



SHARANAS TEACHING AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO MODERN TIMES

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ABSTRACT

Sri. Shivasharanas were a great mystic treasurer of Lord's love and a social reformers, they were visionary rationalist and a socialist they promoted the cause of the down-trodden they advocated equal rights for women in religious and social walks of life they promoted a new literary style in Kannada known as Vachanas which served as powerful medium to communicate their revolutionary ideas to common man.

Keywords: Vachanas.

They applied spiritualism to solve political and state problem. They struggled to eradicate untouchability and superstition from society. They tried to establish casteless and classless society based on spiritual values. The reforms brought about by them may be mainly classified as religious, social, economical and literary. Their preaching regarding the above may be explained briefly as follows.

1) Religious reforms:

a) The nature of God:

In 12th century the practise of worshipping many petty Gods and Goddesses was prevalent Basava and the Shivasharanas condemned his practise and advocated monotheism.

God is but one, Many his names,
The faithful wife knows but one lord
Should she fall for another man,

He chops her nose and ears:
Should I, O Kudalasangam Lord...
Regard them as sort that eat
The crumbs of several God's !

And

“Do not say Swollen with pride,
The gods are two or three;
Mark you, He is but one,
That there are two is just a lie
The Veda says, There is none,
But Kudala Sangama”

Thus, there is only one God. He is all pervading. He is absolute parabrahman. Absolute reality and he is parasiva. His another name is Sunya (Void) Sarva Shoonya (absolute void or Bayalu). The one form which everything is evolved and again merges in is shoonya it is infinity. It is Linga. The Shoonya conceals in it countless billions of Universe and all that could exist beyond that. It is embodiment of infinite energy. It is beyond space and time as conceived by Science. Linga represents boundless space and whatever exist beyond that, as aptly explained by Sir Basaveshwara¹.

b) Every human being is potentially divine:

The entire universe and all the beings in it are emanated from LINGA or PARASHIVA, man appearing in the end. The divine consciousness present in Shoonya – Parashiva or Linga, flows continuously in the process of creation and remains embedded in all the objects of the Universe. It is exhibited in greater degrees in human beings. A great thinker says; God sleeps in stone, walks in animal and takes in man.

The divine spark hidden in a disciple is extracted by a competent Guru by Hastha – Mashtaka – Samyoga (placing a plan of Guru on the disciple) and it is incorporated in Ishtalinga and it is given to him for worship at the time of initiation. Ishtalinga is considered as a symbol of parashiva and its worship is the worship of divinity hidden in man. The Ishtalinga is made of magnetic stones and in shape it resembles Linga installed in temples, Ishtalinga is coated with

semi-elliptical black and bright material called 'Kanthi' no mediation of priest is required for the worship of Istalinga. However, desciple is guided by Guru (teacher) and Jangama (moving temple of spirituality). Both Guru and Jangama are persons who have attained the spiritual perfection. Therefore Guru Linga and Jangama are considered as three aspects of divinity in Lingayatism.

Since Parabrahma Chaitanya, the spark of divinity is concealed in the inner self of every individual and worship of Ishtalinga is the worship of this divinity, there is no need to go to temple for worship Ishtalinga graced by Guru should only be worshipped and not Linga installed in the temple or any other deity as the body it self is a temple and there is God inside the body.

“Those who have money build
Temple to Siva, what can I build?
A poor man, Lord am I;
My body is Shrine
Its pillars are my legs
The golden pinnacle my heads
Hear me Kudalasangam Lord,
There is a destruction for what stands
But not for that which moves”²

Basava preached the path of Shatsthala for spiritual practise. Here, spiritual progress proceeds in size steps known as Bhakta sthela, Maheswarasthela, prasadi sthala pranalingi sthala, sharana sthala and been put in a nut shell in the following Vachana of Shivasharana Ganadasi Veeranna.

Action for Bhakta,
Firmness for Maheswara,
Dedication for prasadi
Yoga for Pranalingi
Utmost wonder for Sharana
Non-involvement for Aikya.
This is how Aikya position is attained
By Shasthala process.
One who attains this is hero,

Who is beyond Shambhu,
And beyond self Boon, The absolute
O, Matulanga Madhukeshwar³

Action in Bhakta Sthala means good actions full of faith and devotion towards God represented by Guru, Linga and Jangama. Guru initiated disciple for spiritual progress. Linga is the object of worship, the symbol of parashiva. The Jangama is moving God who guides the Sadaka in spiritual practise. The Bhakta should Shun all vices and lead a life of austerity.

Firmness in 'Maheshwara Sthala' means determined and firm in all his actions mentioned above. In prasadi-sthala he must completely surrender himself to God and accept good or bad whatever comes to him as God's grace and 'prasad'. In these three stages sence of dualism pre-dominates i.e., the devotee thinks himself separate from God.

In Pranalingi Sthala by Yogic practise. SADAACA realises divine inner light and inner energy hidden in him. This sthala is characterised by the sense monism. He begins to feel that he is himself parashiva.

In 'sharana sthala' he is wonder struck by realising infinite qualities of parashiva. He feels that he is inseparable from God. Shiva and Shakti are inseparable from each other so Sharana and Shiva. This Sthala is characterised by Sharana Sati-Linga-Pathi Bhava. He enjoys complete divine bliss. Here all his actions transform into Godly actions and all his speech become God's utterance.

In Aikya-sthala the individual soul meges into universal soul. This process is nown as Linganga Samarasya. Linga means God, Anga means soul Linganya-Samarasya means union of soul with God. Here he ceases to involve himself into wordly actions. He rather attains the state of void which is characterised by infinite potency, infinite knowledge and infinite consciousness.

In path of Shasthala emphasis is on purification of mind by living a life of austerity. The internal and external purities are royal roads to realise God. The meaning less rituals will not help to achieve spiritual perfection. Basava prescribes seven codes of conduct to achieve this:

Thou shall not steel nor kill,
Nor speak lie
Be angry with no one

Nor scorn other man,
Nor glory in thyself
Nor others hold to blame,
This is your inward purity,
This is your outward purity,
This is the way to win our Lord
Kudalasangama⁴

The most enlightened and highly respected, a realised soul, the saint Allama Prabhu considers that it is futile to go to the temple while the body itself is the temple in his own words we understood him better.

“When the body itself is the temple God?
Why ask for a temple else
When the breath itself has become the Linga
Why ask for a Linga else
It is not for lips to tell,
It is not for ears to hear
O Guhesvara, if you should turn
into a stone
What should I be?”⁵

Sharanas, astonishingly, understood the components of the body-structure and their functional inter relationship. Here is an example of the comprehensive knowledge exhibited by Allama Prabhu. He says about the five senses thus.

“Unless you know what the five senses are
you cannot know
The attributes of each particular one
Because the attribute
Although one image has assumed triple form
Mark you Candayya
If you worship with no thought

Of recompense, that is not alien to

Our Guhesvarlinga⁶

2) Social reforms:

a) Crusade against casteism, eradication of untouchability:

Sharanas social reforms are values emanated from their religious revolution mentioned earlier. They regarded all human beings as children of one and only one God or the products of one ultimate reality. No one is low or high born. These distinctions are man-made. One becomes great or small by virtue of one's own action and not by birth. Pariah is not a separate caste. Even if a person born in so-called high caste he is to be considered as madiga or lowborn. If so called low caste man who lives outside the village has attained spiritual perfection by living a life of austerity, he is none but high born. All those irrespective of caste and creed, who work for welfare of all living beings belongs to well born category He says:

The man who slays in pariah,

The man who eats carrion is low caste person.

Where is the caste here where ?

Our Kudala Sanga's Sharana

Who loves all living things

He is the well born one!⁷

Based on the above principle Lord Basaveshwara and Sharana tried to establish equality among all human beings by kindling divinity hidden in them. He regarded divinity as an equalising factor. He tried to eradicate untouchability by giving freedom of worship to low caste people. In those days and even now to certain extent, the untouchables were not allowed to enter the temples. He admitted them to Lingayat fold, gave them Istalinga, the symbol of Parashiva for worship without any mediation of priests and without entering the temples and preached them to live a life of austerity. In a way he used Istalinga as a symbol of social equality. Whenever wears Istalinga on the body is given equal status in the society as all the inequalities cease to exist after initiation.

They further, said that caste cannot be determined on the bases of profession. It depends upon once conduct and behaviour.

Unless the flow of blood appears,

There is no harbauroge,
Where in the embryo may dwell.
The function of the seed is even the same
Greed, lust, anger and joy,
All other passions are the same
Whatever you read or hear what fruit ?
What is a rule to judge the caste?
The embyo needs the seven elements
It is the same birth out of the same womb;
Same the alliance of self and soul;
What is then the usefullness of caste?
You are black-smith if you heat,
A washerman if you beat,
A weaver if you lay the warp,
A brahmin if you read the books;
Is anybody in the world
Delivered through the ear?
Therefore O, O Kudalasangama Lord,
The well-born is the man who knows
The nature of divinity !”⁸

Thus the caste is neither determined by birth nor by profession. It is the spiritual perfection that determines whether one is low born or high born.

Large number of untouchables and other from lower strata of society became followers and attained great spiritual heights. They gave them equal status in society. Haralayya, Urilinga Peddi, Dohara Kokkayya, Madivala Machayya and Ambigar Chowdayya are a few celebrated name which can be mentioned in this context. Inter-dining and inter-marriages among people of various castes who came into this new fold were encouraged. Basavashwara went to the extent of blessing a marriage between a son of Haralayya, untouchable by birth and cobbler by profession and a daughter of Madhuvarsa, Brahmin by birth and a minister in the court of Kinga Bijjala not heeding the voilent apposition by traditionalists special mentioned must be made of

Urilinga Peddi here. He was an untouchable by birth and thief in his earlier days. After getting initiated by his Guru Urilingadeva he attained such a spiritual height that he succeeded Urilinga Deva his Guru as the head of the Mutt. Such examples are very rare in history.

(b) Equal rights to women:

Sharanas kept the door of religion open for women. They declared that soul has no sex. The soul present in the male and female bodies are the same if a woman gets chance for spiritual attainment she could achieve the highest perfection in this field. The vedic Hinduism treated woman as Sudra and deprived her of spiritual enlightenment. Even in Buddhism and Jainism there was no free access to woman for this. Sri Basaveshwara and other Sharanas emphatically declared that woman too is eligible for deliverance. She should also be given equal status in society in all respects. The scientific and rational stand taken by them is explained in the following Vachana and Jadara Dasimayya a great sharana.

“One with long hair and breast is called woman,
One with beard and moustaches is called man,
But the soul moving in between is,
Neither female nor male
O Lord Ramanath”

They discarded the vedic idea of considering woman as Maya. According to them man’s own desire and not woman is maya. Mahadeviyakka says that if woman is maya for man, man is also maya for woman. They up-held the dignity of woman by identifying her as divinity incarnate.

Inspired by these ideas of Basava and other Sharana many women created history by achieving a great height in spiritual, social and religious fields. Many women even excelled their husbands in spiritual attainments and went to the extent of guiding and correcting them in this field. Few examples may be cited here:

Sri. Basaveshwara at the time of seeking communion with Lord Kudalasangama sends a word to his wife Neelambike to come and join him. Neelambike who was at Kalyan sends back message that Lord Kudala – Sangama is omini present. He is also at Kalyan and she wonders how all knowing Basava missed this point. On one occasion Moligeya Marayya tells his wife Mahadevi that he is going to seek a communion with God. She corrects her husband by telling

him that in Pilgrims progress when one attains highest spiritual state one becomes a Linga himself or Parashiva and therefore seeking communion with God is not a separate process.

Akka Mahadevi, a teen-ager, was a real gem in the spiritual field. Her spiritual dialogues in Anubhava Mantap with Kolahala and spiritual gaint Allama Prabhu are second to none in the entire history of the world. Channa Basaveshwara ranks her vachanas as top-most in spiritual content amongst all Sharanas.

Thus Sharanas tried to establish egalitarian society based on spiritual values giving equal status to all irrespective of caste, colour, creed and sex. The vachanas reflect the experience of going beyond the physiological considerations such as one's sex. Being a male or female is not just an anatomical fact. It is a state of mind which goes along with the levels of achievements and maturity of the devotee. The following vachanas of Shidharama and Akka Mahadevi amply depict this

Before I came, I was a man;
arrived, I became a woman
hereafter, I became a eunuch
when I must unite with our eminent Lord
'Kapila Sidha Mallikarjun'
look, mother who gave birth to me:
I am a man again.
if woman feels that she is female man became taboo
if man feels that he is male woman becomes taboo
if the taboo in the mind vaporizes
is there room for the taboo of the god, Father?
The whole world is frenzied by the endless taboo
For my God the Great Chennamallikarjun
The whole world is woman.

In short the contempt and fear which determined the attitude of the Dharma Shastras towards woman is nearly absent in the vachanas. On the contrary veershaiva movement upheld the dignity of women. Female body no more a curse or hindrance to achieve spiritual heights. The conviction of the movement that man and woman are essentially equal formed the base for

other gender related changes. The newly emerging sense of equality brought in self awareness and confidence in women. The following vachana of Siddharama will summarise the attitude of the Veerashaiva Movement towards women⁹:

“A women is not just a female,
a woman is not a demon either
but a woman is really the eminent
Lord Kapilasidha Mallikarjun”

c) The war against superstition

Superstition and blind beliefs are deep rooted in our society since time immemorial. It is customary to go for an auspicious day, date of star (Nakshtra) for initiating any work especially for performing religious or social ceremonies Basava apposes this:

Don't say that day, this day, another day !
To one who bows to Shiva, to-day
Must ever be the day;
To one who bows to Hara
Today is ever be the day!
To one remembering ceaselessly
Our Kudala-Sangama, today
Must ever be the day !

There are no good or bad days, good or bad stars, good or bad dates (Thitis), auspicious or unauspicious time (Muhurtha) in the eyes of God. Every function of time is auspicious in the Lord's creation. The true devotee who remembers God always is under his grace and protection. They take every thing as God's Prasad (grace) and perform their duties in his name Basava tried to root out superstition on these lines from Indian society. He also apposed astrological considerations and performing marriages based on horoscopic calculations. But the reactionary forces were so powerful that it was very difficult to achieve complete success. Even the most scientifically advanced society of today is not able to digest these ideas as it is not free from the influence of this nuisance. He pooh poohed the idea of existence of heaven and hell. He regarded them as only a myth. They are nothing but creation of human mind.

Sharanas viewed worldly life and spiritual life as two sides of the same coin. They did not advocate the renunciation of worldly life and to go to forest to obtain deliverance. They preached and to realise God while leading a mundane life. They considered good worldly life is well beginning for spiritual life.

“This mortal world is but the makers – Mint,
Those who earn merit here, earn also there
And those who earn not here, earn neither there
O, Kudala Sangama Lord!

and further, he clarifies:-

Bridling your senses, all you do.
Is starting maladies;
For the five senses come and stand,
And laugh at your face!
Did Siriyala and Changale
Give up their night of love
As wedded man and wife?
Did Sindhubalkla give up
His amorous pleasures and alliance?
Before thee I avow!
Should I but covet another’s wealth and wife
Let me be banished from Thy feet
O Kudala Sangama Lord!¹⁰

He strictly warns against a desire for other’s wife and other’s wealth. Basava and other Sharanas have repeatedly advocated this in several of their vachanas, most of Sharanas, except Allama Prabhu, Channabasava, Siddharama and Akkha Mahadevi, who were bachelors pursued spiritual practise as married men and women since God is very much pleased with joint devoted life of wife and husband.

3) Economic revolution – the concept of Kayaka and Dasoha

To earn once livelihood one will have to adopt some profession or the other. Work done for earning one's livelihood is a profession whereas if it is done with dedication, honesty and sincerity as worship of God, it transforms into Kayaka. Sharanas preached and practised this principle and they made others to follow this. The money earned by Kayaka does not entirely belong to a particular individual. Part of it should be spent for "Jangama Dasoha" Jangama means the holy man with spiritual perfection. In broader sense it means all that moves and particularly the society. Dasoha means offering. In short after meeting once daily needs, the rest should be spent for feeding holy men and society. This concept of Kayaka and Dasoha involves well knit system of both production and distribution avoiding amassing of wealth by individuals. It is socialism which is spiritual oriented. It is straight path leading to material and spiritual progress of an individuals and society. Kayaka Dasoha was given a priority over the worship of Guru, Linga and Jangama. Ayadakki marayya who was an ardent follower of Kayaka – Dasoha principle and who was model for others in this respect declares.

“If one is busy with Kayaka one can
Even forgo seeing his Guru, he can forgo
The worship of Linga and he need not
Care for Jangama
Since Kayaka itself is worship
Even Amareshwar Linga is
Indebted to Kayaka”

That means Kayaka itself is worship of God. Kayaka itself is heaven or 'Kayakave-Kailas' In fact it is the fourth aspect of divinity in Lingayat religion, other three being Guru, Linga and Jangama.

The money earned by Satya Sudha Kayaka (work done with honesty and dedication) is one eligible for Jangama Dasoha i.e., Linga worship as Jangama is considered to be the mouth of Linga. Money earned by foul means is not acceptable to serve. Linga and Jangama. It is sinner's money and it is fit only to be used for expiating his sins. Today there are people who offer diamond ornaments to their deities out of money earned by black marketing and smuggling. They do not know that such offerings are not acceptable to their deities. Even Jungle leaves earned by hard labour are acceptable to God.

While doing Kayaka one should receive only appropriate remuneration or wages. To receive undue remuneration and amass wealth with greed is a sin. Sri Basaveshwara in one of his Vachana says’.

If I should say,
I want this day, another day,
A Single particle of Gold,
A single thread of cloth,
Let thy curse and pioneers, curse
Be upon me!
But for Thy Sharanas
There is nothing that I know
O, Kudala Sangama Lord,

Thus he apposes hoarding.

Once Aydakki Marayya comitt a mistake by chance in this respect is Kayaka was to pick up scattered rice grains. One day he brings in more rice than needed for that day. His wife Aydakki Lakkamma immediately corrects him by telling him that the greed is for kings and not for SHIVABHAKTAS (devotees) and sends back the extra rice brought. Thus she makes us understand true meaning of Kayaka-Dasoha principle. She excels her husband in correct understanding and practise of this principle.

The Jangama (holy man or a society) is a living Linga or living God. It is hypocritical to offer food to Linga which does not eat and refuse it to Jangama who could eat. Basava pooh poohs this practise.

“Seeing a snake of stone they say
Pour milk, do”
Seeing real snake, they say
‘Kill it’.
If Jangama who can eat arrives
They say: ‘Away’:
And serve their dainities to a Linga
That cannot eat:

If you make little of
Our Kudala Sanga's Sharanas
You will be as a clod
Knocking against a stone"¹¹.

Therefore, in Kayaka Dasoha principle feeding Jangama is itself worship.

Sharanas upheld the dignity of labour and removed a sense of discrimination among Kayakas (professions) as high or low. The Kayaka of cobbler Haralayya and Basava's Kayaka as prime minister are equally dignified. Cobbler, tanner, herdsman, tailor, dancer, treasurer, washerman boatman and Prime Minister were given equal status in society. The problem of unemployment was solved, as it was made compulsory to do Jangama Dasoha by earning money by honest and sincere work (kayaka). No one was allowed to avoid it. This led to the establishment of egalitarian society based on spiritual values which Karl Marx achieved by violent revolution by distributing the wealth from rich to poor. Of course it was a materialistic approach, therefore, it is losing its hold in many countries.

It is needless to say that the economic revolution brought out by Kayaka-Dasoha is worth emulating by all Nations of the world.

The Sharanas are conscious of the value of their work. They have to work for meeting needs and to offer the earning to others who are in need. But they are against getting more than what they work for. That is to say, the remuneration should not exceed the value of the labour, if one gets more than one deserves for one's own labour it amounts to thieving. They argue in favour of maintaining harmony between the labour they do and the wages they receive. In other words the remuneration and the labour must commensurate with each other. We can look into the utterances of Vachanas in this connection.

Aydakki Marayya says thus
"If doing work a farthing's worth,
You say they owe you a money bag,
Is that the right idea of work?
To ask the bhaktas less for your work
Than it is worth – that is work done

With a pure mind
for Amaresvaralinga

Nuliya Candayya explains in detail how and why there should be harmony between the work and the wages got for it in these words.

“One’s mind must not be ruffled
Whatever income comes.
From disinterested work
There must be harmony
Between the wages you have asked
And your habitual wages.
If you grasp money, coveting
Gold in you greed
Waving the wages of your vow, why Sir,
The service you have done will come to naught
Do you walk into the nose
Of the greed you have put on
That I should get
The grace of Jangama, the very life
To Candesvaralinga¹²

Literary Scene:

Sri Basaveshwara and other Sharanas were to educate the mass about their new revolutionary ideas particularly the people belonging to lower sections of the Society. They were illiterate and were forbidden to learn and hear anything from ancient scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and other texts, which were in Sanskrit. Therefore, Basava and Sharanas rightly chose people’s language Kannada to communicate their ideas. He and his colleagues expressed their ideas in the form of unique prosepoetry style known as Vachanas (sayings). Vachanas contain age long wisdom examined and tested in the light of their own spiritual and practical experience in every day life. Approach to all problems was based on realism, rationalism and scientific out-look. Vachanas solutions to intricate problems in all walks of life.

They rank very high from the point of view of their literary content and it is a unique contribution to the literature of world. Nowhere and in no language such a literature exists. With the creation of Vachana literature new 'free age' began in Kannada literature. Hereafter literature become reflection of common man's life in its true sense.

Anubhava Mantapa established by Sri Basaveshwara at Kalyan was a centre of all the activities of Sharanas. The different problems of life, social religious, spiritual, traditional and philosophical were discussed here. Shiva-Sharanas, who came to Kalyan from the different parts of the country, attracted by the magnetic personality of Sri Basaveshwara, used to take part in these discussions the considered ideas generated out of these discussions were expressed in the form of Vachanas, this led to the creation of vast Vachana literature in Kannada.

To put it in the words of Late Prof. S.S. Basavanal, a celebrated scholar in this field 'when God's language Sanskrit failed to become a common man's language, Basava raised Kannada, a common man's language, to the status of God's language'. Thus the prestige of Kannada language was enhanced due to the creation of Vachana Literature.

The Vachanas of more than 330 Shiva-Sharanas are available. Majority of Vachanakars (Vachana writers) came from lower strata of the Society. It can be seen that they were illiterate when they were admitted to the new cult. Later they became literate, attained a great spiritual height and were able to write valuable vachanas of high literary and spiritual content, as a result of revolution brought out by Basava. Amongst 330 Vachanakaras more than 30 Vachanakaras are women and again majority of them are from lower sections of the society. In no country and in no language we find such literary luminaries in the entire world.

Vachana writing has become a literary style in Kannada throughout the countries since the 12th century which was then pioneered by Basava and other Shivasharanas. Even to-day Vachanas are written covering subjects pertaining to present day problems. This due to the great and everlasting impact of Vachanas of Shivasharanas on the modern Kannada literature.

5) Moral values:

The religion and society should be based on sound structure of moral values. Degeneration in moral values will result in the collapse of social structure. Sharanas advocate that the moral values are necessary for the construction of ideal society. Some of them have already been explained earlier and a few more can be listed here:

Anger breeds anger. It harms you first before harming a man on whom you are angry.
Therefore root out anger,

“Why Sir, be angry with those
Who are angry with you?
What does it mean to you
Or what their loss ?
To show one’s anger means
Loss of dignity
To feel it, loss of sense !
The conflagration in your home
Unless it burns your house
Does not burn your neighbour’s house,
O, Kudlasangama Lord?”

God will not be pleased with you if you do not act as you speak as it amounts to self –
deception. Oneness in speech and action will lead to purity of heart and mind.

“Alert in word, if you pay false in deed,
The Linga that you hold.
Is like a monstrous snake!
You cannot talk or act
But God is your ordeal, good Sir!
Mark you, Kudlasangama Lord,
One cannot get anywhere,
Even as a poor man’s range
That ruins his own jaws!

Before finding fault with others one should correct his body and mind. If every one
adopts this principle, the whole world stands corrected and reformed without any so-called
reformers.

“Why should you try to mend.

The failings of the world?
Assuage your bodies first,
Each one of you!
Assuage yours minds, each one!
Lord Kudala-Sangama
Does not approve
Those who bemoan
The neighbour's grief.

The moral values practised by Sharanas were relevant for all times. They need to be implemented even today by every one in every corner of the world and in all walks of life.

To sum up it may be said that Sharanas tried to establish casteless, and classless society based on spiritual values and realistic grounds. The religious, social, economical and literary revolution that took place under their guidance is unparalleled in the history of the World. The implementation of these principles is very much needed to-day than ever, so that entire human race could get solace from innumerable sufferings that it is going through.

Conclusion:

It is not quite correct to say so, because Sharana's movement did succeeded in bringing about a qualitative transformation in the minds of individuals as also in certain sections of society and enabled them to lead a meaningful life. Even today Sharana's teachings are followed to a greater extent or may be lesser extent, by large number of people in different parts of the world. It is evident from the growing significance of Vachana literature in the present day world.

Sharanas, are great mystics and its saints, were also men of action. The greatness of Sharanas lies in the fact that they practiced what they preached. By their teachings and by their examples, they brought about a revolution in society, which had a great impact on the life of millions of people. In the present days of communal tensions, the Sharana's teaching possess almost definite significance and value.

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