

There is a deep relationship between knowledge, action and power. A great concentration of knowledge in the hands of a small section of people results in the rule of caste and money in society. If you disagree with this, can you point out a restaurant/ eatery that can proudly announce that it is run by a Dalit?

While I agree that a great many people depend on the knowledge of the past to live their lives, we should abandon romantic ideas about the greatness of such knowledge.

#### **Rajarama Tolpadi**

Political thought is dead in India and specifically in Karnataka. It is interesting to note that political scientists do not write about political thought in Karnataka, lay analysts do!

There is a tradition in Karnataka to study political thought through the works and ideals of Hardikar Manjappa, Alur Vengat Rao, DVG and others. Over the years, nothing has changed in this list – neither do we attempt to understand their work from different perspectives, nor do we even understand what their work means in the contemporary situation. We have labeled them as Gandhian, etc. without inspecting the relationship with the ideas that underlay whatever they have been labeled as.

We do not spare a thought about why we still consider them to represent any political ideology, and what is its relevance today. Nor do we think about further studies based on developments that have taken place after the times of the people mentioned above. It is surprising that the social sciences are absent from work related to political thinking. We do not seem to ask questions about what political independence gave us, what freedom means in the Kannada context, and inspect political thought from a new perspective.

As a first step, it is perhaps useful to consider the works of UR Ananthamurthy, Devanooru

Mahadeva, Shivarama Karantha, Kuvempu and SL Bhairappa and interpret them to explore the political thought of Karnataka as it has evolved from the pre-independence days.

### **Santhosh Naykar**

It is a commonplace that language was created by humans to communicate with others. Society comes into existence through exchange of knowledge in a community. If there is no mechanism to transfer the knowledge of the community to an individual, it is obvious that communities cannot continue to exist.

It may be appreciated that there are as many types of knowledge as there are Jati's in society. The Nilagaras (minstrels), Vaidyas, honey harvesters, etc. all are knowledgeable. Their knowledge provided them the means for not only a livelihood, but also for interactions within and across their communities; in terms of protocols, rules, rituals and the like. But when Jati weakens, the rules collapse too.

In today's context, we speak about polarization as if this is a new phenomenon. Was it really so? It is only in answering such questions that we may better understand the system of creating identities to create clashes between people.

Meanwhile, we speak in glowing terms about folk arts and life; in fact, we glorify them. However, do we also want the Jati system to return in full force when we speak about restoration of these? Can we ignore the role of modern Science and Technology in the significant progress that we have made since independence? For example, how do we explain away the increase in average lifespan from 32 years in 1947 to the mid 60's today? Sanskrit literature speaks about the coming of old age at 40 years!

We need to reflect unbiasedly on these matters when we consider the role of tradition and history in our times.

### **Du Saraswathi**

I speak from the perspective of a Dalit activist. For me knowledge means that which we learn from relationships and the conduct of life. And knowledge today has become divided into islands with separate existence, the practical and the theoretical.

As for the Dalits, their experience is not well documented and therefore not considered to be knowledge. And what is to be documented and what not is determined by the political environment. For example, the 2011 census reported that there are 2.5 crore toilets in India without an underground drainage system (UGD). However, only 59,000 people were identified as sanitary workers. The situation is similar in Karnataka where 18 lac toilets are found to have no UGD whilst the number of sanitation workers are reported to be only 7,000, although a survey I was a part of indicates the number to be several lacs!

There is a deeper motive here that the data hides. The 1993 parliament act for elimination of manual scavenging demands that identified workers be rehabilitated into alternate occupations as the responsibility of the state. The State's response is to hide the real numbers and deflate them to an extent where it does not invite criticism or even action on its part. Accordingly, all district commissioners (DC's) of all states provide a pro-forma response to data seekers that there is no manual scavenging in his area. It is interesting to observe that while tall claims are made about replacing manual scavenging with machines, there is absolutely no interest in the rulers of India

in making this a reality. Such deceit is seen in many other areas where the Dalits and the poor are involved. Changing terminology is one way of diverting attention from the problem at hand.

Another dimension of the Dalit problem that is shared by many other castes is that of the woman. In this, it may be appreciated that the great role of women in society is considered of little importance in the knowledge hierarchy. This has been the state even in earlier times. Even a great progressive reformer like Basavanna was not immune from the distinction he makes about women and men, as were our folk traditions, proverbs and stories.

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Session-4

**Imagining Swaraj in the 21st century -- *some Knowledge issues***

*Working Group: B V Rama Prasad (Convener), G. Sivaramakrishnan, Sunil Sahasrabudhey,  
Rajeev Sangal*

## Summary

All societies are sufficiently rich and complex, and possess the imagination and knowledge to understand and address problems as they arise. It is when expert knowledge claims for itself the right to unconditionally judge and teach others that problems become intractable and multiply. Today, people are considered ignorant, who need to be guided by those who know better. Contemporary political ideologies, whether of the right or the left, reinforce this illusion even while claiming to speak on behalf of the people.

It is in this background that a new political imagination has become a critical need. This can come about through a dialogue that solicits ideas and questions which do not find a place in the debates in the media or circulate in learned journals. Such a dialogue works by putting trust in the knowledge of people and their movements. In its mature state, the dialogue can potentially enable people to believe that they have the power to shape their own destinies, which is what we call as Swaraj.

It is not simply a matter of discussing Swaraj in abstract terms or without empirical grounding; rather, considering the current state of our society, culture, and economy, Swaraj may indeed represent the only viable alternative. Not only does data from the 18th century corroborate this view, but recent studies also lend robust support to this conclusion.

In recent years, the idea of nation-state seems to be under serious stress, national sovereignty is no longer guaranteed, and global finance capital dictates terms to even super powers. In this background, the session on Swaraj as a new political imagination will indeed be incomplete without a serious consideration of what it means in the twenty first century. This would help address skepticism regarding dialogues on Swaraj.

Societies are sufficiently rich and complex. They possess the imagination and knowledge to understand and address the problems as they arise. Problems become intractable and multiply when expert knowledge claims for itself the right to unconditionally judge and teach others. People are considered ignorant, who need to be guided and manipulated by those who know better. Today's political ideologies whether on the right or the left reinforce this illusion even while they claim to speak on behalf of the people. We need a new political imagination. This can come about through dialogues which bring into discussion ideas and questions which do not find a place in the debates in the media or that circulate in learned journals. This dialogue works by putting trust in the people in their knowledge, in their movements.

Who are the people? People are whom we meet in homes, in the streets, in the markets, at work, and in our travel. They are all people. Farmers, factory workers, laborers, artisans, retailers, hawkers, housewives, students, teachers, jobseekers, jobholders, old people, young people, - are all people. There are some people whom we never meet; we can never meet. They meet us when they think we need to be chastised or guided. These people have power, but all people have knowledge; the knowledge to understand problems of society and the knowledge to make and remake societies in ways that make life worth living. It is not as if there are no structures of power and authority among people, it is just that these are distributed in society. If something goes down, something else takes over. When people have the power to shape their own destinies, we call that Swaraj.



Viewed another way, Swaraj is the manifestation of what is innate in every human being. This innateness is rooted in caring for others and love for all. As a person realizes this innateness, his behavior and actions follow accordingly. It leads to a society that naturally is Swaraj, where people build family and community based 'natural' structures. This is in contrast to 'artificial' society being built today whose stated goal is to build efficiency but has no place for family or human relations, where people are powerless and life is not worth living.

How do we promote dialogues on knowledge in society for a new political imagination? This question presupposes that knowledge in society provides a sufficient basis for a new political imagination, namely Swaraj. This is the world of knowledge which houses Swadeshi Darshan and therefore a constructive dialogue here can be a robust departure for a concrete, contemporary concept of Swaraj.

As was demonstrated by Dharampal in his work on 18th century Indian society, village communities across India seem to have managed their affairs without the influence of kingship or other centralized governance. Each village or a group of villages tailored their management to their specific conditions and characteristics, leading to a varied but not necessarily asymmetrical government structures. However, the colonial administration uniformly categorized these local governance mechanisms as panchayats, deeming them unsuitable for their purpose. Therefore, they began to introduce modern state institutions within the villages initiating a progression of reforms in panchayats that persist even to this day. Despite this, traditional governance mechanisms continue to operate albeit hampered by the newly imposed structures of state institutions.

There are numerous examples where the administrative, judicial and political frameworks of state institutions prove inadequate to handle village affairs, while traditional communities, adeptly manage them outside these institutional structures. These communities autonomously resolve conflicts, oversee family and community issues, manage temples and their associated festivals, maintain community and traditional Mathas, Chatras, teach and learn traditional and local performing arts, practice traditional medicine and manage agriculture and allied activities. Importantly, the manner in which these activities are conducted varies from village to another, indicating that Swaraj remains alive in them though in a rather altered form. Contemporary accounts of villages, derived from colonial accounts and framework tend to misrepresent these as non-existent or corrupt and regressive. This mis-characterization underscores the need to reevaluate these indigenous models of governance and explore the true essence of Swaraj.

This session on the idea of Swaraj for a new political imagination will be incomplete without a serious consideration of what Swaraj means in the twenty first century as we are already in the second quarter when nation-states seem to have come under serious stress and national sovereignty is no longer guaranteed nor sacred, and when global finance capital is dictating terms to even super powers. Therefore, there is bound to be skepticism about any dialogue on Swaraj. The session will therefore have to address what Swaraj could possibly mean today.

## The Session Program

*Moderator/ Chairman* : Krishna Gandhi, Ph.D.

### Presentations:

1. JS Sadananda, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science ( Retd), Kuvempu University and MS Chaitra , Ph.D., Director, Centre for the Comparative Study of Cultures , Chanakya University.
2. KV Akshara , Director of NINASAM, Heggodu. Cultural critic .

### Panel discussion:

1. Sunil Sahasrabudhey, Vidya Ashram, Varanasi.
2. Rajiv Sangal, Ph.D., IIT Hyderabad
3. Shanmukha A, Ph.D., Prof of Political Science , Kuvempu University, Shivamogga
4. Praveen TL , Ph.D., Associate Prof of Political Science , Davangere University , Davangere
5. Sumanas Koulagi, Ph.D., Melkote

## **Papers/Abstracts Presented in Session-4**

### **I. Understanding Grama**

**Prof. JS Sadananda & Prof. MS Chaitra**

Villages in India are currently experiencing significant transformations, and there has been a notable decrease in their numbers due to the expansion of urban areas. Despite this urban growth, approximately 70 percent of the Indian population continues to reside in villages. Projections indicate that by the year 2050, urban dwellers may comprise 50 percent of India's population. Even then, a substantial portion of the population will remain in rural areas, presenting considerable challenges from both social-scientific and policy perspectives. One of the foremost challenges lies in understanding these evolving villages. Numerous studies within the field of social sciences have revealed that villages possess distinct characteristics that set them apart from urban localities. As individuals migrate from rural to urban regions, village traditions are often replicated within these new urban settings, albeit transformed in the process. Grasping the unique attributes that differentiate rural from urban areas is crucial for informing policy decisions related to health, food security, employment, sanitation, and agriculture—all integral components of the rural ecosystem. The government is tasked with developing a comprehensive model of development that accommodates the needs and dynamics of both urban and rural India. To facilitate effective policy interventions, a robust understanding grounded in social-scientific research is essential.

Academically, numerous studies have been conducted since the colonial era to delve into the life

of rural India, encompassing aspects such as community life, nature and role of communities, conflicts, and cooperation. Over the past century, understanding the dynamics of Indian villages has remained a central focus within the fields of sociology and anthropology. From the 1940s to the early 1990s, village studies were not only a critical component of sociology but evolved into a distinct academic subfield. Sources informing these social scientific inquiries include materials from pre-social scientific explorations of Indian villages. Notably, European administrators — predominantly the British beginning with the East India Company era in the 1760s — sought to understand Indian villages for administrative purposes. This curiosity spurred the compilation of a substantial body of literature on Indian villages from the 18th century to the early 20th century, crafted mainly by British administrators and travelers. Subsequent sociological and anthropological studies, such as those by M.N. Srinivas and Louis Dumont, drew upon these earlier works.

European attempts to comprehend Indian village life were often filtered through a European conceptual lens, particularly within the framework of modern State. For instance, searching for bureaucratic structures resembling those in the courts of European kings, they were puzzled by their absence in the administrative setups of Indian villages. Unable to locate similar systems, they resorted to romanticized perceptions of villages, branding them as autonomous republics—a notion reminiscent of the village ideal in Britain, which vanished post-industrialization.

This description ultimately contributed to a unique, if skewed, understanding of Indian villages, primarily reflecting a European experiential understanding. Faced with the challenge of integrating these communities into a broader administrative framework, colonial authorities introduced concepts such as bureaucracy and taxation, which were alien to Indian villagers.

Moreover, the colonial administration diligently sought traditional Indian institutions within villages that could be adapted and incorporated into their governance structures. They discovered the panchayat system, a local dispute resolution mechanism, and assumed that it was a remnant of a possibly ancient structure that had been distorted during Muslim rule. In presidencies like Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, the British were convinced of the juridical nature of panchayats and believed these institutions possessed the necessary authority to function effectively.

In their pursuit of modifying these structures to fit colonial administrative needs, the British initiated the creation of new institutions between 1800 and 1850—an experiment that largely failed to generate functional institutions within the villages. The ineffective juridical institutions began transitioning into political institutions in 1882, marking a period of significant legal intervention aimed at promoting self-governance and decentralization within the British Empire. Thus, the legacy of nearly two centuries of engagement with Indian village governance persists. The notion of self-governance, cultivated during the colonial period, continued post-independence, influencing the establishment of the Panchayat Raj system in India.

The conceptualization of the Indian village that has been inherited from colonial administration exerts a significant influence on our understanding of Indian villages, as well as on the effectiveness of institutions purportedly 'Indian' in nature. Any well-informed scholar of Indian sociology is aware that village studies have largely been unsuccessful. This failure is further exemplified by the experiments conducted with Panchayat Raj institutions, which show a noticeable lack of active engagement from villagers. Moreover, there is a consistent grievance regarding low levels of public participation. Despite various efforts to enhance the effectiveness of these institutions, they fall short of even minimal expectations. Given this backdrop, the importance of considering Dharpal's portrayal of the panchayat becomes quite evident. He

presents extensive data that illuminate our inadequacies in comprehensively understanding Indian villages, elucidating both the distinctive characteristics of these villages and the reasons behind the failure of modern Panchayat Raj institutions. Consequently, Dharampal's detailed account compels a thoughtful reassessment of our perceptions of Indian villages.

An examination of Dharampal's work and supplemental archival data reveals a significant discrepancy between our conceptual understanding of Indian villages and their actual historical and social realities, despite over two centuries of scholarly engagement. The uncritical superimposition of European interpretations on Indian rural structures, treated as if they were scientific truths, has significantly hindered efforts to accurately understand the nature and functions of Indian villages.

Consider the example of the Panchayat institutions. Both Gandhian supporters and Ambedkarites recognize these as typically Indian institutions, though they diverge on their perceptions of the institutions' inherent characteristics. Despite various reformative measures such as reservations, these institutions have largely failed to deliver their intended outcomes. On the rare occasions where they have succeeded, it can typically be attributed to the extraordinary efforts and ingenuity of specific individuals, indicating that these successes are unique and not scalable. State institutions are generally ill-equipped to handle projects that cannot be systematically replicated or scaled.

Dharampal provides further insightful analysis into how these institutions have evolved. A widespread discussion points to corruption as a major flaw of the modern administrative system in India, with many arguing that the advent of the Panchayat Raj has extended corruption into rural areas. Yet, there remains a lack of compelling explanations for the prevalence of widespread corruption across the nation. Dharampal's exploration of the Panchayat system's evolution within the Madras presidency illustrates how corruption can become an intrinsic component following the imposition of modern institutions like the Panchayat.

Moreover, Dharampal delineates a clear distinction between traditional ('Sampradayak') Panchayats and government-implemented ('Sarkari') Panchayats, highlighting how community engagement differs markedly between these types of institutions. This distinction is crucial for understanding the varied impacts and effectiveness of these governance models and their structures in rural India. In short, Dharampal's account sheds critical light on the complexities of implementing modern governance mechanisms in traditional settings and underscores the nuanced differences in institutional engagements and outcomes.

Villages in India confront a myriad of challenges including migration from rural areas, agriculture instability, unemployment and underemployment, education deficiencies, and health care inadequacies. Successfully addressing these concerns hinges on an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the intricate nature of these villages. While individuals associated with various ideological frameworks such as conservatism, progressivism, and liberalism may differ in their approaches to resolving these issues, a fundamental prerequisite is consistent across all perspectives: the necessity to overcome cognitive limitations in comprehending the dynamics of village life. Each ideological group, regardless of its distinct philosophy, must dedicate efforts towards enhancing our collective insight into rural environments to foster effective solutions.

## II. Towards A New and contemporary Political Imagination

Sunil Sahasrabudhey

Vidya Ashram, Sarnath, Varanasi

Political ways of thinking largely meaningful in the 20<sup>th</sup> century no more appear to apply to the new world being created by the new Information Technology, in particular the internet. We shall attempt to come to grips with the new situation in continuity with what has been happening up till the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Given below are the points which may serve as points of departure for a new political imagination in this country.

1. **Bahujan** means the non-elite. It is in this sense that Shakyamuni Buddha used it frequently. Today too it is used mainly in this sense, that is to refer to ordinary people. They always happen to be a majority, but that is not part of the meaning of this word 'bahujan'. As politics has expanded to include ordinary people as citizens and not just as subjects, 'bahujan' has got mixed with non-elite castes which have become a major explicit factor in politics. However, we shall prefer to use this word *bahujan* to refer to ordinary people.

2. **Swadeshi samaj** refers to contemporary non-capitalist social formations which have far too many similarities with their pre-capitalist avatars. Farmers, artisans, adivasis, the small retailers. Women constitute the main stay of their domestic organization, economic activity and preservation of social/moral values.

3. **Bahishkrit samaj** is made up of people who have no place in the modern structure of opportunities, people who have no place in modern institutions like government, big industry, institutionalized services like education, health, police, military etc. It is seen as distinct from *pashchimikrit* (Westernised) *samaj*. It is also seen as Bharat as distinct from India.

4. **Lokavidya samaj** refers to people who possess *lokavidya*, a form of knowledge that resides in society and not in (organized) institutions. *Lokavidya* is living knowledge based on tradition and enriched by the later experiences.

These are all more or less the same people, the ordinary people, *Bahujan*. Ordinary life is life without a condition, it assumes no religion, no technology. Ordinary language is language without a condition, it assumes no grammar. Ordinary experience is experience without a condition, it assumes no theory, no conceptual pre-condition, it includes *nirvikalpa pratyaksha*. So *Bahujan* has a thoughtful and active mind, a genius of its own pervaded by thought but with no canonical (ideological) binding. When this *Bahujan* comes up with a new political imagination, the elite shall not understand it, for it will not be reducible to any of their imagination.

The following may constitute some points of departure for such an imagination.

i. **Ordinary life** is the life of the *Bahujan-Samaj*.

ii. **Lokavidya** is the knowledge of the *Bahujan-Samaj*.

iii. **Swaraj** is the idea and practice of governance of the *Bahujan-Samaj*.

iv. **Sant-parampara** expresses the values of the *Bahujan-Samaj*.

v. **Swadeshi darshan** bench-marked by neighborhood and proximity is the philosophy of *Bahujan-Samaj*.

**vi. Women** constitute the main stay of the domestic organization, economic activity and preservation of social relations and moral values in *Bahujan-Samaj*.

**vii. Panchayat** is central to the social and economic organization and regulation (enforcement of a code of conduct) in society. It is popular in *Bahujan-Samaj*.

**viii. Traditions of Public Finance and fiscal systems** are rhizome like, similar to the power distribution in *Bahujan-samaj*.

**ix. Traditions of Indian agriculture** are traditions of the *Bahujan-samaj*. Food sovereignty has been central in their thought and practice.

**x. Indian industrial products** constituted more than one-third share of the industrial production of the world up till less than 200 years ago. *Bahujan-Samaj* had the required skills, knowledge, controls of the means of production and social control for such production.

**xi. Brahmanic thought and ritual** robbed the *Bahujan-Samaj* of its independent and equal status.

**xii. Moghuls** took away the say and participation of the *Bahujan-Samaj* in the governance of the society.

**xiii. The British** robbed the *Bahujan-Samaj* of its land and control on the means of industrial production. They created conditions such that *Bahujan-Samaj* could not use its knowledge for the betterment of society.

**xiv. The Independence Movement resurrected the idea of swaraj** and mobilized the ordinary people.

**xv. In independent India** the relations between different segments of the Indian society remained more or less the same as in British India. *Bahujan-Samaj* was caught in the process of *sanskritization* guided by the professional classes. For a few decades now, they have their own political leadership. The challenge, however, remains to substantially undo what the Brahmins, the Moghuls and the British did them in past. A resurgence to connect India back to its soul demands a new political imagination in the leadership of the *Bahujan Samaj*.

**xvi. The new political imagination** is to be born through a *lokavidya* knowledge movement of the *Bahujan-Samaj* which explicitly entails for the *Bahujan-Samaj* social equality, political participation and leadership, control on means of production, distribution and communication and equal status for *lokavidya* in the world of knowledge.

**xvii. Swaraj** has a long tradition in the Indian society. It still provides the pivot for a new and contemporary political imagination. Re-emergence of *swadeshi darshan* is a broad requirement. A beginning was made by Mahatma Gandhi. As can be traced back to him, *lokavidya* knowledge movement is the bridge between *swadeshi darshan* and *swaraj* in today's world.

xviii. Mahatma Gandhi's path of reconstruction and building afresh is expressed in the phrase 'based in our tradition and enriched by the later experiences'. Attempts of this kind were made in some countries of South America. Early this century, Bolivia and Ecuador went through large mobilizations asserting that they need to rebuild their nations taking lessons from their knowledge (cultural) roots. The key ideas that came out were Rights of Mother Earth and Rights of Nature. They adopted new constitutions and called themselves Plurinational States which, briefly said, recognize multiple politico-social formations and autonomy of the same within a nation/state. This is in stark contrast to the concept of the State born in Europe and spread all over the world through colonialism and imperialism and now in the name of 'Democracy'. It is

also a complete opposite of the very recent concept of civilizational state born in the wake of the neo-conservative developments in many countries across the world.

xix. Two major outcomes of the internet in the shape of the World Wide Web may be noted: one, the unprecedented expansion of communication and dialogue and two, the Artificial Intelligence. Whereas the former distributes and spreads knowledge and intelligence almost without limit, the latter mops up the intellectual resources available on the internet at one place with lightening speed. The first inaugurates a new epoch of knowledge dialogue, briefly called **The Age of Dialogue** and the other concentrates all knowledge for profiteering by a few.

xx. The **new political imagination or a contemporary conception of swaraj** depends on how well we understand this new Age of Dialogue and how effectively we construct a *Bahujan* knowledge dialogue in this new world.

### **III. The Models of Swaraj: Nature of Indian Villages and Nyayapanchayats**

Dr. Shanmukha A and Dr.Santosha E

The village communities across India seem to have managed their affairs without the influence of kingship or other centralized governance. Each village or a group of villages tailored their management to their specific conditions and characteristics, leading to varied but not necessarily asymmetrical government structures. However, the colonial administration uniformly categorized these local governance mechanisms as panchayats, deeming them unsuitable for their purpose. Therefore, they began to introduce modern state institutions within the villages initiating a progression of reforms in panchayats that persist even to this day. Despite this, traditional governance mechanisms continue to operate albeit hampered by the newly imposed structures of state institutions.

#### **Nature of Indian Villages:**

Our understanding of a village transcends the mere geographical and demographic aspects it encompasses a living, breathing entity that encapsulates the life cycle of human existence: birth, growth, decay, and rebirth. Just as each individual has a unique identity shaped by experiences and interactions, each village has its own distinct nature defined by its history, culture, and the interplay of its inhabitants.

Take, for example, the dynamics within a village that maintains a composition of various castes, social interactions, and cultural exchanges. These elements are not static; they evolve as new families settle and others depart, reflecting a vibrant tableau of social harmony and adaptation. When a new group integrates into a village, it doesn't merely coexist; it becomes an intrinsic part of the village's evolving identity, absorbing and contributing to the local customs and traditions. In villages, inclusivity and community participation are core to their operations, almost as if each village behaves as a single organic entity.

As we consider these rural communities, we must also recognize the practical implications of these dynamics in the context of Swaraj or self-governance. The concept is deeply rooted in the idea that local communities have the autonomy to manage their affairs, from resolving disputes to managing local resources and cultural events. This autonomy is essential not only for efficiency of governance but also for preserving the unique cultural identity of each village.

In practice, this means encouraging and facilitating villages to harness their local knowledge what we can call kriya jnana or functional knowledge. This encompasses the wisdom and practices developed over generations, tailored to the specific needs and peculiarities of the community. By embracing Swaraj or self-governance models which empower these communities to apply this intimate knowledge to govern themselves in a manner that is socially, culturally, and ecologically sustainable. One such models is ‘traditional nyayapanchayats’.

### **Traditional Nyaya Panchayats as a model of Swaraj:**

There are numerous examples where the administrative, judicial and political frameworks of state institutions prove inadequate to handle village affairs, while traditional communities, and adeptly manage them outside these institutional structures. These communities autonomously resolve conflicts, oversee family and community issues, manage temples and their associated festivals, maintain community and traditional Mathas, Chatras, teach and learn traditional and local performing arts, practice traditional medicine and manage agriculture and allied activities. Importantly, the manner in which these activities are conducted varies from village to another, indicating that Swaraj remains alive in them though in a rather altered form.

For example, various forms of Nyaya Panchayats can be observed in all the villages. The empirical study conducted on Nyaya Panchayats across Karnataka reveals that traditional Nyaya Panchayats continue to exist in various forms, including Community Panchayati, Halli Panchayati, Katte Panchayati, Jati Panchayati, Hatti Panchayati, among others. Additionally, apart from Nyaya Panchayats in villages, there are several conventional Mathas such as Sirigere, Gavisiddeshwara, and temples like Dharmastala (referred to as Hoylu Panchayati), as well as Daiva or Kola Panchayati (found in coastal Karnataka) and Nayakanahatti temple Panchayati in central Karnataka. These conventional places of pachayatis are prevalent across the state and handle higher disputes or issues that could not be resolved in the village traditional Panchayats.

These Panchayats in villages and traditional institutions adhere to ancestral wisdom and conventional structures for conflict resolution to reach solutions to disputes and issues. Data indicates that even today, approximately 85% of conflicts and cases are resolved through these traditional Panchayats, with only 15% of disputes in villages goes to modern courts. Moreover, those cases that proceed to modern courts often experience significant challenges and sufferings, leading many to revert to traditional Panchayats to resolve their conflicts amicably. This persistence highlights the enduring relevance of the Swaraj models that have existed throughout India's history and continue to function effectively even today whatever the distorted form possible.

Contemporary accounts of villages, derived from colonial accounts and framework tend to misrepresent these as non-existent or corrupt and regressive. This mischaracterization underscores the need to re-evaluate these indigenous models of governance and explore the true essence of Swaraj.

Moreover, the principle of Swaraj extends beyond mere self-governance. It is evident in the models like traditional nyayapanchayats. They foster a sense of belonging and accountability among the residents. When people have a say in the affairs of their community, their engagement and investment in outcomes increase profoundly. This is crucial in a country as diverse as India, where each village can sometimes seem like a microcosm of the nation itself. The essence of Swaraj lies in recognizing and nurturing the intrinsic nature of each village, understanding its unique identity and dynamics, and empowering it to govern itself.



## IV. Revisiting Swaraj: Native Models of Sustainable Living

Dr. Praveena T. L

Indian notion of nature is very distinctive comparing to west. It highly influenced by the concept of *Panchabootas*. The modern western notion of nature has historically been utilitarian, viewing natural resources as commodities for economic growth and technological advancement. It has driven large-scale industrialization, deforestation, and resource exploitation. This approach influenced a lot on property rights, agricultural structures, and taxation etc. It emphasis on scientific and technological control, such as genetic modification and artificial ecosystems, has aimed at maximizing productivity but frequently disregards long-term environmental consequences. The West has a history of misusing and overexploiting natural resources, evident in activities like fossil fuel extraction, deforestation, overfishing, and unsustainable farming. These practices directly impact the climate, leading to issues such as ocean acidification, land degradation, and water shortages.

In recent years, there has been a shift toward sustainability and conservation. Movements like deep ecology, climate activism, and renewable energy initiatives reflect a growing awareness of environmental limits. Despite these efforts, ecological sustainability remains a persistent challenge.

*In this context, Swaraj* is an important alternative model for protecting nature and its resources by the indigenous communities. *Swaraj* emphasizes local governance and indigenous knowledge for ecological stewardship. Indigenous communities in India protect nature through practices like sacred groves conservation; sustainable agricultural techniques; etc. **Concept of Sacred Groves:** Many indigenous communities in India maintain sacred groves—patches of forest dedicated to deities or ancestral spirits. These groves are strictly protected and often serve as reservoirs of biodiversity. For instance, Nagarabana, Bhootarayana Bana in Malenadu and Karavali region of Karnataka. Such practices have been crucial in conserving various plant and animal species. **Traditional Agricultural Practices:** Indigenous agricultural methods emphasize harmony with nature. Traditional farmers manage pests and diseases using indigenous practices, avoiding synthetic chemicals and maintaining ecological balance.

One can see plenty of practices related to the nature in India. These practices embody *Swaraj*, where locals assume responsibility for preserving ecosystems. Recognizing and integrating such indigenous wisdom fosters sustainable development. This approach ensures ecological balance while honoring India's cultural heritage.

The concept of *Panchabootas* is very central to these kinds of indigenous practices. This ancient spiritual framework sees the universe as composed of five fundamental elements – Earth (Prithvi), Water (Jala), Fire (Agni), Air (Vayu), and Space (Akasha). Each of these elements is believed to represent specific qualities and energies, and their harmonious balance is considered essential for the well-being of individuals and the cosmos. The *Panchabhoota* concept underscores the inseparable connection between humans and nature. It encourages a holistic perspective, recognizing that individuals are not separate from the environment but an integral part of it.

Indigenous communities have long been custodians of India's diverse ecosystems, with their traditional practices embodying principles of sustainability, respect for biodiversity, and harmonious living with nature. Their knowledge systems offer valuable insights for contemporary efforts to protect the environment where modern state system is failed miserably in doing such responsibilities.

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## **Session-5**

### **Knowledge in Development Discourse, and Peoples Movements**

*Working Group : Umashankari Narendranath (Convener), O Ramasubramanian (Co-Convener),  
Rajeev Sangal, Rahul Goswami, Sunil Sahasrabudhey, Veena Joshi*

### Abstract

The “Knowledge in Development & People’s Movement” Session examines three critical intersections: the emergence of neo-localism as a response to globalization's failures, the epistemological tensions in agricultural systems where traditional knowledge confronts modern paradigms, and the inherent violence in development processes that marginalize indigenous wisdom. Through these lenses, the convention questions contemporary development narratives while exploring how knowledge hierarchies impact communities. The discussions shaped by experienced and leading public intellectuals, activists and academics, aim to reimagine development frameworks that honor local knowledge systems while addressing the challenges of epistemic injustice in our rapidly changing world.

The Session on Knowledge in Discourse & People’s Knowledge interrogates the intersectionality of epistemic hierarchies, development paradigms, and indigenous knowledge systems through three critical discursive frameworks. First, it examines the emergence of neo-localism as a counter-narrative to the hegemonic globalization discourse of the 1990s, positioning it within the context of three decades of economic reforms that have exacerbated structural inequities. This dialectic between the local and global raises fundamental questions about the commons' knowledge and its reclamation in contemporary socio-economic structures.

The second framework delves into the epistemological violence inherent in modern agricultural systems, where cultural knowledge systems are subordinated to mechanistic, capital-driven paradigms of food production and food security. This session problematizes the binary between traditional farming knowledge and contemporary agricultural discourse, examining how multilateral organizations' definitions of food security systematically marginalize the livelihoods of farmers and the cultural dimensions and indigenous agricultural wisdom.

The final framework critically examines development as a vector of violence. By examining the intersection of gender, food systems, and epistemic violence in defining gender, this session deconstructs the embedded power structures within development discourse while questioning the potential for transformative change within existing paradigms.

Together, the session aims to construct a critical examination of knowledge systems in relation to development, challenging conventional narratives while proposing alternative epistemological approaches that center marginalized voices and indigenous knowledge/wisdom; thereby shaping a crucial intervention in contemporary debates about development, sustainability, and democratization.

### The Session Programme

This session is designed as a combination of presentations and panel discussions. Following is the tentative schedule.

#### Presentations: Emergence of the Neo-Local?

The concept of the ‘neo-local’ is a phenomenon that is emerging in the world today, as against the globalization that was seen as a panacea for economic progress in the 90s. After three decades of

economic reforms, India has witnessed organized extraction, exploitation and furthering of the pre-existent inequities and inequalities even more acutely. Epistemic injustice is the hidden truth in plain sight during the period of globalization. Can this emerging local movement provide an opportunity to reclaim the place for the commons knowledge?

- **Loka Vidya- Peoples Knowledge Movement and Local economy - Chitra Sahasrabudhey**
- **Towards a new imagination of 'Development' - Baskar Manimegalai**
- **Radical Ecological Democracy, Rights of Nature -Shrishtee Bajpai**

#### Dialogue: Farming, Food, and the Knowledge question

The area with the highest impact of the knowledge injustice committed today is in the domain of farming and food systems. Farmers' economic and social status, his/her knowledge and culture have become an afterthought in the definition of food production and food security. Reports of multi-lateral organizations such as FAO and other international organizations on farming is necessarily censored through the lens of speed, mechanization and global capital interest. What has been and can be the place for farmers' knowledge in discourses of food, and farming in the future?

- **GM crops, vanishing agri-bio-diversity and the need for preservation of indigenous knowledge in agriculture - Kavitha Kuruganti**
- **History as a Present Continuous – Knowledge questions behind the Farmers' Movement - Girish Sahasrabudhey**

#### Reflective Talks: Violence in (& as) Development

Development as a process has aggravated prevailing injustices in society, it has also created new ones. Understanding the role of knowledge holders, their current challenges and how do they see the future is essential today, even as "sustainability" drives a new discourse. Will this be even more violent than the previous phase?

- **Food Systems, Women, and the Knowledge question – D U Saraswathi**
- **Redefining gender in the Knowledge discourse – Tashi Choedup**
- **Epistemic violence in Development discourse and the space for ahimsa- Rajni Bakshi**
- **Interaction with the entire panel of presentations**

*Brief Profile of the Contributors to the Session (in alphabetic order) with their language of choice*

**Baskar Manimegalai** (Tamil): Baskar Manimegalai is Director of the Nammalvar Multiversity. He is an intellectual and educator in Tamil Nadu, known for making his insights accessible to a broad audience, including teachers, academics, students, and parents.

**Chitra Sahasrabuddhey** (Hindi): Chitra Sahasrabudhey turned to lifelong social activism after receiving her Ph.D. in Chemistry. She has worked primarily to organize women and artisans with focus on lokavidya as their source of strength. She is the National Convener of Lokavidya Jan Andolan and Coordinator of Vidya Ashram, and lives at Vidya Ashram in Varanasi.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe** (English): He is a member of the Executive Committee of Vidya Ashram,

Sarnath, Varanasi and an activist of Lokavidya Jan Andolan. He was active in the Farmers' Movement led by the Shetkari Sanghatana in Maharashtra in 1980's and later. He has been a student of the Shetkari Andolan all along. During student days he was an active member of the group of activists around the Hindi language periodical Mazdoor Kisan Niti.

**Kavitha Kuruganti** is the Convener of ASHA (Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture)- - Kisan Swaraj, member of Coalition for GM free India. She is a lead campaigner against GM food crops, and promoter of organic agriculture, indigenous genetic resources, and has played a critical role in the Farmers' Movements in the recent years.

**Rajni Bakshi** (English): Rajni Bakshi is a Mumbai-based freelance journalist and author. She writes about social and political movements in contemporary India. Rajni is the founder and curator of Ahimsa Conversations, an online platform for exploring the possibilities of nonviolence. She was formerly the Gandhi Peace Fellow at Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations.

**Saraswathi** (Kannada): Dalit women and workers rights activist, researcher, creative writer (poetry, short stories, plays as well as articles) theater artist. got my Ph.D. degree in 2019 for "community under siege: socio-cultural study of safai karmacharies in Karnataka from feminist perspective". My poems, short stories and one act play has been part of the syllabus in schools, colleges.

**Shristee Bajpayee** (English): Shristee is is a member of Kalpavriksh, an environmental action group in India. She helps in coordinating the Vikalp Sangam (Alternatives Confluence). She is a researcher, writer, and activist working at the intersections of environmental justice, social justice, more-than-human governance, worldviews, and systemic transformations.

**Tashi Choedup** (English): Tashi (They/She) is a trans feminine person working in human rights, and social justice movement spaces for 15 plus years and a Buddhist monastic in Tibetan tradition for over 7 years. Tashi is a founding member of Telangana Hijra Intersex Transgender Samiti, and Queer Swabhimana Yatra. Their were also a member of the Telangana State Government's Welfare Board for Transgender Persons.

**Usha Soolapani** (English): Usha Soolapani is the Director of the Thanal AgroEcological Producer Company. She Researches, documents and writing about issues related to agroecology, climate change, biodiversity, wilderness, politics of food and health, community wisdom and exploring peaceful co-existence.

## **Papers/Abstracts Presented in Session-5**

### **I. Loka Vidya- Peoples Knowledge Movement and Local economy**

**Chitra Sahasrabudhey**

( English Translation of the original in Hindi)

(Lokavidya (लोकविद्या) may be roughly rendered as 'Knowledge in Society' in English)

The industrial age which dominated the lives of the people for last 100-200 years has come to a close. From the beginning of the 21st century, with the arrival of the Information Age, new claims of building a new man and a world have been staked. It is a claim of building a

knowledge-based world. Rulers of many countries in the world including India are working towards fulfilling these claims. New domains of knowledge are opening and these countries are investing more and more in management and Converging Technologies (nano, bio, information and cognitive). Globalization has increased the competition in expanding the markets and building new ones. This has led to greater violence, war, injustice, oppression, hatred, disparity and displacement (eviction). Which further leads to destroying ordinary life by displacing moral values, human sensibility and constructive human disposition out of life as such. Now Artificial Intelligence and Robotics are giving further push to this phenomenon. Traditional aristocracy, democracy and socialist states all are equally pushing this trend forward. So, the question arises as to what is the nature of this knowledge which is leading to development causing the systematic destruction of nature and humanity. It has so transpired that man's activity in political, economic, social, philosophical etc. spheres is considered fulfilling only when it is emptied of human activity? How can one conceive of knowledge without sensitivity. These states of affairs are creating a historic opportunity for heralding a new epistemology which may contain criteria of legitimacy for people-oriented knowledge. This is an integral aspect of the work of social reconstruction based on truth, equity and brotherhood. It is here that Lokavidya Jan Andolan sees its role. Under following heads is discussed Lokavidya Jan Andolan.

- **Lokavidya Philosophy:**

What is Lokavidya? It may be understood as knowledge with the people, knowledge in society, knowledge spread outside the institutions of organized formal knowledge. Every human being is knowledgeable. All knowledge starts from lokavidya and returns to lokavidya. The knowledge that does not return to lokavidya turns against nature and humanity.

- **Claims of Lokavidya Jan Andolan:**

Different types, locations and streams of knowledge are always present in the world of knowledge. Hierarchy among these produces hierarchy in society. Lokavidya and ordinary life embody ideas and imagination to be able to act against such hierarchy and produce fraternal relation and equality between various types of knowledge, unorganised, organized, all. In every village, at every ghat, in every forest and basti, In every fair, in every market, at every river bank, On every road, at every step in the world, there are knowledgeable people. And from here is to be decided where lies knowledge and who is knowledgeable. Let the masters of lokavidya speak and stake their claims on knowledge.

- **Ideas and programs of Lokavidya Jan Andolan(LJA):**

The first convention of Lokavidya Jan Andolan was held in the year 2011 on the premises of Vidya Ashram at Sarnath in Varanasi with about 300 participants. In the last fourteen years, people from many parts of the country have participated in this knowledge movement. One of the main assertions of LJA is that it is the birth right of every person to earn his/her livelihood based on lokavidya. And that incomes of households living by lokavidya should be equal to the incomes of government employees. This shall be the effective way for emerging out of the persistent crises of inequality, unemployment and environmental degradation.

Inspired by the aspirations and movements of farmers, artisans, labourers, tribals, women and ordinary people, LJA promoted concepts of 'lokavidya' and 'ordinary life'. These were seen as the main sources of thought and action to illumine, organise and establish the strengths of the samaaj. These efforts are discussed in this paper. The ideas and programs merge into one, but they are dealt with separately for the sake of effective communication.

(a) **Ideas : Bauddhik Satyagraha, Gyan Panchayat, Lokavidya Satsang**

(b) **Programme: Bhaichara Vidyalaya, Lokavidya (local) Bazaar, Darshan Akhara, Kala Sadhna, Publications**

These find extensive treatment in the paper. These will be expanded upon in the talk at the Convention.

## II. Towards a new imagination of 'Development'

Baskar Manimegalai

Tamil:வடிவமைப்பு பெருமிதத்துல மட்டும் ஒரு நாடோ மாநிலமோ செழுமையடையாது, அதன் உள்கட்டமைப்பு எல்லாருக்கும் பாகுபாடில்லாம கடைகோடி மனிதனாக இருப்பவன் கிடைக்க வேண்டும், விண்ணுயர்ந்த கட்டிடம், வானம் முழுக்க விமானம், தரை முழுக்க தண்டவாளம், மாளிகை எங்கும் கண்ணாடி ஒரு பக்கம், ஊருக்கு எப்போ பஸ் வரும், வீட்டுக்கு எப்போ தண்ணீர் வரும்னு மணிக்கணக்கா காத்திருக்கும் மக்கள் இன்னொரு பக்கம்.

மக்களுக்கான நல்லாட்சி என்பது Gini Coefficient பூஜ்ஜியம் இருக்கனும் ஆனா இங்க 100 நோக்கி நகந்துகிட்டு இருக்கு.

வளர்ச்சிக்கும் வீக்கத்துக்கும் வித்யாசம் தெரியாமல் வடிவமைப்பு பெருமிதத்தில் (architectural ego) மட்டும் கவனம் செலுத்தும் ஆட்சியர்கள் கல்வி நிலையங்களுக்கு மத்தியில் மண் நலம் மக்கள் நலம் மீது அக்கறை கொண்ட சிந்தனைகள் செயற்பாடுகளுக்கு ஊக்கமளிக்கும் கல்வி நிலையங்கள், ஆசான்கள் தான் இன்றைய தேவை.

English:A country or a state can not take pride only on its architectural ego, its inner structure has to reach the last man without discrimination or prejudice. On the one side we have tall skyscrapers, airplanes filling up the sky, trains running all over the country, and mansions with glass windows and doors; on the other hand, we have people waiting for hours for the bus to come to the village, waiting for hours for the water supply to the house. The Gini Coefficient must be zero if we have to have good governance, but it is going up to 100 in our country. In the midst of politicians and educational institutions who know no difference between healthy growth and inflamed swelling, we need teachers who are concerned about the health of the soil and welfare of the people.

## III. GM crops, vanishing agri-bio-diversity and the need for preservation of indigenous knowledge in agriculture

Kavitha Kuruganti

Genetically Modified (GM) crops, with their accompanying political economy, are established to impact biodiversity in numerous ways. Within the commercially cultivated GM crops, the most widely adopted trait is that of herbicide-tolerance (HT). HT GM crops have a more direct bearing on the erosion of biodiversity in general, and agro-diversity in particular. While GM crops are an apparent logical next step for global agri-input industry, which consolidates its control over



agriculture through an intensive agriculture paradigm, the vanishing agro-diversity from farmers' fields is a direct deathknell on associated knowledge systems too. The informal seed systems which sustain agricultural livelihoods and food security in India, and also maintain agro-diversity to an extent, are mainly the direct result of indigenous knowledge. In the age of climate change, such diversity and associated knowledge are potential contributors to resilience in farm livelihoods. This talk will focus on GM crops' impact on biodiversity in general and agro-diversity in particular, will touch upon the importance of agrodiversity and seed sovereignty from a livelihoods perspective and will share information on current efforts underway in resisting the GM technology onslaught and revival of agro-diversity and associated indigenous knowledge.

#### **IV. History as a Present Continuous – Knowledge questions behind the Farmers' Movement**

Girish Sahasrabudhey

A vast majority of ordinary people live by their own knowledge. This knowledge they acquire from their family and their community through their social interactions in their everyday lives. It is a part and parcel of *lokavidya*, or Knowledge in Society. People's movements are largely movements of these people, the *lokavidya samaj*. Today they reflect the primary reality of their condition - that the work they do does not give them a position in the larger society and a return, that would ensure a life even of a sustained primary existence, let alone one of contentment, honour, and promise for their children. Compared to the return guaranteed for work based on modern knowledge acquired through formal education, return on their knowledge-work is not just meager and irregular, but also precarious and subject to large fluctuations and uncertainties. This immediately raises the following knowledge question: Why should this be so?

This is a knowledge question because it forces one to raise questions about the knowledge criteria that justify this state of affairs, support such hierarchy in the contemporary knowledge world, and perpetuate the starkest forms of injustice in human society. People's movements indirectly raise questions of knowledge criteria. At times they do so directly too.

The Kisan Andolan, or the Farmers' Movement, is a movement of the largest section of the *lokavidya samaj*. The Movement began with questioning official wisdom on causes of poverty. It declared that poverty is unnatural and perpetuated by subjecting their produce to grossly unequal terms of trade fostered by state policies. It exposed development as a neo-colonial practice funded by value-extraction. The demand for

equal exchange for farm produce has remained with the movement. Central to the Movement, and to the unity forged by it over intervals of its relative strength during its journey, is its non-political creed. The “political” clashes with its ideas of governance and representation and signifies locations of ultimate loss of initiative and autonomy of the samaj. The novel and entirely peaceful methods of mobilization, organization, assembly, protest and satyagraha and of autonomous decision making created by the Movement all along its long journey show this awareness. All this is once again in evidence today. After three decades of globalization, as the Movement rose again it characterized the moves on agriculture by the state as attempts ‘to confine food to coffers’ and ‘to trade in hunger’ and warned that this will be the end of fraternal sentiments (*bhaichara*) in the samaj. Its demand for legal guarantee of minimum support price with a minimum wage for agricultural labour should be seen as a demand for right to life and livelihood by one’s own knowledge.

Movements of adivasis, collectively known as the Jal-Jangal-Jameen Movement, assert ownership of local natural resources. The Movement has questioned development and exposed the environmental devastation it has caused. It emphasizes the role of community knowledge, local wisdom and local control over natural resources for their sustainable and just management. Movements of weavers, fishermen, and artisans of various crafts point to how application of technological and financial wisdom in modern knowledge systems has mercilessly deprived them of the very means and markets which enable them to sustainably continue their knowledge-work. The movement for environmental justice holds modern lifestyles responsible for destruction of the environment. Without global finance and markets backed by modern S&T, ICT-AI and the State these lifestyles are neither possible, nor sustainable even for a small part of humanity. Women and youth have always played dominant and, at times, leadership roles in all these movements. They are the biggest victims of destruction of families and loss of lokavidya-work which has led to displacement, migrations and unemployment.

People’s movements then clearly show an increasing insistence on facts of the condition of their people. That amounts to an implicit rejection of future imagination of development and questioning of its knowledge-basis. This suggests that a knowledge dimension must be added in any meaningful debate about a just and equal future society. The implicit demand of people’s movements is one of a future imagination on a new knowledge basis. A clear message is that lokavidya, the knowledge basis of their life and the primary source of their strength, must enjoy status of equal merit and honour with other streams and systems of knowledge in all matters of social, economic, political governance. The message has far-reaching implications for the discourse on future imagination. The ideas put forward by practices of people’s movements over their journey – equal exchange, right to life by one’s own knowledge, autonomy of social formations, strength and capacities of local wisdom and initiative, local control on

natural resources, equal distribution of national resources, life in synergy with nature, social values of *nyaya*, *tyaga* and *bhaichara* all gain fresh and contemporary meanings as central ideas in the knowledge basis for reconstruction of a just and equal society.

## V. Food Systems, Women, and the Knowledge question

D U Saraswathi

The whole convention, 'Convention on Dialogues in Knowledge in Society,' attempts to examine three critical intersections: neo-localism as a response to globalization's failures, epistemological tensions in agricultural systems, and the inherent violence in development processes that marginalize indigenous wisdom. Through these intersections, contemporary development narratives are questioned with the aim of reimagining development frameworks that honor local knowledge systems. With this background, my paper focuses on food system as a knowledge system and women who are closely connected with food system as knowledge producers. I have been part of the women's movement since 1982. We called our movement a non-hierarchical, autonomous, democratic collective. Personal is political was our statement. We believed in sisterhood. We came together and got united because we were exploited, oppressed. We fought for our rights as human beings. Our slogan was, 'Women's rights are human rights'. We demanded respect and dignity as human beings and for our labour and contributions. In-depth studies were done on women's labour. The amount and hours of work women did and what they got in return were analyzed. We discovered that women's labour, work is unseen, never valued and thankless, but it was very much essential to our families and society. As essential as the food we eat.

My academic journey with the food system began with doing field work on food preservation in Karnataka for a convention organized by PPST and IIT Bombay, way back in the 90's. Since then, food has become my permanent interest. I am connected closely with the municipal workers which includes sweepers and manual scavengers. Without their labour, the food cycle can never be complete. Because the food we eat becomes shit, and shit becomes manure for the food we eat!

My journey as an editor of the volume on food system of Karnataka, named 'Ahara Samputa' for Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, led to explore a step beyond preservation. The knowledge, skill, creativity, art, aesthetics, philosophy, and diversity involved in food system was amazing! Mind blowing!

Knowledge about nutrition, seasons, botany, zoology, chemistry, preservation, measurements; tools used in cooking, the skill and head and hand co-ordination, artistic and aesthetic excellence involved in preparing and preserving food that women have and the labour that goes into cooking all 365 days has been sidelined, not recognized, not valued therefore never becomes part of the history. But the occasional involvement of men makes it excellent art and part of 'his'tory.

Cooking is considered as one among 64 art forms for men to excel! The written history on food is 1500 years old. Chalukya king Somaeshwara's 'Manasollasa' in 1130, 'Supashastra' by king Mangarasa in 1516, and the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of 'Linga Purana' by Gurulinga Desika in 1594, 'Lokopakara' by poet Chavundaraya are the texts written by men which speaks about different recipes and their preparations. The need to study food system for me was to write 'her'story along with 'his'story so that we can create our story of human food system.

Knowledge of nutrition includes what should be fed in different seasons for different age groups, right from toothless infants to toothless old people and sick people; pregnant women, women who have delivered; for different occasions like festivals and fairs.

Knowledge of preservation involves techniques to preserve food in different seasons in a organic

way using lime, ash, mud, turmeric, salt, medicinal plants, and drying in the sun light. Aesthetics of creating varieties of food with different tastes, different shapes, sizes, colours, designs

Creativity is shown in all the proverbs, stories, songs women have developed in the process of doing the work involved in preparation of food

Philosophy: Every human culture considers food as god. Disrespecting food is a crime. Every culture believes in sharing food and feeding the hungry. Mud on which food grains are grown is called mother earth!

Food as a knowledge system has evolved through women's emotional, intellectual, physical, creative, philosophical energy. It is neither recognized nor acknowledged nor duly credited. Masanaba Fukovoka says food is a medicine to maintain health. Food is essential for our strength to work, stamina to confront diseases and keep us healthy both mentally and physically. Food in the present day has become a huge business in the globalized Market. Junk and packed food using chemicals are spoiling the whole digestive system. Serious health issues like obesity and gastro-intestinal problems have created major health issues.

Valuing the knowledge of women in food system, and adopting it practically in our day-to-day life itself is reclaiming that knowledge, which in turn becomes our strength to resist, confront violence and inequalities embedded in the name of development.

## **VI. Redefining Gender in the Knowledge Discourse**

Tashi Choedup

As human beings, we navigate a world that is constantly changing and we also willingly or unwillingly participate in the process of that change. As cliché as it may sound 'change is the constant' and it won't be unrealistic to say that any of us are unfamiliar with this constant in our lives. In life, we are born into various social, political, economic, and cultural circumstances which the privileged try to maintain or strengthen more, and the marginalized folks aspire and try to change against many odds. Along with these outer circumstances we all are also born into many identities such as caste, race, class, ethnicity, and so on, and these identities are always presented as inherent to our existence, some more so than others. These outer circumstances and the supposed inherent identities are in constant interaction with each other, often with a great deal of friction and tension. This interaction in so many ways is the basis of struggles and our aspirations for a world that is free of such struggles.

One such interaction is between the identity called 'gender' and the rest of the world we inhabit. When we talk about gender it is often imagined in relation to the existence of cis-gender women and in the framework of feminist thinking. Even in 2025 when gender gets invoked it becomes the question of cis-women as if men are genderless and as if all 8 billion humans can be neatly categorised into these boxes of gendered cis-women and 'genderless men'. Of course, I am not implying that gender discourse has remained unchanged, in spite of all the changes, many pockets of the feminist world have resistance to fully unpacking gender and connecting with queer-trans movements.

As a non-academic, non-scholarly transgender person who spent all my adult life in social justice movement spaces my engagement with 'identity politics' is personal and intimate, and at this knowledge convention I will share snippets of that journey and how I understand and perceive the connections and distances between feminist and queer movements and also

how the identity of gender is undergoing a transformation in the personal and political.

## VII. Epistemic violence in Development discourse and the space for ahimsa

Rajni Bakshi

In the ancient world 'ahimsa parmo dharam' was a radical idea and it arose from India -- where life was never seen as being fundamentally "short nasty and brutish". Indic cultures struggled with and then acquired a refined understanding of the dynamic between violence and nonviolence.

We have known for millennia that himsa and ahimsa are not a binary divide, its a spectrum.

This is why Gandhi said with absolute confidence that nonviolence is as old as the hills.

Lets explore just what ahimsa parmo dharam means -- why it is indeed possible but difficult.

How and why this awareness informs people's struggles for justice and dignity -- often resulting in painful challenges as well as opening pathways to creativity.

Why this is true not just for activists in India but across the world.

Nonviolence is not merely a "belief" or a tactic.

It is potentially an epistemic framework for a finer understanding of the human condition. When we do this then 'development', as it has been defined for the last 80 odd years, begins to unravel.

Then space grows for the ideal of Sarvodaya.

Just what does that mean today? Why is the ideal of nonviolence now under attack in India? Is there indeed a distinction between "dharmic violence" and "adharmic violence"? How we answer this question will shape our future.

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## **Session-6**

# **Artificial Intelligence and the Knowledge question**

*Working Group: Rajeev Sangal (Convener), Avinash Jha, J K Suresh, Sunil Sahasrabudhey,  
M Sasikumar, Shatrunjay Rawat , Nachiket Udupa*

AI or Artificial Intelligence is much talked about these days. There are predictions that it will enter into all aspects of our lives - from production to education and health, from distribution

of products to information and entertainment, from social affairs and justice to politics and societal decision making.

There are fears of centralization of power, disempowerment of users, bias (unintended as well as planned), breach of privacy, loss of personal data, malevolent uses, malfunction of technology, and finally going all the way to takeover of human kind. Justifications for technology come from benevolent uses of technology - producing better health, mitigating disasters, performing of hazardous tasks by machines, to providing comfort, and indeed life without any work!

What about AI and Knowledge? What knowledge do AI systems possess today? Is it explicit or tacit (including intuition)? If it includes both types of knowledge can the machine reason with it transparently? Are systems explainable? Can they carry out a dialogue? Or the systems are completely opaque? If so, what are the implications - what new problems does this raise?

How do we deal with bias that might come into AI due to machine learning based on data? Who takes responsibility, if an AI system has bias?

Existing data reflects inequities and injustices of the past. Would AI systems, which use the same data for machine learning, end up propagating and promoting these? Human society has been evolving, at least yearning for equity and justice, non-violence, truth, etc. Valiant attempts have been made in history to build better societies. Would AI mean the end of evolution of society, leading to staying stagnant in status quo?

AI technology, like any other technology, would get used by the powerful and the privileged first. Would it lead to greater, even unprecedented, centralization of power?

Today, the big technology companies already possess private data on hundreds of millions of users, which they use to manipulate them. This manipulation is not limited to their buying habits and showing of directed advertisements, but is moving towards control over their thoughts. Control is exercised on circulation of certain types of messages, especially containing negative opinions and emotions. AI embedded in algorithms, is already playing a role. With the future developments of AI, such manipulative power would get deployed with even greater "ferocity", but quietly.

AI promises comforts, and a life without any work. In this scenario, the human beings become totally dependent on machines. It raises the ultimate question about what is the human "purpose"? Life with food, clothing and shelter, including play and entertainment, but bereft of emotions and relationships and without any meaning - would it lead to happy human beings and a life worth living?

The discussion on the theme " AI and the Knowledge question" in the Convention will be in the form of a Panel , and would seek to touch upon all these issues and offer insights into them.

### **The Program**

## Round 1: Presentation by Panelists

### **Avinash Jha - AI touching lives of ordinary people**

Avinash Jha has been a librarian at Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. He has been concerned with philosophical aspects of human affairs, and how they interact with society. His PhD is in Exact Humanities at IIIT Hyderabad.

### **Sasikumar M. - Explicit coding of knowledge to opacity now**

Sasikumar has spent three decades in CDAC, Mumbai (earlier called NCST), as a young thinker and doer to leading the organization. He has been concerned with issues of technology and how it affects society.

### **Shatrunjay Rawat - Bias in AI systems and the problem it creates**

Shatrunjay Rawat has been teaching at IIIT Hyderabad for the past 15 years. Before that he was a computer networking expert and manager at CMC Hyderabad (later renamed TCS). Besides networking, he has also been teaching AI and Ethics, and Human Values courses among others. He has played an important role in guiding students in running the mess, discipline, and other aspects of student life. He has been interested in traditional Indian knowledge in scriptures and other aspects.

### **Nachiket Udapa - Who takes accountability for AI systems?**

Nachiket as a young thinker has been a keen observer of technology and how it shapes

### **Suresh J K - AI technology and Centralisation of power**

JK Suresh has served in HAL and Infosys at Bengaluru for more than four decades. Ever since his students days at IIT Kanpur in late seventies, he has been dabbling in readings, thoughts and analysis of the befuddling relationship between politics, technology, science, society, language, philosophy and the like. He has been working towards popularising hand-made products in India as an alternative to large scale automated production of goods and services to provide dignity and livelihood to its people.

### **Rajeev Sangal - Summary and Human purpose and AI**

Rajeev Sangal was the first regular Director of Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi (2013-18), and the founding Director of IIIT Hyderabad (2002-13). Earlier, he was a faculty member at IIT Kanpur where he headed the Department of Computer Science and Engineering. He is the Chairman of the Executive Committee and the designer of Bhashini, the national Mission on language translation of Meity, Govt. of India. Besides working on NLP/AI for four decades, he has also worked on Universal Human Values and Student Induction Program and its national convenor over the last two decades.

## Round 2: Cross questions among panelists

## Round 3: Questions/observations from audience (Time permitting)



## Papers/Abstracts Presented in Session-6

### **I. AI touching lives of ordinary people**

Avinash Jha

#### Brief Summary:

Artificial Intelligence is based on representation of knowledge that obtains in ordinary life. The idea is to reduce the need for human intervention in knowledge processes. I will briefly discuss philosophical underpinnings of AI and some dimensions of how it is going to affect the dynamics of knowledge in society.

#### Abstract:

Human beings are knowledgeable beings. Knowledge for them is sahaj - meaning easy, spontaneous, natural. This capacity to know is not constructed by humans but is a part of life. In Contrast, artificial intelligence is a human construction. Its knowledge is the polar opposite of sahaj. It seeks to imitate the sahaj.

AI is based on simulation of human capacity of knowledge. It seeks a particular type of understanding of human cognitive capacities which can be simulated in a technology to create a non-human intelligence. In the process a new idea of knowledge is emergent.

We are going to approach AI from the perspective of knowledge in society. Knowledge is central to AI as it seeks to create non-human intelligence. This non-human intelligence in the form of technologically created knowledgeable agents will perform increasing number of cognitive tasks that are currently performed by humans. The idea is to reduce the need for human intervention in knowledge processes in industry, governance, and daily life. Knowledge processes are where data are gathered, interpreted, reasoned with, and decisions are made.

With increasing urbanisation and technologisation of life, the knowledge that was required to conduct our ordinary lives is slowly being replaced by 'information'. Information handling is the new knowledge that is crucial for the conduct of life. This knowledge of 'information handling' is also knowledge in society.

We will ask the question regarding who, and in what manner, is excluded and included in these developments. What is the kind of political imagination that is needed in order to intervene in matters related to development of AI and other ascending technologies?

### **II. A World without Grandmothers: AI and Society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Dr. J.K. Suresh

*“When the looms spin by themselves, we'll have no need for slaves.”*

*~Aristotle*

*“I speak and speak, Marco says, but the listener retains only the words he is expecting...It is not the voice that commands the story: it is the ear.”*

*~Italo  
Calvino*

### Abstract

Popular imagination has for long held Knowledge as being agnostic to the affairs of the World. However, a close analysis of the relationship between Knowledge and Power in the modern age provides necessary clues to establish the nexus between the State, Capital and Power that in recent centuries seek to establish complete control over the lives of people.

The gains of mercantilism and colonialism since the 1600's, together with rapid advances in Natural Sciences and technologies, enabled the West to develop huge capital and labor intensive productive capabilities by the turn of the 19th Century. Such large changes led to the need for a radical restructuring of society in which Knowledge of various types started playing a central role. In turn, this resulted in a strong dialectic connection between the State, Capital, Power and Knowledge whose effects began to manifest themselves in a big way in the 1900's in the form of widespread disillusionment across societies about the nature and quality of the lives of the majority.

More recently, in the 35 years following the widespread adoption across the world of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) in all walks of life, their nexus has significantly strengthened their hold over societal processes. Recent developments in AI (Artificial Intelligence) indicate that the world is likely to witness another round of large transformations that are likely to fundamentally alter current ideas about society, life, work, livelihood, equity, justice and freedom.

In summary, it is only by recognizing the new dynamics of Knowledge in the modern era that we may comprehend its evolving alignments, connections and relationships with societal processes; in turn, this will enable us to interrogate its nature and effects on the world today. This paper attempts to lay the foundations for such an exploration with special emphasis on recent developments in AI.

### **A. The New Role of Knowledge**

Popular imagination for centuries has held Knowledge as a unique human trait that is somewhat untainted by the affairs of the World, except as a benign aid to progress and development. At first glance, it therefore appears unusual to treat Knowledge as being implicated, other than as a tool, in the machinations of State, Capital and Power that seek to control and drive the socio-economic and cultural processes of a society. It might appear for example that although the West in the modern era began to place faith in the Baconian dictum that Knowledge is Power, their connection was neither unambiguous nor well defined for long? In fact, a consideration of the work of scientists such as Newton, Laplace, Maxwell, Einstein, etc. or of philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Marx, Wittgenstein etc. might even bear out the relative independence of the pursuit of Knowledge from affairs of society or considerations of the State! Or, as in the case of Galileo, demonstrate how the State could be inimical to the pursuit of Knowledge?

Rich ideas about Knowledge seem to have been pervasive on the other side of the world, in India, as well. We do know that the country's non-oral traditions have for long considered Knowledge as a thing of value to the extent it pertains to *Paravidya*. On the other hand, its oral traditions do not seem to have had great theories of Knowledge at all, although a modern analyses give an

appearance that they do!

However, it is in recent centuries that the relationship between Knowledge and Society has undergone a remarkable transformation. To provide context, an exploration of the evolving relationship between Knowledge and Power in the modern age is provided below.

For three hundred years starting from the 16th Century, guns, steel and finance played an important part in the colonization of the new World as well as the East. This phenomenon may be considered the first successful attempt to set up a large global supply chain of raw materials and labor as well as of some finished and semi-finished goods that readied Europe for its next step. In subsequent years, the consolidation of the gains of mercantilism and colonialism of earlier times, along with the ongoing advancement of Natural Sciences and technologies, resulted in great changes that enabled the West to develop large Capital and labor intensive productive capabilities. Together with the Knowledge developed in various disciplines, they created a base for an intensive restructuring of society to accommodate emerging ideas of time, space, life, leisure and culture that came to rule it.

Over time, a strong dialectic connection between the State, Capital, Power and Knowledge developed to a point in the early 1900's where the purpose of Knowledge came to be increasingly seen as utilitarian and not merely as a search for truth, beauty or certitude that is to be detachedly pursued. This period introduced a greater degree of inter-connection and complexity in all societal processes involved in the control of raw materials, production and distribution of goods and services and the manipulation of tastes, preferences and choices of consumers. In cadence with it, the combine of State, Capital, Power and Knowledge seem to have become isomorphic: hierarchical, closed, secretive, propagandist, open to inspection yet difficult to comprehend, etc. This is usually justified by concerns of national interest and security, social and economic well-being, free trade and commerce, common good of society, protection of intellectual property rights etc.

To summarize, it is only by recognizing the new dynamics of Knowledge in this period that we may understand its evolving alignments, connections and relationships with societal processes; in turn, this will enable us to investigate assumptions of its independent status and interrogate its nature and effects on the world today. This note attempts to lay the foundations for such an exploration by seeking to provide a broad framework for understanding the current status and future prospects of 21st Century society with a particular emphasis on the status of the majority of its ordinary people.

## **B. AI and Society**

It is important to note that AI is not a development out of the blue. Visions of machines that think, speak and act like humans have been on the margins of Western thought for millennia, at least since the time of the Greeks. However, it is in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century that they acquired momentum following the development of the digital computer. After an initial phase of euphoria engendered by small successes, AI went relatively dormant for a few decades. Its rejuvenation around ten or fifteen years ago was predicated on the convergence of several factors: extraordinary increases in computing power, social networks, knowledge of human behavior, business oligarchies, political power, commerce and the technologies of surveillance and war that are enabled by ICT (Information and Communication Technologies).

This paper argues that AI must not be considered a mere development in the area of knowledge

whose effects are solely determined by societal dynamics. It involves a deep dialectic between knowledge and power that cannot be represented by a one dimensional preoccupation with either one of them alone.

The author believes that the true effects of AI remain to be grasped in the years to come. What we see now is a situation that is developing and whose future forms and actions are not readily deducible at this point in time. However, it is important, especially from the standpoint of countries like India, to continuously monitor the developments in the broad areas of AI development, deployment, control and dispersion in order to evaluate its effect on Indian society and measures to increase public awareness about its consequences.

### **C. Questions that need Discussion**

In this context, some questions that become relevant for any discussion on AI are the following:

**1. Implications of the huge resources being pumped into its development:** It appears that in addition to the huge investments made in AI over the last 10 years, a half trillion USD will be spent on it in the next few years. This raises concerns about aspects of its ownership, control, areas of deployment and consequences to ordinary people across the world.

**2. AI and its challenge to the foundations of S&T (Science and Technology):** Are concepts such as verifiability, repeatability, reliability and traceability applicable to AI? What place do socially mediated cognitive functions such as recognition of truth and fact have in the world of AI? Will AI lead to a new understanding of language, cognition, knowledge and intelligence? Are challenges such as the Turing Test (or TTT), the Chinese room no longer relevant?

**3. AI and Human Society:** The frontline players of the AI industry have today forgotten their previous acknowledgements of significant threats to humanity from AI and are now in a competitive frenzy to develop associated technologies at breath taking speed. How do we address job losses because of AI in India? How do we ensure the safety, welfare and freedom of ordinary people in this situation? When regulatory authorities across the world appear bemused about containing the possible ill-effects of AI, what can India possibly do?

**4. Consequences of Knowledge as Power in the AI era:** Knowledge and Power are today in perfect alignment more than ever before in history; in earlier times, enlightened segments of society that had the intellectual capacity to intercede between the laity and the State would often lend their support to the poor and the oppressed through dissent, opposition and discourse. Spaces for dissent, opposition and discourse by the oppressed have drastically shrunk with the rise of Techno-Capitalism across the world. In this context, what is the meaning of Equity and Justice in a world where Knowledge, Capital, Power and control vests with less than a tenth of a percent of humanity? What are the possible sources of opposition to this phenomenon?

### **D. Conclusion**

To conclude, in reflecting upon the various possibilities engendered by AI, it may be useful to

recall an evolutionary oddity that characterizes three species on earth – the whales (not all, though!), the chimps and humans - the only ones where the female undergoes a menopause.

Not co-incidentally, these are the only species where nurturing children is both intensive and of long duration. With age, post-menopausal females of these species (not just the humans) are observed to become increasingly interested and helpful in rearing their “grandchildren”.

Menopause allows extension of maternal nurturing well beyond the usual in the animal kingdom, and because grandmothers play such an important a role in caring for offspring that are already born, it is possible to hypothesize that it may have evolved to benefit the social group.

In the age of AI, what would be the position of grandparents? Are they irrelevant to society? How would the immanent logic of the development of AI affect our ideas and practice of all that has been taken as self-evident truths about the world, human society, child development, wisdom of the elders, care for the old and life itself?

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## Session-7

# **Art and the Knowledge Question**

*Working Group: Sushruthi Santhanam (Convener), A Sashikanth (Co-convener), Avinash Jha, Sunil Sahasrabudhey, Udayan Bajpayee, Rajeev Sangal*

This session is to interrogate the territory of knowledge beyond the usual discourses of science, technology and social sciences, which have been left unexplored in the mainstream institutionalised academic spaces. Knowledge conceived of in the image of Science has an impervious boundary guarded by an epistemology that claims to be more and more universal. In

this, universe knowledge is separated from aesthetics, ethics and any meaningful social experience. Whereas art seems to build bridges between mundane reality and intangible worlds of ideas, between many the perceptions of reality.

Within a larger deliberation on Knowledge, the panel *Art and the Knowledge Question* can simply serve one very important purpose, which is to turn our attention back to knowledge as a human potential to create experiences. For it is only in the domain of the arts (besides religion) that society has seen a persistent reinstatement of the *human experience* as the foremost purpose of human endeavour.

What is being explored here through the medium of art, is a conception of knowledge that can capture the paradigm of social life of ordinary human beings beyond production and consumption. As truth and meanings, collective visioning of life, reflection and contemplations of common people have all been better expressed through artistic intelligence.

In India there still exist several instances of such continuous social traditions in kalā (her used to refer to all creative work in kala and karigari). Historically this society made grand temples and complex lyrical compositions, iron and exquisite cloth as part of its engaged seeking of a sāmājik drsti. Now we critically examine these practices to help us work towards a more encompassing theory of knowledge that better represents human effort and the human condition.

No critical enquiry into a domain of practice can be undertaken without fully understanding its epistemic evolution. This panel sets of the enquiry approaching the epistemic space of kala neither by looking at it through lens of traditions nor as product genius and singular creativity. It attempts it through an essentially Indian understanding of Kala as a deliberate and legitimate social engagement whose primary purpose is to create collective experience. This is achieved in some cases through systematised knowledge of how to evoke (emotional state) *rasa anūbhuti* and even deeper states of consciousness and in a majority of cases its grammar and repertoire are simply embedded in social custom and ritual.

In these presentations and discussions you may find insights on culture, creativity, consciousness, historicity, truth, agency, discipline, practice, faith, subjectivity, grammar, freedom or tradition. But there is no such critical agenda here only an invitation to experience some practitioners and engaged minds speak of the mechanics of artistry, of the extraordinary discipline and adherence to codes and technical frameworks that open out subjective experiences; modes of knowing which are more vested in the body of the artists and the community of listeners, beholders, knowers of art, rather than in the texts; modes of work (technique), play (samvāda) and negotiation (consensus) creating the space for the samāja to exercise a collective ownership of the practice and performance of art.

Two papers presented at the very beginning by Banatanwi Dasamahapatra and S. Jayachandran illuminate very contemporary concerns, one of the role of aesthetic knowledge and sensitivity in creating institutional spaces and the other of creating a universal pedagogy for traditional knowledge. Udayan Vajpeyi and Sashikanth Ananthachari through their expositions on folk art and theatre bring to fore the extraordinary element of artistic resilience deeply embedded in the memory and bodies of communities which form the prime response to the eternal challenge of vulnerability in the face of change and loss of context.

Shri. Dakshinamoorthy Sthapathi as the practitioner voice of shilpa shastra and the Ustad Bahauddin Dagar as the performer who speaks of the embodiment of tradition and play in the

practice of the ancient tradition of Dhrupad, close the session.

If these deliberations could lead us closer to a view of art as a process that gently enables society towards realising Beauty - beheld as what is real, what is true, what is just and what is universal then we can hope that it would also illuminate, for the group here, an approach to work towards creative sovereignty and an imagination to push forward even towards an idea of *swaraj*.

### The Program

4.00 -5.15 pm - Tribute to Late Prof. Navjyoti Singh

The first few talks and a sharing by his students and collaborators in the audience is designed to be a special tribute to Late Professor Navjyoti Singh whose seminal contribution in the field of aesthetics and philosophy informs some of the serious work that has happened in the area of Art, Knowledge and Society. Navjyoti Singh was primarily a philosopher, self-trained in the Vaisheshik philosophy. What is important was perhaps he was the only thinker who embarked upon developing a theory on the ontology of arts.

#### **1. Banatanwi Dasmahapatra** - *The Role of Design and Aesthetics in the Creative Growth of an Educational Institution - Impact and Relevance in Society*

Banatanwi was trained in Fine arts at Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, and earned a PhD from the Centre for Exact Humanities, IIT Hyderabad. She has also taught at IIIT Hyderabad and was a visiting scholar at College of Fine Arts, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA; Research Associate at Outreach Programme, NID, Ahmedabad; Project Designer, National Centre for Jute Diversification (NCJD), Kolkata. Her current focus is on understanding the social and design vicissitudes of *colour*. At present, Banatanwi Dasmahapatra is an associate professor and H.O.D at the Department of Textile Design, Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. Besides teaching, Banatanwi's professional career includes various exhibitions, seminars, workshops and projects.

#### **2. S. Jayachandran** - *Universal Dance Fundamentals and Their Regional Expressions: A Study of Indian Traditions*

S. Jayachandran is a practitioner of dance who works on formal nature of Art. He is a Lecturer at Center for Exact Humanities, IIIT, Hyderabad. Jayachandran did Diploma in Saiva Siddhanta, B.A. History, M.A. History, M.A Philosophy and M.A. Bharatanatyam. He has researched significantly on the Temples of Tiruvarur and Chidambaram. As part of his research, the pedagogical tool he designed for teaching Universal Dance Fundamentals was granted a patent.

5.15 -5.45 pm -

#### **3. Udayan Vajpeyi** - *From Music to Painting : The Strange yet not so strange Tales of Pradhaans.*

Udayan Vajpeyi is an acclaimed award winning writer, poet and translator. His numerous works include volumes of poetry, a short story collection, a book of essays, a book of recreated folktales and an account of an extended conversation with filmmaker Mani Kaul. He has translated into Hindi works of internationally acclaimed writers like Octavio Paz, Borges,



Chekhov, Brodsky, Jaccottet, Tadeus Rozewicz. works include He is an interlocutor of folk traditions in storytelling and arts. Udayan Vajpeyi just retired from teaching Physiology at the Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal.

5.45 - 6.15 pm -

**4. Dakshinamoorthy Sthapati** - *Visual Expressions and Experiences in the Sculptural Heritage of India -Introduction.*

Dakshinamoorthy Sthapati comes in a long lineage of traditional sculptors and builders (Sthapati). Besides heading the firm Vedic Architects and Sculptors, he is an author of many books and articles, a teacher, a public speaker on the subject of traditional architectural heritage and is part of committees on Heritage Arts Conservation for the Government of Tamilnadu.

**15 MINUTE BREAK**

**Expositions : The following two are screening and performance based talks**

6.30 pm - 7.20 pm

**5. Sashikant Ananthachari - Villi Bharatham-** *Performance traditions in Mahabharata from Tamilnadu* (Film Screening and talk)

A graduate of Cinema from FTII, Pune, Sashikanth worked for many decades as a cinematographer. He has made over 300 documentaries and six feature films in his career and many of them have gone on to win both National and International recognition. He has been an interim Professor of Cinematography at the premier Satyajit Ray Film and Television of India, Kolkata, a Creative Consultant for an alternate Television channel, New Generation [Puthiya Thalaimurai in Tamil], and more recently he has completed designing a 2 part course for the Humanities and Sociology Department of IIT, Madras and NPTEL on 'Performance Traditions of the Mahabharata in Tamil Nadu'. He is currently working on the completion of a trilogy of films "Kelai Draupadai" [Listen Draupadi], "Ninaivin Nagaram" [Landscape and Memory] and 'Kalpavaasi" [Textures of Time] and two manuscripts 'Mahabharata of the Mind' on the aesthetic reception of the festival and 'Kaleidoscope- The Idea of Four' both of which are currently being revised for publication.

**7.30 pm DINNER**

8.30 -10.00 pm

**6. Ustad Bahauddin Dagar** - *On embodied learning and playing with tradition - A talk and a performance of Dhrupad on the Rudraveena.*

A Sangeet Natak Akademi Awardee, Bahauddin Dagar comes in the hoary lineage going back to 20 generations of Dhrupad Sangeet. The son of the inimitable Ustad Zia Moinuddin Dagar and later the disciple of his uncle the doyen, Ustad Fariduddin Dagar, Bahauddin, besides keeping alive the performative dimension of playing Dhrupad on the Rudraveena, has also made the conversation with an ancient tradition of music engaging and demanding at the same time.

## **Papers/Abstracts and Presentations made in Session-7**

### **Introduction to the Session by Dr. Sushruthi Santhanam, the Session Convener, over the video**

Namaste, I am Sushruti, a co convener of this session - Art and the Knowledge Question. This session is the result of a need felt among some members of PPST and the conference organisers, to extend their deliberation on Knowledge and Society to include the domain of Arts. As part of such a deliberation with specific reference to the Indian experience, this session is a fledgling effort.

There are many directions that such a discussion could take, but this panel has been put together keeping in mind the position that any enquiry into the nature of knowledge construction, is essentially an enquiry into its consequences as human experience - of power, relationship, identity or an experience of beauty and beauty here, seen as what is real, what is true, what is proportionate, what is just and what is universal. This panel hence turns the light on art making and its many traditions found in India as having persistently established the primacy of human experience, as the foremost purpose of knowing and doing.

With AI on the one hand set to develop predictive and creative intelligence and climate change on the other, throwing up nature's challenge to self obsessive anthropocentric human existence, a kind of imperative has emerged to have a better understanding of the relationship between human knowledge and the ethical framework it acts from within. This requires us to cultivate an intuitively human experience and approach the core of what defines us as human. The Indian experience of producing and appreciating art as community bound endeavours, includes an essential quality of consensus, an act of extending of the self to include the community and this is worth our focus.

In the practices of traditional art, knowledge is embodied in the artist but its language is deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of the audience or the community. Community here is to be understood in terms of a co-viewing, as cognates bound umbilically by ethics. And ethics here can be considered as an ethico-artistic view of the world, not necessarily the ethics as a mode of judging the quality of the art production.

The successful persistence of so many diverse traditions of loka kala, shastriya kala, devotional art and secular arts etc is deeply dependent on how society receives and patronises art within this co viewing and co knowing framework. This establishes one fact that generally, there can be no dichotomy of common people and knowledgeable people in art appreciation, there are only

those who are affected (or not) by an experience of beauty, sometimes as individuals but mostly as a collective. Historically speaking therefore and contrary to a common perception, patronage was not exclusively an exclusive royal affair, it was the community that was largely responsible for the nurturing of aesthetic sensibility in society.

The Knowledge component in art is often visibilised as shastra, an adherence to stringent grammar that allows the artists to be able to create such experiences over and over again. But what is often not noted is a deep knowledge of how to use the syntax, the iconography and the elements of artistry to experience beauty, found diffused in customary habits and conversations of communities. Art could be understood as a structured mode of knowing the world through emotions.

Ananda Coomaraswamy's exposition on the role of rasa and rasavant, experiential objects as evoking emotions by a community of rasikas, builds up to a deliberation on how art is used to elevate the consciousness. Which is why again knowledgeable people in art are those who have the capacity to be affected by the experience and who can convert that experience into a larger framework of meaning.

Every important idea in this society, a collective visioning of life, reflection and contemplations of people, even struggles and wars, have thus been given expression through artistic intelligence in painting, sculpture, dance, music, poetry. Its occurrence and appreciation in a society continues to be largely part of social custom, and not some exclusive higher education.

Perhaps then, a deeper look into Arts as a domain of knowledge practice, will offer something more fundamental in terms of a social theory of Indian art, allowing the methods and modes of diverse art practices, to be considered as part of a formal epistemic.

Two aspects of Art practice that are universally considered, preconditions to creating an experience of beauty are, one, an imperative of collective knowledge as against particularised knowledge like Science or Jurisprudence and two the recognition of emotional intelligence or a capability to be affected by the other, or a larger human condition like love or sorrow, as a legitimate methodology for practice.

This knowledge is similar to the knowledge of Samvada - conversation, engagement, consensus and a co-viewing of a shared world. And consensus cannot be beaten out of any community, it can only be worked towards gradually and painfully with empathy and an ultimate aim to become one with the other. It is not for nothing that some of the most inspired instances of Bhakti one of the most successful social movements of this land that set purpose of all thought and action as the union of the self and the other, of the self with that which is held to be true, divine and beautiful, has been successfully communicated not in treatises but through poetry, song, abhinaya and stories.

A social convergence of a view on what is beautiful (and what is dissonant) can only be produced by a long and deep conversation in society on the principles of beauty, but also between the grammar that is crafted over the ages and changing social contexts and its ethics, between the urge to creatively transgress and a consciousness of the purpose of a performance or a production.

A beautiful illustration of how thinkers in India have imagined such a samvada around beauty comes from the life of the preceptor of the Visishtha Advaita Siddhanta from Tamilnadu, Ramanujaaacharya.

Ramanuja , born over a millennium ago, was a staunch adherent to the path of surrender or sharanāgati. Moved by the human condition of ignorance, as did so many great teachers of this land, he set out to share with all what he knew as a mārga or path for resolution, regardless of their social position. A lesser known story about him was his relationship with Urangā Villi, an affluent wrestler and an incurable lover.

The eminent teacher first encounters Villidāsa on the streets of Srirangam amidst a comical entourage. Walking backwards in front of his wife, shading her with an umbrella, lost in the beauty of her eyes, Villidāsa seemed oblivious to the world. Upon asking his disciples, he learns of how the community thought of Villi as a fool for being so explicitly in love with his Ponnachee. The disciples are even shocked that the teacher would be interested in so base a human being who is so steeped in kāma, lust.

But Ramanuja sees in Uranga Villi an extraordinary capacity to be moved by beauty and decides that this was the example he required to establish the primacy of this quality of rasānubhūti, over a pure intellectual path.

He recognises, that in Kaliyuga (where eventually time will dissolve materiality) the violence of ignorance that he saw around him, could perhaps be assuaged better by a deep capacity to melt in the beauty of an experience, any experience and Uranga Villi was going to be the messenger. But he would not dare project the intense gaze of society on worldly objects of beauty, especially a woman. He needed to turn society's gaze towards something that would be impervious yet responsive to such an unwavering gaze. What better than an iconic piece of sculpture representing the epitome of human creativity, an idol, made by idol makers according to the canons of shipashāstra and invested with divinity through millennia of rituals and every form of creative outpouring, song, dance, poetry and painting, by people of all antecedents.

He makes a pact with the idol of Ranganātha, that if he brought Villidāsa to see him, he would enamour him with the beauty of his eyes. After much persuasion Villidāsa agrees to shift his gaze away from the face of beautiful Ponnachee and on to the idol of Ranganātha at Srirangam. He enters a lifelong relationship of joyous surrender to the experience of beauty all over again, this time with Ranganātha. Along with Ponnachee, Villidāsa enters the gurukula of Ramanuja to be cherished as one of his closest disciples.

I would like to draw your attention to the samvada between three aspects in this story. One, to the act of viewing or the act of witnessing, as the context of human experience. Second, to the idol not just as an object but as an act of 'creating' beauty as well as the actor (the sculptor, dancer, singer, poet and painter) and third Villidāsa as the samāja, the community. Rāmānuja, by choosing to extoll the human capability to surrender the self to an experience of beauty, did not just turn our gaze away from the primacy of the intellect, but towards an important relationship in society, the one between creators and communities.

To diverge a bit, this is also a powerful argument for reinstating the knowledge base in communities to strengthen the character of the society. Something that links to the debate on Swaraj.

When Villidāsa, personified as the samāja, gazes at the eyes of the idol of Ranganātha, what gazes back at him is the knowing eye of the sculptor, and all the creators who have invested in its character of divinity. They all combine as the divine perceptor. And Villidāsa on his part, by his surrender (staying analysis and resting the criticism), allows himself to be overcome by rasānubhūti, the savouring of the experience.

This process is neither tied to the object nor the particular viewer, but to a framework accepted in a community, of proportionality, propriety and ethics within which that community may know a standard of beauty. With this standard it can view the world afresh, hearing the conversation once again, like it were the first time.

This is most vividly seen in the still existing traditions of the grāma nātakas where regular tellings of old stories, puranas are watched afresh, enacted with a different twist to the same bhava. People are entertained no doubt, but they also judge characters and ruminate on the happenings of the imaginary world and reflect on who is right and who is wrong, what is just and what is unjust. This play between the art form and community, as a kind of resilience of narrative which is reborn every time, is an exercise in creative sovereignty that affords the community an imagination to push forward towards the future. And in a world that is defined increasingly by the logic of a few, it may help to turn our attention towards a way of knowing that is essentially a conversation about beauty.

We begin the session with some talks and tributes to late Prof. Navjyoti Singh who continues to inspire such conversation through his ideas. Prof. Navjyoti Singh, inspiring many and provoking many but he himself made a persistent effort to develop an essentially Indian language in which to construct a theory on the ontology of arts. We are fortunate to have several of his students and collaborators in session.

Two papers presented at the very beginning by Banatanwi Dasamahapatra and S. Jayachandran illuminates very contemporary concerns, the first on the role of aesthetics and the sensitivity to artistic traditions in creating modern institutional spaces. The second is an overview of a methodology to populate a universal pedagogical framework for traditional dance. Udayan Vajpeyi and Sashikanth Ananthachari through their expositions on folk art and theatre, bring to fore the extraordinary element of artistic resilience. The art traditions they each talk about are deeply embedded in the memory and bodies of communities, and are discussed here as responses to vulnerability caused by change and loss of context.

Shri. Dakshinamoorthy Sthapathi as the practitioner-voice of shilpa shastra illuminates the strong link between grammar, imagery and social imagination, while Ustad Bahauddin Dagar as the ubiquitous performer speaks of the embodiment of tradition and play in the practice of the ancient tradition of Dhrupad. He also performs Dhrupad on the rudraveena to close the session on Art and the Knowledge Question.

## **1. Banatanwi Dasamahapatra**

### The Role of Design and Aesthetics in the Creative Growth of an Educational Institution: Its Importance, Impact and Relevance in the Society

The idea is to analyze and examine the role of design and aesthetics in the foundation of an educational institution. Any creative action essentially requires a free mind. A mind can only be free when it's embraced with the phenomenon of aesthetic experience and aesthetic judgment. An aesthetic vision awakens our will power to re-create the horizons of existential, experiential and imaginary realities by re-visiting their intimate, immediate and distant spaces in the discreteness of reality. It brings clarity to our existential being in relation to experience and imagination. Design plays an important role to articulate the phenomenon of transformation from aesthetic experience to aesthetic judgment with the clarity of having meaningful celebration of life and composes the creative dimension of a society. I would reflect on and bring out certain fundamental areas as well as a specific site based on design thinking and aesthetic sensibilities in the institutional frameworks envisioned in Santiniketan School which became Visva-Bharati University later on and Centre for Exact Humanities (CEH).

## **2. S. Jayachandran**

### Universal Dance Fundamentals and Their Regional Expressions: A Study of Indian Traditions

Dance is a universal art of human expression that transcends cultural and geographical boundaries. While dance forms vary across regions, certain fundamental principles remain consistent. This paper explores the universal, form-neutral, and style-neutral fundamentals of dance such as Postures, Transitory movements across Postures and the rhythm in Transitory movements and examines how these principles manifest uniquely in the regional dance traditions of India. By analyzing both the shared foundations and distinct characteristics, this study provides insights into the dynamic interplay between global dance principles and localized artistic expressions. While Indian dance forms are deeply rooted in cultural narratives, religious symbolism, and historical continuity, they remain aligned with the fundamental aspects that define dance as an art form. By understanding the intersection of fundamentals of dance, dancers, choreographers, and researchers can gain a more comprehensive perspective on the ways in which movement transcends borders while embracing its uniqueness.

## **3. Udayan Vajpeyi**

### From Music to Painting: The Strange Yet not-so-strange Tales of Pardhaans

All transformations give materiality to the otherwise immaterial thing called time. This time lives in tales. Perhaps we may claim that the point of all tales is to underline one or other kind of transformation.

The one I am going to talk about is no different. It is about an extremely strange transformation that took place not long ago. It is about Pardhaans, a sub-community of the Gonds, one of the largest 'tribes' of central India, and one that has ruled portions of that region for centuries, both before and after Mughal rule. I must express my reservations about the use of the word 'tribal'

in the Indian context, because I feel those who are called tribal in the modern discourses about India are in fact various castes; their complementarity to each other, like that of castes in various localities, is one of the reasons why this is so. I believe that they were conceptually and practically segregated from other communities living in India, to serve the purposes of colonial rule - even though their lifestyles were in continuity with those of other communities. But that is a different story, which will have to wait for some more time if it wants to be told in greater detail and with authenticity. So then, I keep my reservation with me and tell you the story of the Pardhaans. Let me begin by quoting two of their folk tales.

The first tale is about birth of the mahua tree. The wine made from its flowers is used in almost all rituals of almost all tribes of Central India

#### **4. Dakshinamoorthy Sthapati**

##### Visual Expressions and Experiences in the Sculptural Heritage of India -Introduction.

The cultural history of India is built on a strong artistic foundation that extends across the nation. The traditions and practices of this heritage remain vibrant today, serving as significant sources of beauty and breathing life into our artistic legacy.

The extensive tapestry of India's vibrant artistic heritage includes five branches: Literature, Music, Dance, Sculpture, and Architecture. Although distinct, they are interconnected through a shared logic behind their experiences and expressions.

The core theme of every artistic creation lies in the artist's experience, who envisions and derives enjoyment from expressing their ideas, ultimately aiming to share that enjoyment with others. This experience and expression can be understood as envisioning and manifesting or cause and effect in every creative work. Maha Kavi Kalidasa highlights this concept through the Upanishadic phrase "Raso vai saha Rasikaha," which translates to "the creator becomes the essence of enjoyment when they find joy in the act of creation." This idea applies to all five branches of art forms.

The Shilpa heritage represents an important aspect of Indian culture that deserves more discussion to help people understand and appreciate this art form. As previously mentioned, the experience and enjoyment of art are similar across various Indian traditional forms. It is also important to highlight that "sculpture is visual music, and music is audible sculpture," which allows for a deeper understanding of both.

To grasp the sculptor's vision, one must recognize how the universe's principles are applied through technology. The sculptor takes this same technology and skillfully transforms it into visible art for the public to enjoy. Our ancestors spent many years studying the process of envisioning and its manifestation through sculpture, documented in ancient texts known as the Shastras, which is explained in the forthcoming session of Dr Sthapati K. Dakshinamoorthy.

#### **5. Shashikant ANANTHACHARI**

##### 'PERFORMANCE TRADITIONS OF THE MAHABHARATA IN TAMIL NADU

Every year in over 300 villages in North and South Arcot districts of TN, the Mahabharata is celebrated as a festival at the Dharmaraja/Draupadi Amman temples. For over 20 days, the Mahabharata is recited as a story, performed as a ritual and enacted as theatre. An icon of Draupadi is taken to wherever the performance takes place, and it is believed that the Mahabharata is performed for Draupadi to hear her own story. Draupadi here is doubled, she is both the primary audience and a representative of all the people unjustly affected by war. Though there are designated performance spaces, at some point or other the entire village becomes the performance space. It is an immersive festival and the audience/participants get to relive the Mahabharata in their own lives. The villages, for the duration of the festival don multiple identities from the Panchala kingdom, Indraprastha, to the forests where the Pandavas live in Vanavaasam culminating in its final identity as Kurukshetra, or in Tamil, Padugalam. The festival seems to be strongly anti-war in nature as it is performed to create Samarasam or peace and harmony in the festival villages and the Mahabharata itself is seen as an anti-war text. After the ritual killing of Duryodhana and on the performance of his funeral rites by the villagers themselves these festivals conclude with the coronation of Dharmaraja, the just King.

### **Full Papers presented**

#### **I. From Music to Painting: The Strange Yet not-so-strange Tales of Pardhaans**

UDAYAN VAJPEYI

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So then, I keep my reservation with me and tell you the story of the Pardhaans. Let me begin by quoting two of their folk tales.

The first tale is about birth of the mahua tree. The wine made from its flowers is used in almost all rituals of almost all tribes of Central India.

##### *The Wine of Mahua Flowers*

One day, Shiva the god thought about us, human beings. He wondered how we would offer wine to the gods and goddesses, after having made sacrifices of goats and chickens to them. Without mahua trees, how would the ceremony of offering wine be performed?

He called over the parrot, the tiger and the boar, and said to them, "Become mahua trees".



"Very well. We shall become mahua trees", the three said. In the month of Chait (around March), flowers blossomed in the mahua trees. Flocks of tiny birds came to the three trees. They pecked at the flowers and ate them. After eating no more than two or three flowers, they began calling out loudly, "Cheep chirp cheep, cheep chirp cheep cheep..." They raised a din.

People thought, "There definitely is some intoxicant in these flowers, or else the birds wouldn't make this noise after eating them". The people now began making wine from the same flowers, and they began using the brew in all festivals and ceremonies.

If a man drinks a tiny quantity of mahua wine, he becomes like a parrot and says the same thing over and over again. If he drinks a little more, he becomes like a lion. He doesn't speak, he roars. And if he drinks still more, he becomes a boar. He lolls on the ground.

The other is a long tale about the dog, the fox and their daughter. I will quote only a segment:

*Dog Father, Fox Mother*

When a girl was born to the fox and the dog, the dog thought, "The two of us get by with scraps of food foraged here and there, but this human daughter born to us, how will we feed (her)?"

The dog was the girl's father, after all. His worries were understandable. He went into the basti (settlement), stole into a house left open by the owners who were away, and grabbed a roti. He gave it to the girl. For years together he fed the girl thus, with food grabbed from homes in the basti. The girl grew.

The growing girl made the dog worried again. "We are born dogs and foxes, after all, what have we to do with clothes? But this girl of human form has to have clothes. How can she be without them?" An idea came to him. He said to the fox, "Powder my tail with ash". She did so.

Powdered thus, he went to the bazaar and sneaked into a shop selling clothes, and ornaments of gold and silver. The dog wagged his tail furiously. Ash spread all over the shop. Ash went into the shopkeeper's eyes too, blinding him. This was his chance: the dog grabbed a heap of clothes and all the ornaments he could, and ran back into the jungle. He gave the clothes and ornaments to the girl and asked her to wear them.

The girl grew still bigger. The dog fell into worry again. "Where am I to give this girl in marriage? Where do we go to settle an alliance for her, we that are born dog and fox?" One day the dog wandered away from the jungle. Fields stretched far and wide. Many people were at work in the fields. He looked carefully at the men farming the fields, studied them and their ways.

And so the tale continues.

It is evident is that in both tales the transformations take place and are dramatized with equal ease. It is as if these shifts of imagination are naturally embedded in the awareness of the people who exchange such tales. And perhaps that's why when a major change was demanded from their own lives, they faced it with patience and understanding they negotiated that literal transformation with the customary attitude they maintained towards the symbolic transformations present in their tales, in their music.

2. Paridhaans are the musicians, genealogists and storytellers of the Gonds. This story about their origin appears in Sheikh Gulab's *The Gond*:

The Goods were seven brothers. They sowed jute in the fields. In a few days, the jute began to grow. One day they saw a handsome young man galloping on his horse right through their field. The hooves were trampling the jute saplings. They pounced on the young man with their paitharis (spears). The youngest brother was so scared that his stomach got upset. He went to the nearby nullah (ditch) to

relieve himself. The other six brothers chased the horseman. The field was quite big. At the edge of it was a saja tree. Seeing the Gond brothers chasing him, the horseman rode upto the saja tree and disappeared into it along with his horse. The Gonds saw him vanish into the tree. They instantly understood... "This is our Bada Dev (Big Lord) who came riding through our field on his white horse.

Howunfortunate we are that we could not recognise him... Now he is angry with us. He has disappeared into the saja tree. How should we placate him?"

Together they began to reflect on this. They erected a platform under the saja tree. They offered raw lentils. Sacrificed a white rooster. Sprinkled wine made from mahua. Folded their hands in prayer. Went on pleading... But Bada Dev was angry. He did not come out of the saja tree... At this point the youngest brother turned up from the direction of the nullah. He found out what had happened... He said. "I will find a way, it might please Bada Dev..." He went and felled a bough from a khirsani tree. He made a one stringed instrument from the wood and playing on it, began to sing. The notes began to resound in the woods. In the song he started to sing praises of the glory of Bada Dev. Listening to the song, Bada Dev was pleased. He made an appearance in the trunk of the saja tree. He blessed the youngest brother by placing his hand on his head.

"Whenever you sing my song playing this instrument, I'll make an appearance. This instrument of yours will be called bana". Bada Dev accepted everybody's offerings and once again vanished into the saja tree....

Pardhaans used to go to the house of their yajmaan every third year and sing stories about their deity Bada Dev, about the valour of great Gond kings, and many other stories. Their songs were and are accompanied by the music played on the bana. There is also an extremely interesting story about playing the bana. When the Pardhaan made the bana from the wood of the khirsani tree, he had no idea about how to play it. He kept thinking, but could not imagine the way to play it. After some time he found himself looking at a kasanger bird in the sky. She would rise like an arrow but would descend in the rhythm of waves. This was her style of flying. The Pardhaan immediately understood that this was how he should move his bow on the string of the bana.

At the yajmaan's house, the Pardhaan would also perform other rituals, particularly those relating to death. The spirit of those Gonds who have died in the yajmaan's house after the last visit of the Pardhaan are supposed to wait for his arrival so that he can merge them into the spirit of Bada Dev. Something very similar to the Hindu practice of going to Gaya after the death of their kin, an act they believe unites the departed spirits with Brahman, the absolute reality. Each Pardhaan singer normally had 50-60 yajmaans. He would go there every third year in the brighter half of the month of Vaisakha (April-May). He received his grain, oil, clothes, utensils, etc., from his yajmaan. Pardhaans were not supposed to earn their living through farming. They lived amongst farmers, but were seen as performers and were supposed to sing and narrate, and evoke the collective memory of their people. In fact, if someone died at the yajmaan's house half of his or her belongings, including jewellery, etc., were given to the genealogist Pardhaan. And rightly so: after all, he was the one who would enable the dead person's spirit to be subsumed into that of Bada Dev. He was, as stated in the Guru Granth Sahib:

... one who merges each singular light with the Universal Light ...

3. I am writing about Pardhaan singers who 'were', i.e., in the past tense. This may cause some confusion. It is a fact that the position that the Pardhaans had a century or two ago is no longer

existent, but in a lot of Gond-Pardhaan villages, we can still find pardhaans evoking Bada Dev or praising the valour of past Gond kings, accompanying themselves on the bana. This can still be witnessed in number of villages of Dindori or Mandala districts of Central India. But the social texture that gave resonance and spiritual authenticity to the Pardhaans' performances has weakened. The centuries have played their different roles in contributing to this decline. The complex mechanism of social patronage is today fragmented. Pardhaans might still be going to their yajmaan's houses, but yajmaans are no longer able to support their genealogist-musicians. As a result, Pardhaans are forced to do farming or manual labour in their own villages or in small towns or cities nearby. The inherited and nurtured self-image of being valued performers lies buried within, awaiting the chance to materialise. The sad situation that the Pardhaans are in is evidence of the way a social support system had taken care of artistic activities in India, and how its erosion led to the difficulties that the artists now have to suffer.

As is true for many other pagan traditions, the Gond-Pardhaan society also lives with a number of gods and goddesses. They are everywhere. In fact, these gods and goddesses mediate all possible relations between man and nature. Sensed as somewhere between the two, they bequeath a divine aura to nature, and bestow upon man a sense of being a part of divinity. Members of the community experience this connection at almost every moment of their lives, whether they are going to the forest or crossing the border of their village or cooking meals or putting a child into the cradle. Here the deities are not yet distilled into an abstract idea; through them, the sensuous and the spiritual manifest together.

4. Jangarh Singh Shyam was a Pardhaan boy from the village of Patangarh of Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh. He, like his ancestors, loved music; but unlike them, had almost no possibility of carrying on the tradition of music and storytelling. He was born when the system of social patronage had become ineffective. From his childhood onwards he was forced to do manual labour to support his extremely poor family. Only at night, when he was alone, he would play his flute as if to console the Pardhaan musical tradition flowing silently within him, as if to tell himself that he though he was not in a position to perform for the Gond yajmaans, he could at least keep the music alive for himself.

It so happened that at that time a major art centre was being built in Bhopal. The person in charge of the subject area of plastic arts was the well-known modern painter and thinker Jagdish Swaminathan. He wanted to create a gallery of contemporary art in which both urban and rural, so-called 'modern', folk and tribal arts were to be displayed. He was very clear about the notion of the 'contemporary' in the arts; he thought societies that were technologically backward need not be artistically feeble, and did not live in bygone times. For Swaminathan, all forms of social organizations that existed in a particular time, whatever their technological status, were 'contemporary'. He sent groups of young artists to many villages of central India to collect folk and tribal paintings, sculpture, etc.

In a particular village, one such group found some interesting paintings on the wall of a house. There was not a single painting anywhere else in the village. They asked for the painter, and found that the work was by a boy called Jangarh Singh Shyam. They requested him to come with them to Bhopal. He obliged. Swaminathan provided painting materials to the boy and asked him to create whatever he felt like. The restless musician waiting in the folds of Jangarh's mind saw a new possibility and means to express himself: painting.

5. The 5th century Sanskrit text Vishnudharmottarpuran narrates a revealing dialogue between

King Vajra and the venerable sage Muni Markandeya. The account is known as the Chitrasutra. The king wanted to build a temple and install an icon within it. He asked Markandeya how the icon was to be sculpted. The sage replied that one who did not know about chitra (painting) would not be able to sculpt. The king asked him as to how a painting is rendered. The sage replied that one who did not know about dance couldn't make a painting. The king asked about dance, and the sage replied that one who did not know instrumental music could not possibly understand dance. The king asked about instrumental music. The sage asserted that for understanding instrumental music, it was necessary to understand singing. The king asked about singing. The sage replied that one who did not understand the way a poem is written or read (geetashastra) could not possibly understand singing. The king asked about geetashastra. The sage instructed him with regard to the nature of language and poetry; and then told him about singing, then about instrumental music, dance, painting, and finally how an icon could be sculpted.

6. The opportunity to paint and, to an extent sculpt, led to a strange transformation in Jangarh Singh Shyam: he started painting feverishly. Painting most wonderfully. Painting in a style which was uniquely his own and yet seemed to be rooted in tradition, a tradition not of painting but of his own tradition of music. In a way, his skills catalysed the metamorphosis of music into painting. Or, transposing Muni Markandeya's astute logic from the Vishnudarmottarpuran, the painting which was inherent in the Pardhaan's music was given a chance to unfold itself directly on paper and canvas..

Something miraculous has happened. And yet the possibility of such a happening was already foretold in the conversation of King Vajra and Muni Markandeya...

Bada Dev, Mahrilin Devi and numerous other gods and goddesses, strange birds, flying snakes, animals, beautiful trees and several other entities who inhabited the songs of the Pardhaans, who had existed as notes of music, started manifesting on the canvas in various colours, and in a unique, distinctive style. It was the first time that the Gond pantheon was being actualised in images. Mostly orally transmitted, Gond iconography was now taking a visual form. These icons were extremely alluring versions of those gods and goddesses embedded in Pardhaan narratives. Within a few years of Jangarh's endeavour, many Pardhaans began painting in that distinct style which Jangarh discovered. More and more Pardhaans would come to Bhopal to participate in this newly found mode of creative self-actualisation. Many of them very happily turned away from their farming to take up painting. This new genre provided a livelihood to Pardhaan women as well as men. It was as if the flow of creativity which had been obstructed for many historical reasons found a new release. And this aesthetic/symbolic shift came very naturally to most Pardhaans. The moment they were offered and accepted the possibility, they immersed in it with as much ease as their immersion in their music.

7. I will not go into greater details of the Pardhaan painting style, but will only say that it is highly musical in its composition, in the interrelationship of its elements. It is also musical in the way it treats narrative and the various configurations of temporalities. I only wish to emphasise that when such an event took place in the lives of Pardhaans, they accepted it with open hands and hearts. The Jangarh phenomenon happened less than three decades ago, and already more than a few hundred Pardhaans have started painting, in a broad and recognisable style with its own distinct visual vocabulary. They were all painting in the same manner, and yet each painter individuated in a particular way. This style of painting has been called by various names: Jangarh Kalam, Pardhaan painting, Gond painting, etc. I prefer Jangarh Kalam, where 'Kalam'

means 'style'.

It is true that Jangarh Kalam is the art of a community, an art practiced by artists still strongly rooted to their community, who are not spiritually alienated from their communal lives. But since this style was first created by that boy who came from the little village of Patangarh, it is named Jangarh Kalam. A number of Jangarh Kalam painters now live in Bhopal, as well as in Gond-Pardhaan villages. They have yet another common denominator: they are giving visual form to their deities, but at the same time, through this act they are trying to protect them from the very real danger of oblivion. Their new life in cities is also making the Pardhaan painters' task of symbolic retrieval a little more urgent. These are works of great excitement because their creators have found a new genre for self- and community expression; but they are simultaneously works of great longing, as the artists are becoming increasingly alienated in space and time from their home...

The Hindi word for 'longing/yearning' is 'utkanthaa'; literally, 'raising one's neck in order to see'. Perhaps this is the situation the Pardhaan painters find themselves in: one of anticipation and expectation, but a constant recollection of the deities and the landscapes of the village.

8. This newly found creative genre of the Pardhaans is already under threat. The artists are living in stressful conditions in cities, but do not want to return to their villages because of the almost complete absence of patronage, and an equal lack of work opportunities, even as manual labourers. They also do not wish to leave because the cities have bred hope in them: hope in some distant or not-so-distant future. This is how almost all modern cities function as the breeding grounds of hope, because they exist in more or less purely linear time, their trajectory always pointing towards a kind of betterment. Purely at the notional level, the figure of 'a brighter tomorrow' has a much better chance of surviving in cities than in villages. Most Pardhaan painters in cities also experience pressures on their creativity. Earlier, when their ancestors were practicing and performing music in their villages, no yajmaan would put any pressure on them to sing any so-called 'new' themes. The themes were made new, if at all, by the singers themselves, and not under any external coercion. They were primarily evoking the intimate world of their audience; their form was not representative but evocative. But in cities, the rootless middle class is pressurising the Pardhaans to paint themes that have nothing to do with these painters' lives or memories. The populist forces are attempting to displace the folk world from folk paintings. They are attempting to hollow out the style of Jangarh, i.e., Jangarh Kalam. More and more, the once ingrained sense of community is becoming remote for Pardhaans. This is the challenge they now face. Only the future can tell which will prevail - fidelity to collective consciousness, or the stranglehold of economic survival. Or do we already know the result? Perhaps not. Who knows how many transformations are waiting to manifest in the Pardhaan's lives, as in their narratives...

#### Notes

1. I heard these tales, along with many others, from Pardhaan men and women in their native language, Chhattisgarhi—a dialect, so to speak, of Hindi. I rewrote these tales in Hindi without altering a single detail. For this essay I have used Delhi-based writer Raji Narasimhar's English translation of my Hindi version.
2. The term used by Pardhaans for the person in whose house the singing and storytelling is performed. This word comes from the terminology of Vedic rituals where yajmaan refers to the person who regularly does the yajna (broadly translated as 'sacrifice'), and also the one who invites the purohit (in general translated as 'priest'; here, the one who performs the ritual) for the yajna. The reach of this word yajmaan, extends far beyond

the Vedic rituals. It has a defined place and similar connotation in the sociological setup of India. For instance, a barber calls his client, whose house he regularly visits as a servitor for the work of cutting hair, his yajmaan. In earlier times, and even today, the yajmaan would not pay for each visit/service, but support the barber through his entire livelihood. The same relationship exists between the clients of potters, carpenters, etc., and these artisans. This system and its terminology suggest that according to this traditional logic, society is seen as a continuous, yajna performing body. Coincidentally, Pardhaans call themselves the purohiths of the Gonds. Another genealogist community, the Charans, also call themselves purohiths of the Rajput community, of whom they are the genealogists and family-poets.

3. Chitra translates as 'painting', and sutra as 'aphorism'. Therefore chitrasutra would essentially translate as 'axioms on painting. But here the word chitra (painting) is used metonymically for all arts.

4. Pardhaans are genealogists and storytellers. They narrate through singing, which in any case has come into being through recitation. Therefore many genealogists of various castes and locations in India are musicians: the Charans of Rajasthan and Gujarat, Bhaats of Rajasthan, Patiyaas of Bundelkhand, etc. The word 'Charan' derives etymologically from the Hindi word ucchaaran, lit. 'enunciation'.

5. One of the four goddesses who protect the borders of the Gond village.

6. 'Jangarh Kalam' was coined by my painter friend Akhilesh, in the long obituary of Jangarh he wrote a few years ago. Jangarh died tragically young in Japan, in suspicious circumstances. He was painting for a gallery of traditional Indian arts. It is said that he was under enormous pressure there to paint more. He wanted to come back home but was unable to do so. He found a strange way of escaping that alleged pressure: he committed suicide. 'Kalam' is used traditionally to name a style of painting, such as Bundeli Kalam for a style of painting that originates in Bundelkhand.

7. Those living in villages also have to come to cities to sell their works. There are no yajmaans in their present situation.

8. Folk' would translate as lok in Sanskrit a term suggesting a terrain/domain/environment that includes plants and animals as well as humans.

9. This of a sense of community and the parallel birth of an alienated individual is most useful for the modern nation state (and now for the market). Without fragmenting communities into individuals, the nation state cannot present itself as a repository of collective wisdom and ethics, a function conventionally attributed to the community, its leaders, its legends, etc

## II. PERFORMANCE TRADITIONS OF THE MAHABHARATA IN TAMIL NADU : A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE MAHABHARATA FESTIVALS OF TAMILNADU

Sashikanth. A

“In a world surrounded by water, to stand along with the four Vedas, the fifth Veda, the Mahabharata was narrated by the Rishi of unfading power of austerities, We bow in respect and love to Vinayaka who transcribed the text with Mount Meru as the slate and his tusk as the writing tool”

## Villibharatham

In over 300 villages in Tamilnadu and southern Andhra Pradesh, the Mahabharata is celebrated as a unique festival. The festival is variously called Agniotsava Vasantha Bharatha Thiruvizha, [The Spring Mahabharata Festival] Dharmaraja Draupadi Amman Mahabharata Koothu Vizha, Draupadi Amman Theemidhi Vizha [The Firewalk Festival], or sometimes simply as 'Padugalam'[The Battlefield] referring to the penultimate days spectacular event.

During the heydays of the Pallava rule in these regions there seems to have been state patronage for these festivals. There are copper plate inscriptions mentioning both land and money being allocated for the reading of 'Bharatham' or the Mahabharata as it is known in Tamil. Currently each family in these villages contributes money for the celebration of the festival and the total revenue generated in each village can vary between 30 lakhs to one and a half crore of rupees, depending on the affluence of each village. This festival is unique because it is probably the longest running, independently funded theatre festival in the world being performed for well over a thousand years.

Na Muthuswamy first drew my attention to the intricate structure of this festival and its design. He said cryptically "The Mahabharata plays a huge part in Indian and Tamil cultures specifically. It helps one to understand as to what life is; it helps in the development of one's own personality, it also helps one to understand one's own behavioural patterns. You will understand it when you see the ten day Koothu festival. The festival is not about some plays being enacted which people just watch; there is a design and an excess of meaning here." The structure and design of the festival will be one element explored in this book.

The first question which arises is that when returns from agriculture have been declining for the past few decades why do the farmers spend such huge sum of money to conduct these festivals? The answer given unanimously was deceptively simple- to promote 'Samarasam' or peace and harmony in the villages. The Mahabharata, at its core, is a narrative of a fratricidal war fought between cousins over Kingship in which there are finally no real winners. This narrative of the calamitous war becoming a vehicle to promote peace and harmony begs one to ask as to how the Epic was seen in these villages. A storyteller, Muthuganesan gave the pithiest description of the Epic. He said it speaks about the repercussions of "Man Aasai, Penn Aasai, Pon Aasai" meaning that all conflicts at the core hinge on three kinds of desire- the desire for land, or women or gold.

Conflict resolution also seems to be one core of the festival and in every festival you can see old resentments flaring up, conflicts between communities and sometimes conflicts amongst the organisers themselves. A lot of these conflicts are resolved during the course of the festival itself, while some are deferred to raise their head again, in the next festival

These festivals can be celebrated for about ten days to hundred and twenty days with the Vellore Mahabharata festival being the longest such festival which is celebrated for four months. All the festivals culminate with the crowning of Dharmaraja/Yudhisthira , the eldest of the five

Pandavas as the King, but paradoxically enough Dharmaraja, in most villages is never taken out of the temple; only Draupadi and the idols of the other four Pandavas are taken out in procession every day of the festival.

The storyteller Kanchipuram Muthuganesan There are a lot of details in these Mahabharata festivals, generally they will not bring Dharmaraja's idol out of the temple.

Because Dharmaraja not wanting to see the Adharma of the new Yuga, the Kali Yuga, had crowned Arjuna's grandson as the King and departed to the heavens. Respecting his wish of not wanting to see Kali Yuga, they will not bring him out of the temple. This is in 99% of the villages, but in 1 % of these villages they will bring Dharumar's idol out in procession! When you ask them why they bring him out of the temple they say that if that noble soul's gaze fell on all the atrocities happening in Kali Yuga, maybe things will be better!

There are basically two texts used to narrate the story of the Epic. The first is a 14th Century text called 'Villibharatham' or the Bharatham written by a poet from Villiputthur and an 18th century text written by Nallapillai called Nallapillai Bharatham. Nallapillai Bharatham is a portmanteaux text incorporating all available renderings of the Mahabharata in Tamil, including Villibharatham. Professional Singer/storytellers and professional Koothu troupes are hired by the villages to sing the Bharatham and to enact the theatre, but the rituals are performed by the villages themselves.

A pair of singer/storyteller would inaugurate the festival. The singer would sing a song from the text which will be in a Tamil unknown to contemporary Tamil speakers. The storyteller will explain the song and ground it in the values of contemporary times.

MD Muthukumaraswam-There will be two people involved in this. Sometimes they are mistakenly named as Villupattu singers, but they have no connection to the form called Villu Paattu and are basically storytellers. They will read from the Villi Bharatham and there will be two people, one the storyteller and the other the singer with a harmonium. The storyteller has freedom and all kinds of liberties in his performance. It is essential that he knows both the Mahabharata and Villi Bharatham thoroughly. While he will extemporise freely, his accompanist will not deviate from the written text. The storyteller would narrate in a free form and stop at a juncture. For example if they were performing the Virata Parva episode of the Epic, the storyteller will give a general introduction to the story and connect it to everyday lived reality of the villages. The singer will sing some important verses from the text. The singer can take no liberties but be absolutely faithful to the text and the rules of how it should be sung. It is essential that the storyteller has to be a highly educated person and be a fountain of knowledge. It is not just enough that he knows the Mahabharata; he also has to know literature, Cinema and have a deep understanding of contemporary village life. It is only when knows all this will he be able to narrate the Epic.

*"When she heard of it, Kunti, the daughter of hills, got angry and called for the killing of Bakasuran.*



*The daughter of just lineage commanded her son Bhima.  
With the virility and power granted by the great Hanuman  
clash with the demon,  
and pulling out his entrails and brains destroy the demons body!"*

For the first few days of the festival, the Epic would only be sung and narrated as a story in the afternoon. This performance would be of four hours each day. Only when the singer/storyteller reaches the point of Draupadi's marriage with Arjuna will the theatre cycle start. In most villages 'Vil Valaippu' or the play about Arjuna winning Draupadi's hand in marriage will be the first Koothu enacted.

After Arjuna wins Draupadi's hand in marriage, the festival would be celebrated for 20 hours each day, with the village rituals in the morning, followed by the storytelling sessions while the Koothu would be enacted right through the night. While the storytelling and theatrical enactments would be performed by hired professionals, the village rituals would be performed by the villagers themselves. It is by the act of performing these rituals themselves; the villagers inscribe themselves into the Mahabharata. Though there is a designated space for theatre in these festivals, theatre is performed all around the village and every space in the village at one point or the other becomes performance space and everything from the storytelling sessions to the rituals being performed is also theatre. It is an immersive experience which does not seem to permit the notion of an outside. For the entire duration of the festival all the people in the village become characters from the Epic and to perform this transformation, the village rituals play an important part.

To give an example;

the shift of tenor in the festival happens with the ritual of the 'Burning of the Lacquer Palace' performed by the villagers. As the storyteller is narrating the episode of the burning of the Lacquer Palace, the villagers would erect a hut like structure between the storytelling space and the theatrical enactments space.

In the Epic, when Dharmaraja/Yudhishthira asks for their rightful share of the kingdom from their fraternal cousin Duryodhana, he deceitfully promises to apportion the kingdom and asks the five Pandavas with their mother Kunti to stay in a palace he has built for them. Duryodhana has built the palace with combustible materials and intends to burn his cousins to death while they are asleep. To ensure their death, Duryodhana has also sent 6 assassins to complete the job. Bhima comes to know of the plot through Vidura and escapes carrying his four brothers and mother on his shoulders, leaving the 6 assassins to die in the fire.

In the village, 6 dolls representing the assassins sent by Duryodhana would be placed in the hut like structure and the villagers would set fire to it. An idol of Bhima would be carried around this burning structure and the nature and duration of the enactments change dramatically from this point onwards.

Every day the storytelling sessions would begin with an invocation to Vinayaka, the scribe of

Veda Vyasa. This opening song also invokes the idea of Pralaya, or the Great Deluge.

*“In a world surrounded by water, to stand along with the four Vedas  
the fifth Veda, the Mahabharata was narrated  
by the Rishi of unfading power of austerities,  
We bow in respect and love to Vinayaka  
who transcribed the text  
with Mount Meru as the slate and his tusk as the writing tool.”*

In Ramayana, Kamban described the world as ‘Aazhisoozhulagam’, meaning the world surrounded by water, in Villibharatham, he says ‘Needazhiulagam’ Aazhi means the Oceans.

Eternal recurrence is an idea embedded in different systems of thought in Indian traditions, both of the theist and atheistic schools. The world is reborn afresh from deluge into the Satya Yuga, the time when everyone leads virtuous lives; this is followed by Treta Yuga where Adharma makes its presence felt; Dwapara Yuga when the Great War was fought where the values of the previous two Yugas start disappearing followed by the Kali Yuga in which we live where there is an almost near eclipse of Dharma.

Every time the world recovers from a deluge, another Vyasa will be born to organize all the knowledge of the worlds and compile the four Vedas, Brahma would again ask him to compose the Mahabharata, and the Great War would be fought again.

A popular saying in these festivals is that the Mahabharata is re-enacted so that Draupadi can hear her story again. Draupadi is seen as the representative of all the people unjustly affected by war. Draupadi is ‘doubled’- she is both the Queen of the Pandavas and the primary audience for this spectacle. No performance can begin without her presence. In all the storytelling sessions, the village rituals and the theatre enactments idols of Draupadi and four Pandavas will be given pride of place; only then can the performance begin. Dharmaraja/Yudhishthira in most villages never leaves the temple and as already stated there is a strong reason why.

In one Koothu where Draupadi has to be abused in vile language, the Kattiyakaaran or the Sutradhar will draw a circle around the actor playing Draupadi and say

*“Mother! We are just poor actors enacting your story so that you can listen to it again.*

*Oh! Mother Panchali, I place my trust only in you, the noble born.*

*You are the Goddess of this earth! Mother!*

*Mother of all the Worlds, who was the wife of the five Pandavas, the beautiful Panchali!*

*For the sake of sustaining this perishable body and for our living, we are enacting this play as it was enacted by our ancestors. In this play we have to abuse you in ugly language. Please forgive us for this and all our errors”*

Only after this invocation will the actor step back into his role and abuse Draupadi in the filthiest of languages.

Draupadi becomes the site for a double invocation; while she is the ‘wronged’ Queen of the

Epic, she also invokes all the wars that the people of this region were subject. This second memory, which again will be elaborated later, is not a lament or a dirge, but is an affirmation of the will to live of the people- even through calamitous times.

In the Epic, the Pandavas spend 3 periods of their lives in the forest, in Vanavaasam; they are born in the forest, return to the city to claim their patrimony and are cheated by their cousin to again escape to the forest. They return again only to lose their kingdom to their devious cousins to begin their longest stay in the forests. In their 3 Vanavasams, or life in the forests, they listen to stories of other people that mirror their own predicament. In the festival villages, due to the duration of the performances, the entire village virtually lives in Vanavaasam, in the performances spaces spread across the village, and listen to the stories the Pandavas heard in their life in the forests.

The beginning of the theatre cycle happens in the Dharmaraja/Draupadi Amman temple-the storytelling space, with the Koothu actors singing an invocation song to Draupadi and walking towards the performance space singing this song. In between the actors will circumambulate the ritual space where Duryodhana will be finally killed before they begin their performance. Everyday another ritual will be performed between the storytelling space and the performance space and the actors would circumambulate each new ritual space before beginning their performance.

This circumambulation of the middle space linking the storytelling and performance space serves to underline their importance. This is one way the village inscribes itself into the Epic and the Mahabharata as it is celebrated achieves its duality. It is both the Sanskrit Epic while also being a memory of the village itself.

On stage, the actors would sing six invocation songs of which five will be to Rajagopal [Krishna as a King], Saraswati, Durga, Murugan and Shiva while the sixth song will be to the guardian deity of whichever village they are performing- this again serves to underline the importance of the festival village and is another way where the village inscribes itself into the Epic and its performance.

The invocation song to Draupadi is important in its own way as it addresses a Draupadi reborn in Senji. No one, currently among the audience could recount this story and the few storytellers who spoke about the second birth of Draupadi claimed that it was found in a book called 'Draupadi Mahathmiyam' [The Greatness of Draupadi], a book which none of the storytellers themselves had seen. But the narrative survives in a song sung everyday by the Koothu performers before each night's performance. So why was Draupadi born in Senji and how did that become a memory of a region?

The popularity of the Mahabharata festivals seems to be increasing each year and newer Dharmaraja/Draupadi Amman temples are being built each year. It is a belief that the new temple, to be authentic, had to have a little bit of land from the temple tank at Melaccheri in Senji making the temple tank almost devoid of any sand.

When we went to interview the priest at the temple in Melaccheri, he was ready to throw us out as he thought that we were people trying to steal sand from the temple tank! The camera in our hands saved the day, and we did a long interview with him which will be a part of a later session dealing with Senji

<https://youtu.be/Ld2E3xS1jts?si=0MHvKn7eQ7hejAMO>

What is worth noting in these festivals is its intricate structure. The festival does not alone create a space for its audience/participants to relive the Mahabharata, but creates a space to remember more than a thousand years of cultural and social memory. The Mahabharata in these festivals is framed against the Ramayana, Thirukural, the Bhakthi poetry of Arunagirinathar, the Azhwars, Silappadhigaram and numerous other works which constitute cultural memory.

#### THE FESTIVALS AS 'TOTAL THEATRE'

“One sees from this that pratyabhijnā (recognition, scrutiny) is a careful inspection of and continuous reflection upon an object although that object is already [in some sense] known. This is what is meant by pratyabhijnā and not the mere recognition that consists in noting that “this is the same thing I saw before.”

Abhinavagupta

The filmmaker Mani Kaul, while introducing the films of Ritwik Ghatak spoke about the distinctive nature of the 'Epic Form' as opposed to the 'Dramatic Narrative'.

The dramatic narrative, he says, typically converges to a climax with the triumph of good over evil; while “the epic form is just the opposite, which means that the narrative is usually very thin, very spread out and at every stage that it develops, it tries to have wider perspectives. Not just concerning the characters but also about nature, history or ideas. These are not just a description of society, but visions of epochs that have gone by. So it cannot be just a simple movement, a narrative moving forward, but as the story is narrated, it must also embrace and spread out.” Mani Kaul's interview by Tasreen Munni Kabir

In every festival, there would be contestations between the various performers and the audience as to what was the 'original' Mahabharata. For instance, there is a huge difference between the story of Karna as narrated by the storytellers and as enacted by the Koothu performers. In Koothu, Karna before going to war on the fateful 17th day of the battle would request a traditional warrior's farewell from his estranged wife Ponnuruvi or Ponmala. This scene which has tremendous emotional resonances for the audiences would invariably not be present in the storytelling sessions where they rigorously follow the text. The audiences would be angry at this glaring omission by the storyteller and in one festival, the storyteller went to great lengths to convince the audience that the story of Ponnuruvi/Ponmala was not a part of any 'authentic' text and was just purely the imagination of the Koothu writers. Karnan did not have good relations with his wife Ponnuruvi.

The Mahabharata festivals of Tamil Nadu and Southern Andhra Pradesh are intricately structured, incorporating multiple orders of expressions and memories within itself. To participate in the festival of this nature, immediately becomes an act of 'remembering'. The epic, due to the way the festival is structured, becomes a trigger, to an entire series of memories, from the individual to the collective. The Mahabharata is also not performed in its entirety, and the responsibility of re-constructing the whole again, is the responsibility of each individual member of the audience.

Each member of the audience would have seen over the years, different renditions of the same episodes of the epic, and what would be remembered finally, would be a cumulative memory of all that each had witnessed. This cumulative memory would naturally include the memory of oneself witnessing a particular rendition, and by a curious process, by remembering the epic, one also tends to remember oneself, reflect on oneself. By this ritual of hearing, viewing and participating in the same story over and over again, the quality of 'attentiveness' of each member of the audience seems to get intensified. The internal process the viewer/listener goes through can only be described as 'Dhyana'.

The filmmaker Mani Kaul, while speaking to his students had this to say on 'Dhyana' which has generally been loosely translated as 'meditation', he said-

"I'll tell you something, if you dont mind. This word "meditation", which is mystified in the West, has no meaning in India. There is simply a question of attention, a quality of attention. The word 'Dhyan' literally means attention. There is a dichotomy between Being and this quality of attention. Being cannot free itself from certain sorrows; it cannot free itself from its problems and unhappiness, because Being is full of them. The idea of transcending them and reaching a state where there's no sorrow is all a dream. You can talk about it, but until the end of your life, your sorrows will pursue you.

However, "attention" can be free. A great teacher transforms that quality of attention- of listening, of talking, of seeing, of touching - until there is no sorrow, no fear, no anger, no pain; In music, and perhaps in some of my films, one has this quality of "attention"

'Attentiveness', both of oneself and of one's interaction to the world, is seen as the highest value in these traditions and all performances are designed to promote this quality of 'attentiveness'. Repetition becomes a key element to provoke this 'self-introspective attentiveness'.

Crucial episodes from the Epic are presented thrice in these festivals, as it has already been stressed, as ritual, narrative and theatre. And each time the same episode might be rendered differently leading to contestations as to who is presenting the 'original' Mahabharata.

The theatre people would often take dramatic license with the narrative and hence come into direct confrontation with the storytellers who rigorously follow the text. These daily contestations are also a vital part of the theatrical experience of the festival itself. The Epic resists closure in these performance traditions and the quest for the 'truth' becomes the onus of

each individual member of the audience. Over the years, as one's own experience of the world deepens, participating in these festivals leads to a more nuanced engagement with both the text, and by extension to one's own life. This happens in various degrees within each member of the audience

Natarajan- It seems people outside are angry that I have omitted to mention Karna taking leave of his wife Ponnuruvi before entering the battlefield. That is the difference between the play and the Mahabharata [sarcastically] The play has been written by 'illiterate' people, while the Mahabharata has been written by 'scholars', poets. You can check with any classical version of the Mahabharata, you won't find this leave taking scene. I have been telling the Mahabharata for 20 years, but nobody seems to have listened properly. In the play they also so that Karna had only one son and that too born 'accidentally'! Isn't it what they say in Koothu? They say accidentally a child was born to them as the husband and wife never spoke to each other. In Mahabharata they have four sons. Can a man and woman lived together without talking to each other?

Commentary-These contestations between the storytellers, the Koothu actors and the audiences are a vital part of the 'theatre' in these festivals. These contestations and the multiple interpretations of basically the same text give each festival a unique character; no two festivals can ever be alike and in every festival the mindful audience would be presented with a different aspect to ponder upon. This probably might be one of the reasons why the festivals have being performed for over a thousand years. The onus is finally on each member of the discerning audience to discover where the 'Truth' rests.

There are three layers of performance in these festivals. The epic is performed as village rituals in the morning, narrated as a story in the afternoons and performed right through the night in a traditional masked theatre form called the 'Koothu'. Repetition, as A K Ramanujan says, is a key component of Indian performance traditions. For as he says- "If a thing is only mentioned once, it is as though it were not said at all!" This is the reason for some key episodes of the epic being performed thrice in the festival, once as ritual, second its narration as a story and third its elaboration as a theatrical experience. Theatre is not just performed in the designated theatrical space, but is performed all around the village and every space in the village becomes a performing space sometime or the other. This prompted Na Mutthuswamy a noted playwright/director of modern Tamil theatre to describe these festivals as 'Total Theatre'.

The ritual, 'The Killing of Bakasura' is an important emotional marker of time in these festival villages, evoking multiple memories. Again the killing of Bakasura is performed as a ritual, narrated as a story and enacted as theatre. The killing of Bakasura evokes the idea of the 'doubled' Draupadi effectively. In the Mahabharata, the Pandavas get married to Draupadi after this killing of Bakasura. In the 'doubled' Mahabharata of this region, Draupadi is reborn at Senji to kill Rochakan or Asulamasuran, a later day demon who was the great, great, grand descendent of the demon Bakasura who was killed by the Pandava warrior, Bhima. In the Epic narrative, Bakasura is terrorizing a village in which the Pandavas find asylum after escaping from

the assassins of Duryodhana.

Bhima gets angry when he hears that the village has been forced to provide a cartload of food, two oxen and a human sacrifice to the glutton, Bakasura, every day. As the only son of the family which had granted them asylum was the designated human sacrifice that day, Bhima offers to go instead. In the festival village, for this episode, each family cooks food for Bhima to carry to Bakasura.

Koothu actors dressed as Bhima and Bakasura travel through the village, collecting food from each household. By the act of cooking food for the ritual, each household inscribes themselves in the epic and each person becomes 'doubled'; they are both members of the festival village as well as characters of Bakasura's village.

M D Muthukumaraswamy- Now here which is the ritual, the theatre or which is real life? This travel between the three is the experience of these Bharatham festivals. The ritual will cross its boundaries to become a part of real life and real life through ritual will transform into theatre. There will be only a thin line separating the three, while the people themselves will flow naturally from one into the other. Only outsiders like us will separate these three as ritual, theatre or real life, while in the village itself all three belong to one continuum

The ritual of the killing of Bakasura is an important juncture in these festivals where the entire village become characters from the Epic themselves. The ritual is the pivot on which the festival revolves. The Mahabharata now is both an internal memory and an external text. The festival, as Na Muthuswamy says, becomes 'Total Theatre' from this point onwards with the entire village having been drawn into the Epic.

The theatre cycle would begin with this ritual and every day's performances from this moment on would be for about 20 hours a day. The entire village would literally live now, in the various performance spaces in the village. Most storytellers in these festivals speak of the necessity of periodically abandoning the comfort of one's hearth and home and choosing to live in the forests; here one has to kill the demons both inside and outside of oneself. Only then, they say, is a true return to oneself possible.

In the Mahabharata, the Pandavas endure three periods of Vanavaasam; they are born in the forests and return to their paternal kingdom on the death of their father to live with their fraternal cousins the Kauravas. Again they are forced to return to the forest where they kill the demons both within and outside. They return dramatically enriched by their second sojourn in the forests. This return just happens to be temporary and they are again compelled to live in the forests for their longest period of time -thirteen years, after which they are, equipped both mentally and physically to wrest their kingdom back from their cousins.

In fact, the Pandavas spend the largest portions of their lives in the forests- in Vanavaasam. In the festival villages, for the duration of the festival, most villagers live in the performance spaces spread across the villages, in Vanavaasam, or in 'the forests of their own mind'

During this period of self-imposed Vanavaasam, the villagers listen to the stories the Pandavas had listened to in their own Vanavaasam. The other great Epic, the Ramayana is also narrated to the Pandavas in their life in the forests. Draupadi, in this festival is constantly addressed as being the sister of Rama.

Even in the same village, different storytellers and Koothu actors would be hired each year each with their own style or 'Bani', specific to their tradition; some storytellers would be hired for their musical abilities, others for the quality of their storytelling. Some Koothu troupes would be hired for the energy of their performance while other group might be hired for the element of tragedy they get into their performance. This again ensures that the emotional register of each festival even in the same village would be different each year. People still remember details of a performance which

The Mahabharata festivals as they are celebrated/performed in Tamil Nadu have evolved and transformed from its origin in the Pallava times. Perunthevanaar Bharatham which was commissioned in the Pallava times is now a lost text with only 339 verses of the original 12,000 verses currently available.

The festival as it is performed right now is structured around a 14th Century text called 'Villibharatham'. An 18th century text in simpler prose called the 'Nallapillai Bharatham' is used by a lot of contemporary storytellers. While the songs they sing would be from Villibharatham, Nallapillai Bharatham would be referred to for the narrative elaboration of these songs. There is a strong anti-war core to these festivals which will be elaborated in the next session, and Draupadi is seen as the representative of all the people unjustly affected by war. This narrative will be continued in the next chapter where the anti-war nature of the festival and its Pallava origins are explored further. The anti-war core of the festival, its Pallava origins and birth of Draupadi at Senji will be explored in the next session.

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**Session-8**

**India as a Voice from the Global South: *The Knowledge Dimension***

Working Group: *A V Balasubramanian (Convener), Amit Basole, Sunil Sahasrabudhey,  
Srishtee Bajpai, Chetan Singai*

*The Background:*

The larger historical context for a discussion on this topic has to start with the recognition that in the pre Columbus era for well over twenty centuries or more, India has had rich and extensive links with her Eastern and Southern neighbors in Asia and also perhaps across the Western waters and lands with parts of Africa and Middle East. The exchanges were over vast and varied domains of knowledge and culture including (but not limited to) – language, grammar, literature, medicine, agriculture, natural resources, astronomy, mathematics, material science, navigation and ship building. Such links and exchanges seem to have continued through religious exchanges and pilgrimages of Buddhist Scholars- this has continued through centuries and institutions from Kanchipuram in the South to Nalanda bear ample testimony to these links. Trade and interaction through the seas are also recorded extensively and may have reached its peak around the 11th century during the period of Rajendra Chola.

One often encounters a response to this interaction which is a mixture of wonder and a sense of admiration which has survived in some form even into the modern era. The Chinese diplomat, scholar and philosopher Hu Shih (1891-1962) is quoted as having stated-“*India conquered and dominated China culturally for 20 centuries without ever having to send a single soldier across her border*”.

The dawn of India’s Asian- African Internationalism of the modern era can perhaps be traced to the –“Asian Relations Conference” which was convened in New Delhi between 23rd March and 17th April 1947. It was the eve of Indian Independence – an era of declining

colonial empires and emerging independent States across the South. The Conference was attended by representatives from 28 Asian and other countries and had observers from six other regions. The major topics for discussion were naturally those of immediate concern such as – transition from colonial to national economy, agriculture reconstruction and industrial development, national movements for freedom, etc. Even at that time, the conference raised concerns from the West of a possible –“Asian Block” and Jawaharlal Nehru had to affirm that –“.....the Conference would not be opposed in any way to America or the Soviet Union or any other power or group of powers”.

Right from the early days of Indian independence, developments in India were watched with keen interest by the Asian and African neighbours. It was as if we were under a lens, as a “Test case”, for the World at large to figure out if this whole experiment of decolonization would “work”. Immediately after freedom in 1947, India faced severe food shortages and the memories of the 1943 famine were still fresh. India not only averted a famine but also managed to avoid mass hunger

(though with several ups and downs). The General Elections of 1952 were held peacefully in what was recognized as “The World’s Largest Democratic Experiment” with one sixth of the World’s population casting their votes! The next year Sudan invited the Chief Election Commissioner of India Sukumar Sen to conduct their first general election in 1953. It was expected that India would be a strong voice of the South for several reasons, including her economic and military strength, vast capabilities in many sectors of modern science, technology and Industry.

For many of India’s African and Asian neighbours, India continues to be a land that they look up to -- while the reasons may be many, the following are among the few that find repeated mention:

1. India is a “robust democracy” – our elections are held regularly, the transfer of power after elections have always been smooth and peaceful and our armed forces have never interfered with our political process
2. The way we are managing our tremendous and complex diversity – religious, linguistic, ethnic etc.-- as a modern nation state is keenly watched. While it is still a –“work in progress”, it is believed to have implications and lessons not only for our Southern neighbours but also for the rest of the World
3. We have made tremendous progress in various sectors of our economy, built extensive infrastructure and moved towards self sufficiency in Food, Agriculture and other key sectors; while concerns of equity are still very serious, the progress is indeed significant
4. India is acknowledged as a friend who can be counted upon to share what she has with her Southern neighbours. To cite an example, India has been hailed as the “World’s Pharmacy”. Our pharmaceutical sector is a major source of Life Saving drugs at low prices to countries that need this the most -- a role that we have continued to play right up to the era of the COVID pandemic. While there is a lot more that can be and ought to be done, there is no doubt that there is a very favorable disposition towards India.

In terms of our links to the Global South what have we achieved since 1947? Can we hold a mirror to reflect upon what have we achieved, how has this fared in comparison with the expectations, our own and those of our Southern neighbours?

Some of the specific questions to be reflected upon by the Panel would include –

1. What is the current shape and status of exchange of knowledge, traditions and experiences between the Nations of the South- could we look into some specific domains such as Health and Medicine, governance and justice, natural resources management, etc.
2. Today much of what India knows/believes/experiences about the South is heavily colored and dominated by scholarship from the West and received through Western media, news agencies and in English and European languages. How can we move towards better communication and deeper mutual understanding ?..
3. Besides academic research and scholarship in areas like Science and Technology there also need to understand the implications and impact of our knowledge and traditions including music, dance, arts, crafts and cultural traditions ,food, yoga and so on in our relationship with the South .
4. There are also emerging voices in India and the South that are involved in a deeper examination and understanding of ideas of state , governance , knowledge Systems etc.; drawing from their own experiences and values which are significantly different from the thinking from the North ( both mainstream and alternative !!). Some of these are from outside the formal institutions and academia and their content and implications need to be reflected upon.
5. How does one provide support and strength and be more effective as a “ Voice of the South” without acquiring a “big brother” attitude? It appears that suspicions of Indian or Chinese Hegemony held by other Nations (and mutually between India and China) are serious and cannot be lightly wished away. We also need to move away from an approach that sees the South solely as a market for various emerging goods, services and technologies from India.
6. Even after Independence right down to the recent times it is seen that ideas from the Indian Freedom Movement rooted in Gandhian thinking -- Swaraj and Non-violent approaches to political actions -- have continued to inspire people from different parts of the world including Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and more recently the Arab Spring. A strong articulation and a development of these ideas in today's context can surely be a valuable contribution from India.

#### The Program Structure-

1. Introduction to the theme: background and an overview - Convener
2. Presentation by Panel members
  - a. Mahatma Gandhi and Knowledge in Society are the two pillars on which India's Voice may be constructed -- Sunil Sahasrabudhey
  - b. A just 21st century can only be imagined via alternative Knowledge Paradigms -- Amit Basole

c. Welcoming Diverse and Pluriversal World views - Shrishtee Bajpai

d. International Relations as an academic discipline in the global south: *Beyond the paradigm of Eurocentrism* -- Chetan Singai

3. Discussion on the presentations

4. Concluding remarks from the Convener

#### About the Panelists

1. **A. V. Balasubramanian** is a Biologist by training .Since 1982 he has been involved in work relating to various aspects of Traditional Indian Sciences and Technologies and trying to explore their current relevance and potential. In1995 he founded the Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems, (CIKS) an institution devoted toexploring the contemporary relevance and applications of Indian Knowledge Systems, particularly in the area of sustainable agriculture.Currently he is the Director of the Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems and based in Chennai.

2. **Sunil Sahasrabudhey** is founder president of Vidya Ashram. He has done studies in the philosophy of knowledge and politics with the Gandhian perspective and has been active in New Farmers' Movement in India since 1970s. A founder participant of the Lokavidya Movement, he lives at Vidya Ashram in Varanasi.

3. **Amit Basole** holds Ph.D. degrees in Neuroscience as well as Economics. He is a Professor of Economics at Azim Premji University, Bengaluru and works on economic policy and employment. He has explored artisanal economics from a lokavidya knowledge standpoint. A close associate of Vidya Ashram, he lives in Bengaluru.

4. **Shrishtee Bajpai** is a researcher, writer, and activist working at the intersections of environmental justice, social justice, more-than human governance , indigenous worldviews, and systemic transformations. She is a member of Kalpavriksh, an environmental action group in India and coordinates Vikalp Sangam (Alternatives Confluence) network that researches, documents, networks around systemic alternatives. She is one of the founder-members and part of the core team of Global Tapestry of Alternatives She also serves on the executive committee of Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature. She is also part of some fraternal networks and groups such as Liminality Network and Inner Climate Academy.

5. **Chetan Singai** Professor and Dean, School of Law, Governance and Public Policy, Chanakya University, Bengaluru. He obtained his doctoral degree (PhD) from the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bengaluru, India. He received his master's in Political Science and M.Phil. from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has received Erasmus Mundus scholarship. Formerly, Faculty at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru. He has been at DAAD visiting-faculty Julius-Maximilian-University, Germany from 2014 to 2017. He is a recipient of the Social Justice Medal awarded by the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India. Nominated as Chief Consultant to the Committee to Draft the National Education Policy-2017-2019 (chaired by Padma Vibhushan Dr K. Kasturirangan), Ministry of

Education, Government of India, New Delhi. He has published two books and more than 25 national and international articles in peer-reviewed journals on higher education, geopolitics, space policy and human rights issues.

## **Papers/Abstracts Presented in Session-8**

### **I. Mahatma Gandhi and Knowledge in Society are the two pillars on which India's Voice may be constructed**

Sunil Sahasrabudhey, budhey@gmail.com

1. India, the nation, may not be thought of only in terms of the Indian State, its institutions and professional classes. The vast majority is outside these locations. These people with their knowledge ought to be an important factor in new formulations on INDIA AS A VOICE FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH. To do this, we may underline the change that has taken place in the last five-six decades in reference to the growing recognition of 'knowledge in society', often as traditional, local, indigenous, peoples' knowledge etc. The need of the times is to erect a political/philosophical dialogue from this 'growing recognition'. Recognition of such knowledge as a primary enabler for the ordinary people has given rise to a new language in the public domain. Greater and often formal use of terms like Rights of Nature, Rights of Mother Earth, Food Sovereignty, Jal-Jangal-Zameen Rights and possibly many more in different languages in many parts of the Global South, are indicative of such radical development of thinking which owes little to the Global North in the epistemic domain. A robust reference to 'Knowledge in Society' should enable us to make a substantial departure, from the earlier and much of the present thinking, and give new points of departure for erecting a new dialogue on the Global stage.
2. India as a nation is known for the great diversity it has, of which we can have a rather concrete view through the variety of languages spoken in this land. Every language embodies certain knowledge traditions and world-view. When these knowledge traditions interact with one-another, without being mediated by a language of the Global North, a large nation like India is created which has overarching traditions of justice, equality, brotherhood etc. (vide Ma-

hatma Gandhi's new constitution for the Indian National Congress in 1920 based on linguistic regions) When this process is taken beyond national boundaries, we have the concept of the erstwhile Third World or the present Global South.

3. Two major outcomes of the internet in the shape of the World Wide Web may be noted: one, the unprecedented expansion of communication and dialogue and two, the Artificial Intelligence. Whereas the former distributes and spreads knowledge and intelligence almost without limit, the latter mops up all the intellectual resources available on the internet at one place with lightening speed. The first inaugurates a new epoch of knowledge dialogue, briefly called The Age of Dialogue and the other concentrates all knowledge for profiteering by a few. India's voice as a voice from the Global South can only be of the great spread of knowledge in this Age of Dialogue.
  4. Mahatma Gandhi's path of reconstruction and building afresh is expressed in the phrase 'based in our tradition and enriched by the later experiences'. Attempts of this kind were made in some countries of South America. Early this century, Bolivia and Ecuador went through large mobilizations asserting that they need to rebuild their nations taking lessons from their knowledge (cultural) roots. The key ideas that came out were Rights of Mother Earth and Rights of Nature. They adopted new constitutions and called themselves Plurinational States which, briefly said, recognize multiple politico-social formations and autonomy of the same within a nation/state. This is in stark contrast to the concept of the State born in Europe and spread all over the world through colonialism and imperialism. It is also a complete opposite of the very recent concept of civilizational state born in the wake of the neo-conservative developments in many countries across the world.
  5. Mahatma Gandhi is central to this conception. In the name of Mahatma Gandhi a lot has gone to the world, to both the North and the South. The idea of non-violence and non-violent struggle have played important roles in the movements for peace, autonomy and liberation in many countries. For example, movement by the Catholics of Northern Ireland (1970s) for independence from UK , movement of Blacks in South Africa against Apartheid (Nelson Mandela), movement of Blacks in America for equal rights (Martin Luther King), movement of the Zapatista in Mexico. What has not happened with it is taking to the global stage also the knowledge aspect of his thought which appreciates knowledge in society (as also not separable from the moral fiber of society and also as the
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knowledge basis of swaraj). The present Age of Dialogue on Knowledge creates opportunities to do this.

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## **II. A just 21st century can only be imagined via alternative knowledge paradigms**

**Amit Basole, [abasole@gmail.com](mailto:abasole@gmail.com)**

One defining feature of the 21st century thus far is the serious unsettling of the 20th century post-WW2 global economic order. Both the "Keyensian consensus" of the 1950s-70s and the "Neoliberal consensus" of the 1980s to the early 2000s are in question today. This century has seen a dramatic increase in the economic, political and military power of China, along with the reassertion of Russia trying to re-establish her own sphere of influence and return of trade protectionism in the advanced capitalist countries as a result of a popular backlash against globalisation. There are two large perspectives to be found against the rise of new nationalisms and populisms across the world - the old left seeking a return to the Keynesian consensus and the new liberals seeking a return to the neoliberal consensus. But neither return seems likely. The question facing countries such as India is, how to imagine a just future for their own people with the 20th century paradigms exhausted and conflict between large powers once again becoming a fact of life even as the climate crisis deepens. To make the challenge even more complex, the next 20 years will also see a demographic shift in the Global South such that China and India will become ageing societies (China much faster than India) while sub-Saharan Africa remains relatively young.

The Lokavidya Jan Andolan (LJA) has maintained the position since some time that existing varieties of development paradigms do not offer a road to a just society. LJA has also pointed to the space created by unsettling of old knowledge hierarchies by the coming of the Knowledge Age. Thus far, this space has been effectively used by large social media companies to create an era of "post-truth" where unsettling of the "rule of experts" has been put in the service of new anti-people forces. Unless a new imagination is produced by peoples' movements going beyond the confines of 20th century visions of democracy, secularism, socialism etc. the road to a just society appears blocked.

In my talk I will take stock of these developments of the past 10 or 15 years and offer some tentative suggestions on where the knowledge movement can go from here.

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## **III. Welcoming Diverse and Pluriversal Worldviews**



**Shrishtee Bajpai, shrishteebajpai@gmail.com**

1. Can India alone be the voice of the Global South? I would like to highlight a more bioregional thinking around this, especially being guided by the rest of nature when thinking about nation-states and boundaries.
  2. Expanding on how we need to welcome diverse and pluriversal worldviews to challenge the hegemony of certain strands of western thinking: that humans alone are possessed of rights and that other species exist for human use. Communities in India as well as in many parts of the world have respected rivers, mountains, forests, lands, seas, plants and animals, believing that they have agency of their own. They have grounded themselves in intuitive and embodied knowledge of the territories they inhabit, living in accordance with natural rhythms and rules, aware of consequences if these are broken. Hence, in their ways challenged the core concepts of western modernity by articulating and living their own visions of ‘good life’.
  3. Building on the above point, I would like to highlight the elements of Earthy Governance and how we can begin to reimagine different ways of being by learning from the embodied knowledge of adivasis and other local communities.
  4. Finally, what kind of systemic transformations are called for in these times.
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#### **IV. International Relations as an academic discipline in the global south:**

##### ***Beyond the paradigm of Eurocentrism***

Chetan Singai, chetan.s@chanakyauniversity.edu.in

International Relations (IR) as a discipline has long been shaped by a Eurocentric theoretical framework, which has privileged Western historical experiences, paradigms, methodologies, and intellectual traditions while marginalizing non-Western knowledge from the Global South. This study addresses this critical gap by tracing the historical origins, suppression, and resurgence of alternative knowledge systems in IR. Drawing on Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan’s critique of IR’s Western-centric foundations, it examines how pre-colonial societies developed sophisticated mechanisms of statecraft, diplomacy, and conflict resolution—systems that were systematically undermined during the colonial and imperial eras. The study engages with Acharya’s concept of "Global IR," which calls for the recognition of diverse intellectual traditions and the agency of the Global South in shaping global order. Additionally, it draws on Buzan’s analysis of the historical evolution of international systems beyond the Eurocentric model, demonstrating that non-Western perspectives are essential in gaining a comprehensive understanding of global politics.

The paper also investigates the ongoing struggle for intellectual decolonization in the post-colonial world, highlighting contemporary scholarship and policy innovations emerging from the Global South. These contributions provide valuable insights into pressing global issues such as development, security, environmental sustainability, and global governance, challenging dominant Western paradigms and offering alternatives from the Global South for a more just and equitable world order. This paper calls for a fundamental re-evaluation of what constitutes legitimate knowledge in IR and advocates for a more inclusive and globally relevant discipline. Only through such epistemic rebalancing can IR move beyond its historical biases and foster a truly comprehensive understanding of international relations.

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## Popular Lectures

### **Traditional Indian Mathematics and Astronomy**

Dr. M S Sriram

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#### Abstract

In this lecture, we present an overview of the development of mathematics and astronomy in India.

It is well known that the decimal place value system and the concept of zero have their origins in India. Thanks to these concepts, arithmetic was formulated well in India, and Indians were very good in arithmetic, able to handle operations involving large numbers, with some ease (unlike Greeks, for instance). Algebra had its roots in India. Indians had their own way of doing geometry, beginning with the śulba sutras ( 8 th century BC onwards), and trigonometry. In fact, the modern trigonometry is the Indian version of it. Later the calculus concepts developed, including basic ideas of derivatives, and infinite series for  $\pi$ , and sine and cosine functions.

There are astronomical concepts in the Vedic literature regarding the Sun, Moon, Stars and the Earth. The Vedānga Jyotiṣa of Lagadha (around 1200 BC) is a short text in the sutra format. Here, we have a systematic calendar relating the days, months and the year, and rules related to the motions of the Sun, and the Moon. In the siddhānta texts, beginning with Āryabhaṭīya of Āryabhata (499 CE), we have full-fledged scientific astronomy in India, with the use of trigonometry. Brāhmasphuṭasiddhānta of Brahmagupta (7th century), Siddhāntaśiromaṇi of Bhāskara-II (12th century), Tantrasaṅgraha of Nīlakaṇṭha Somayājī (1500 CE) are only some examples of later siddhanta texts, where there was advancement, and significant new ideas were added. In Tantrasaṅgraha, we have a quasi-heliocentric model for planetary motion, with the planets orbiting around the Sun, which itself orbits around the Earth.

Developments in mathematics and astronomy went hand in hand, mostly. Most of the ācāryas in this tradition were astronomer-mathematicians. It is also significant that there are many works in mathematics/ astronomy in regional, spoken languages of India ( mostly after 16 th century).

## Artificial Intelligence – an Introduction

Dr. M Sasikumar

Executive Director, C-DAC Mumbai

### Abstract

Artificial intelligence, AI for short, is the most heard buzzword these days, in all corridors of life. But many have a very skewed view of the field.

In this talk, we will take a walk down the memory lane of AI from the origin of the term to the current times. The discussion will be mostly non-technical, sketching the challenges of building intelligence – often attributed to just humans – into a pure machine, that is, a computer.

We will look at how the massive growth in computing power, and memory space over the intervening 5-6 decades have helped the resurgence of the current version of AI. However, in the excitement, we often forget to evaluate the field critically and identify the negatives – we will take a look at problems of bias, hallucinations, trust, and security in this context.

List of Contributors in Alphabetical order

*Note:Numbers indicate the Session in the Convention, as given at the end of the list.*

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### Session numbers

1. Knowledge in Society – the Foundation for an Equitable and Just Society.
2. Poverty and the Knowledge question – Role of Traditional/Indigenous Knowledge.
3. Kannada Knowledge Traditions. (Mostly in Kannada language.).

4. Imagining Swaraj in the 21st Century – some Knowledge issues.
5. Knowledge in Development Discourse and Peoples' Movements.
  
6. Artificial Intelligence and the Knowledge Question.
  
7. Art and the Knowledge Question.
8. [India as a voice from the Global South – the Knowledge Dimension.](#)

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