

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation

THE VISUAL CULTURE OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA.



ASSERTION OF KANNADA VISUAL IDENTITY IN CONTEXT OF Globalization

Vernacular Visual Representations in Local Bengaluru versus Global Cosmopolitan Bangalore, The Silicon Valley of India. Overarching the Concept and the peripherals of Iconography and Representation of Sri Thayee Bhuvaneshwari The mother of Kannada & The Kannada flag.

> Ph D Thesis: Unni Krishnan K Registration no: 454 dated 29-12-2008

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy In History of Art and Aesthetics

BY **Unni Krishnan K** Registration no: 454 dated 29-12-2008



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY OF ART & AESTHETICS, FACULTY OF FINE ARTS MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

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GUIDING SUPERVISOR

INVESTIGATOR

Prof. Deepak Kannal

Unni Krishnan K

DR. S. K. KUSHWAHA DEAN / H.O.D Department of Art History & Aesthetics Faculty of Fine Arts, M. S. University, Baroda

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CERTIFICATE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE PH.D. THESIS TITLED

THE VISUAL CULTURE OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA ASSERTION OF KANNADA VISUAL IDENTITY IN CONTEXT OF GLOBALISATION

FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN **HISTORY OF ART AND AESTHETICS INCORPORATES** The results of independent investigations carried out by the candidate himself. All sources used by him have other wise been acknowledged in the ENDNOTES.

GUIDING SUPERVISOR

INVESTIGATOR

Prof. Deepak Kannal

Unni Krishnan K

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LITERATURE REVIEW:

THE EXISTING WORKS ON VISUAL CULTURE AND KANNADA IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATIONS.

Visual cultural studies is arguably one of the most potential area of research in the post-modern times among several contemporary thinkers. In this visual cultural space, especially focusing on the visuals of South Asia, India has been the most interesting subject for many European and American thinkers. These interests have been researched more or less in the light and context of the western theories and have been considered as the most efficient work in the visual cultural context. The subjects range from the socio-cultural politics through the medium of visuals to the representations of the visuals in the nation and the influence of Bollywood to the goddess of the nation. These works have however served as a tool in structuring my body of research, but in the context of the subject that I investigate, these works have correlativity and a parallel coexistence directly and indirectly to all the above areas of research works in the general outlook.

Specifically my area of research based on the visual cultural study has its focus on visuals of south India's Silicon Valley in parallels of comparison with the national movement. The national and sub-national are in this case of coexisting, mutually inspired within the local, sub-national and national space. The works that I have referred to and used as supportive tool are from the contributions of W.J.T. Mitchell, Christopher Piney, Sumathi Ramaswamy, Kajari Jain, Richard Davis, Ajay Sinha, Catherine B. Asher, Sandria B. Freitag, Janaki Nair and other thinkers. All of their works have focused deeply on the subjects such as goddess and the nation: mapping Mother India, gods in the bazaar: the economies of Indian calendar art, photo of the gods: the printed image and political struggle in India. Study of these works would analyze that they have presided over the national and overall visual issues on the whole, focusing either on research of making of national identity and iconography or showing how

printed images have been pivotal to the construction of new forms of religious identity and the struggle for political independence in India.

Rooting my research theory and argument on the grounds of the visual culture of contemporary India, I have up to an extent referred to and quoted theories of Rabindranath Tagore's nationalism, Aluru Venkata Rao's ideals on nationalism, Partha Mitter's Interpretation On Indian Art, Walter Benjamin's Essays In Illuminations, The Culture Industry by Theodor W. Adorno, Saussurian studies on sign and symbols, among others. Keeping in mind that the argument must have an independent stand point and new perception and contribute to the research as the ultimate crux of the purpose of this study, I have consciously chosen this untouched subject of Kannada visual culture: mother goddess Bhuvaneshwari, her flag and the making of iconography in the context of globalizing Bangalore. With this as a fresh ground of research, I have established my arguments rooted in a rational standpoint, making a strong attempt to develop a new methodology on this process of justifying the argument. Asserting on the local identity in the context of the global, I have presented a new perception of thinking on how subjects in the due course of enunciation and deliverance lead to a state of "in between"; over how the elite thinking versus popular acts plays a role in the public sphere. This study is not just on the over-layering facts and finding of contemporary Kannada visual culture, but about tracing the historical origin and its way through, up to the present time.

This research has adopted the theories of Rabindranath Tagore's nationalism and his ideas on the concept of "Mother" and "Nation" in contrast to the theories of Aluru Venkata Rao's version of nationalism and motherhood; in the making of mother goddess, *Bharat Matha*, from Sumathi Ramaswamy's *The Goddess And The Nation: Mapping Mother India*, especially the comparative parallels with my research on the Kannada mother goddess. Though the research of Sumathi focuses on the life and the course of Bharat Matha, it has not focused on any state-based (local) mother goddess

and flag or on any local identity or iconographies of visual culture. The research work of Christopher Pinney's *Photos of God in India* has a magnificent exposure and arguments on visual culture and Indian photography and images, and has been a very strong ground for visual cultural studies for many contemporary researchers of this area. His work has shed light over a large segment of ignored area of visual culture especially on popular phase, and has drawn inspirations from visuals all around India, not focusing on a geography-specific study or on any state-based representative identities. Kajari Jain's *Gods In The Bazaar* has been another point of reference for my research in the stylization and art forms of calendar art and the analysis on the Sivakasi calendar style has been in parallel compared. *Picturing the Nation, Iconographies of Modern India,* edited by Richard Davis, also has been a supportive material in discussion with the context of the public visual, with examples of *Rath yathra* in close comparison to the other forms of *Rath yathra* or processions of the Kannada mother goddess in this research.

Specifically **Sumathi Ramaswamy's** "body politics" focuses primarily on the preindependence representations, where she contrasts the different ways of "mapping" India as a national entity that developed within the colonial period, the scientific map and the *somatic* form of Bharat Matha, "Mother India". And her study further presents all that was involved when national space was mapped in the context of the devoted form of a female body by the nation. Her research in the work *The Goddess And The Nation, Mapping Mother India* has tremendously focused and elaborated on the issues that rise in a nation on the making of an iconography, especially on the sentimental religion-influenced images such as Bharat Matha. This pictorial historic work on Mother India seeks to explain "why a nation striving to be secular, diverse, and modern would also resort to the time worn figure of a Hindu goddess in its yearning for form" and "what is at stake in drawing such a tendentious female form to picture a sovereign national territory that has also sought to project itself as a culturally and religiously plural body politics?" Her study debates on how Mother India became the crux of many of the developing nation's disagreements on challenging issues such as authenticity and imitation, tradition and modernity, religion and science, secularism and pluralism and their unresolved debates on their nuances in the quest for nationality from a perception derived from the history and analysis of the visuals. Understanding issues such as "how do such struggles leave their traces on this embattled embodiment of the nation? Not least, against the ingrained anti-visualism of the social sciences". She asserts that visuals too contribute in constitutive worldmaking rather than world-mirroring. She then theorises that her work understands the nation through visuals in pictorial ways, visually knowing, analyzing, identifying the nation, and how the visuals of nation become the cause ultimately to die for it.

She is tracing the spark and root cause on how a new, unusual, form as mother goddess for a nation is evolved and in the process involves complicated entanglement in the nation's struggle for freedom and develops as a strong, definite force which acts as a reason for the citizen to fight and die for the cost of freedom in the name and form of the mother goddess. The mother goddess visualized in various mediums in painting, print, poster and in pictures are analysed. In the political ambience of the pre-Independence and post-Independence period of India the visuals portrayed in this research of Bharat Matha has been studied, also focusing on the peripheral issues entangled with the nation's character and the perception, the reaction and reflections of how a visual in a patriotic context involves and adds value to the political and social sphere, and how the very same visual of the goddess becomes the reason for life and death of her nation.

The geo-body and the anthropomorphic form of Mother India, are picturised in the form of the map on the background as Sumathi says that Mother India is a cartographed map of India anthropomorphized. The goddess and the nation thus demonstrate "the entanglement of the secular science of modern cartography and geography in this dangerous liaison, and it charts the *salience* of visual productions in the reproduction of (the) nation's territory as a deeply gendered, divinized and affect-

laden place". The 'cartographed mother goddess', 'geo-body' and 'anthropomorphized map' — the words of Sumathi in her work have delivered a new perception on the importance of the visual and history seen through the visual, and thus redefined the phenomenon of 'Bharat Matha'.

Christopher Pinney's important characterization is of the aesthetics of "embodied corpothetics", "the beholder is a worshipper, drinking the eyes of the deity that gazes directly back at him". Here in my research, I am referring to *Christopher Pinney's* works titled *Photos of Gods, The Printed Image And Political Struggle In India, Body And The Bomb: Technologies Of Modernity In Colonial India, Camera Indica: The Social Life Of Indian Photographs And The Coming of The Photography In India.* Pinney says "the mishaps that can result from such a 'physiognomic' reading of artistic documents are clear enough. The historian reads into them what he has already by other means, or what he believes he knows, and wants to 'demonstrate'." The critical appreciation and theorisation of visual culture in the context of south Asia, specifically India, has been a supportive reference in this research.

Christopher Pinney says "alongside the question of images' powers, we should consider their 'need': the technology of mass-picture production documented here was grounded in a cultural field that routinized these needs. Addressing the 'wants' of pictures is a strategy advanced by WJT Mitchell as a part of an attempt to 'refine and complicate our estimate of their power'." Mitchell advocates that we invite pictures to speak to us, and in so doing discover that they present "not just a surface, but a *face* that faces the beholder." The theoretical discussion and supportive derived theory from other thinkers is what has presented better understanding of the visual cultural study from his works. On his work *The Body And The Bomb*, Richard H. Davis says: "he looks at visual disguise and dissimulation within the anti-colonial movement as strategies used to sabotage the distinctions upon which the British based their colonial control. He also traces an iconography of swords and bombs, visual representations of a violent and revolutionary opposition within the independence movement, embodied

particularly in the figure and lithographs of Bhagat Singh, the Indian Bomber who wears the British trilby hat."

Explaining the visual cultural interactions and the process of how the public perceive it, Pinney differentiates the commercial visuals in the discussions with the structures of western theory and as the theoretical tool and he uses WJT Mitchel's perceptions and Partha Mitter's theories as the constructive base for this study. The most emphasised thinking that we observe in the works of Pinney is the question he throws: "Can one have a history of images that treats pictures as more than simply a reflection of something more important elsewhere? Is it possible to envisage history as in apart determined by struggle occurring at the level of the visual?" and answers asserting the fact that his works speak of the history discovered from the visuals that are presented as evidence to explain. The visuals presented in his works, specifically in the *Photos Of The Gods* have been of potential support to my thesis; for instance the chromolithography of Ravi Verma and the Bharat Matha visuals, has supported me in the comparative analysis and in the differentiation of local, national and global perceptions. The subjective analysis of the Indian visuals by Pinney has therefore been of vital visual cultural study.

Partha Mitter

Partha Mitter in his *much maligned monster: A History Of European Reaction To Indian Art*, says: "the reception of Indian art in Europe presents a curious paradox. On the one hand, it still remains a misunderstood tradition in the modern west, whose aesthetic qualities are yet to be properly appreciated. On the other hand, possibly no other non-European artistic tradition has been responsible for so much discussion among intellectuals from the very end of the Middle Ages. It therefore offers a striking case study of the cultural reactions of a particular society to an alien one. And no cultural and aesthetic values be better studied, even antithetical, cultural and aesthetic values be better studied that in the European interpretations of Hindu sculpture, painting, and architecture." These striking assertions on the misunderstanding of the visuals of PAGE 13 OF 413 India and their establishment on the basis of the Indian theory with the comparative sense of how the west theory perceived in the light of applicable factors has been motivational for my research methodology.

The close comparative study of the western and the Indian, and the complexities of art criticism in the context of Indian art, stands as the structural methodology for any Indian visual medium today. The analysis over Havell and Coomaraswamy questioning the laying of the foundation on which the present art-historical scholarship concerning Indian art rests with a critical question "Were they were able to bring us any closer to a real appreciation of Indian art?" These questions that influenced many art critics on Indian art had been seeking answers.

Another work of Partha Mitter that inspired the development of my research methodology was from *The Triumph Of Modernism: India's Artist And The Avant-Garde, 1922-1947*. Partha Mitter says: "In the 1920s, during a further paradigm shift, the radical formalist language of modernism offered Indian artists such as Rabindranath Tagore and Jamini Roy a new weapon of anti-colonial resistance. In their intellectual battle with colonialism, they readily found allies among the western avant-garde critics of urban industrial capitalism, leading them to engage for the first time with the global aesthetic issues." The structural foundation of modern art of India if stood on the lines of western avant-garde critics, the subsequent influence of art in India is therefore needless to explain that the influence of it in the later phase is inevitable.

On the lines of global and local Mitter says: "In this pioneering phase of Indian modernism, the interactions between the global and the local were played out in the urban space of colonial culture, hosted by the intelligentsia who acted as a surrogate for the nation. Western expansion gave rise to series of 'hybrid' cosmopolises around the globe....the two cosmopolitan cities in India, Bombay and Calcutta, which acted as the locus of colonial encounters, were beneficiaries as well as interlocutors of colonial culture." The similar effects over Bangalore as the uprising cosmopolitan being a victim

to the contemporary global expansions, trends of globalization encounters, were beneficiaries as well as interlocutors of the global culture, as a result in the huge override on the local cultural identities. These theories of Mitter have supported my arguments in various ways.

Kajri Jain

Kajri Jain's *Gods In The Bazaar: The Economies Of Indian Calendar Art*, has focused on the "calendar art" or "bazaar art", the colour-saturated mass-produced visuals used on calendars and in advertisements, featuring deities, religious gods and goddesses, nationalists, patriots, film stars, landscapes and cute images of babies. This study of engagement of the audience and the makers of such visuals is presented with its design sense of art and style. Jain also explains the process of how calendar art gained its influence from Raja Ravi Varma's chromolithograph from his picture press to the succeeding style artists such as S.M. Pandith and M.C. Jaganath and further to the production houses and makers of calendar art. The centre of such calendar art is Sivakasi, and its published prints available on the national scale and international scale, has been documented along with the facts and figures of this industry. The style and the trend of this calendar art depiction and its functional meaning with the pace of time and context are presented with the discussions.

Jain says: "Contrary, then, to the triumphal discourse of resistance to cultural imperialism, based on the oft-cited instances of MTV having to "Indianize" itself, or the proliferation of vernacular-language television channels, what is under way in the post-liberalization era is not so much a case of resistance by a pre-existing Indianness, but a concerted attempt to refashion the categories of 'Indian' and 'Western' — indeed of culture itself — to accommodate consumerism. Again, this process of selective

reformulation is reminiscent of the work of the vernacular culture industries in forging national and other identities in response to the colonial encounter: asserting cultural difference, but through the adoption of formal idioms and *epistemological* frames that undermine this assertion." The popular culture in the Indian context and in local context are the similar situation to the observation Jain draws on the Sivakasi of earlier times and the Sivakasi of now. The computerization of print technology has wiped out artistic sensibilities with more of editing and copy paste in Adobe software, with the present DTP (desktop publishing) mode as the ultimate source found in the context of Bangalore calendar printers. Jain's argument on the images signals some of the ways in which modernity exceeds its own-very powerful-stories about itself, a methodology with a forensic-juridical approach, by combining textual "reading" with attention to the contexts of production of images and their circulation, with the issues it raises for art history and art practice in the present and future.

Rabindranath Tagore

The book *Nationalism* quotes a speech by Rabindranath Tagore: "I am not against one nation in particular, but against the general idea of all nations. What is the nation? It is the aspect of a whole people as an organized power. The organization incessantly keeps up the insistence of the population on becoming strong and efficient. But this strenuous effort after strength and efficiency drains man's energy from his higher nature where he is self-sacrificing and creative. For, thereby man's power of sacrifice is diverted from his ultimate object, which is moral, to the maintenance of this organization, which is mechanical. Yet in this he feels all the satisfaction of moral exaltation and therefore becomes supremely dangerous to humanity..." Rabindranath Tagore has been a very critical yet sensitive thinker, artist and educationist of India, and his words have the weightage of the Indian intelligentsia globally acknowledged. His perception of nationalism has a very dichotomical sense of explanation. In one

extent he talks of the negative and positive of the British and in a similar note he lists the abilities and inabilities of Indian culture. Thus his point of view is quoted in this research as it adds to the context of the term 'nationalism' and its understanding. Similarly, his opinion on the concept of mother and the concept of mother worship as a deity of a nation is also discussed. Rabindranath Tagore and his poetic versions along with the analysis on them by other thinkers as well are also debated.

Aluru Venkata Rao: known as 'Kannada Kula Purohita', meaning the high priest of the Kannada clan.

Aluru says in his journal *Jaya Karnataka* "...Karnataka is not just land (nadu). Not just language. Not just art and architecture, not just History. Just as the individual person, a country (Desa) is said to have three levels of the body (*Deha*) the gross (*sthula*), the subtle (*sukshma*) and the spiritual (*karana*). Just as an individual attains salvation (*moksha*) through development of the triple bodies, so does a Desa (land/country) attain progress (*vikasa*) through these bodies. The gross or the external body of a Desa is made up of its political, social, educational and similar institutions, and its subtle body comprises its language, history, art and architecture, and culture. But its spirit or spiritual core is its religious life (*dharma*)." This journal was a tool to awaken the people of Karnataka, specifically the educated middle-class urbanites and also to bring together all the writers split across the fragments of geography.

He condems the Indian tendency to talk about cosmic welfare at the cost of nationalism. He asks the direct question, "what is a nation"? According to him, the immediate answer would be to identify it with a country, a language, a religion or a race (*vamsa*). Citing the case of Russia and England where the nation is multi-racial and multi-ethnic, he rejects the racial concept of nationalism. Citing the case of multi-lingual Canada and Switzerland, he rejects the linguistic identity of the nation of nationhood. He rejects the religious identity of the nation by showing how nations

were multi-religious collectivities. The reason why he undertakes this negative exercise is to expose the wrong notion about it prevalent in India, especially the wrong notion that India cannot be a nation because it is multi-racial, multi-lingual and multireligious. Then he answers this with a link to the ancient seers, the identity generated millennia ago, on the concept of *sanatana dharma* (eternal religious tradition) recognized by others as Indians (*bharathiyaru*) and condemns on the irony of our nonacceptance of this ancient concept.

Aluru's version of nationalism is contrary to that of Tagore's theory. Aluru's representation as the Kannada activist and reformer holds a very important position as he discusses the local issues while being a part of the experience, thus being practical and more relative to the context. His theories are of prime importance as the methodology of this research regards him as a structural personality in shaping the answers to questions such as: 'Who is a Kannadiga?' And 'What is Karnatakatva?' His role in Kannada unification and his literary contribution to Kannada are remarkable. Thus the essence of the concept that Aluru provides is sufficiently quoted for a clarity of discussion and in the argument of the context.

U. R. Ananthamurthy

Jnanpith awardee U.R. Ananthamurthy, is one of the most significant figures of Indian literature of the post-Independence era. His essays, novels, short stories, and prose have inspired and developed a sense of thinking in readers to further debate and counter-debate in setting new directions of thinking. In his essay *Tradition And Creativity*, he says: "Let us now come down to our times. Suddenly English also has become *marga* to us. And entire Kannada tradition has become *desi*... so that has been the most significant challenge to creativity in modern times. The whole *marga-desi* combination today — the tension between the two — is between the entire regional tradition and what you receive from the west. I would even extend it to our political

realm. In Karnataka all our poets have sung lines such as, 'Jai Bharatha jananiya tanujathe, jai he Karnataka mathe' that is: Jai he O Karnataka mother who is the tanujata of Bharatajanani. We have always had that kind of desire to be within India, but at the same time to retain our individuality. This is what I mean by the marga-desi dynamics." Ananthamurthy's doctrine and intelligence has always pointed to the critical issues of the local with and against global perceptions, with criticism and humour combined in an experienced explanation with a pinch of irony and paradox of the day today, as well as the historical heritage, culture and language.

His works have provided strong, supportive dimensions and inspiration for my research, in understanding the social, cultural and political criticism of local in an elevated context of criticism. His ideas and images, with concepts and real-life experience presented in a rare literary skill, have always been a scope and source of subjectivity and discussion, and are thus reflected in my research methodology in understanding the identity of the local.

Richard Davis

In the book *Picturing The nation: Iconographies Of Modern India*, edited by Richard Davis, eight essays are discussed: Sumathi Ramaswamy's *Body Politics*, Christopher Pinney's *The Body And The Bomb*, Ajay Sinha's *Against Allegory*, Sandria B. Freitag's *More Than Meets The (Hindu) Eye*, Catherine B. Asher's *From Rajadharma To Indian Nationalism*, Kajri Jain's *The Efficacious Images*, Christiane Brosius's *I Am A National Artist*, and Raminder Kaur's *Spectacles Of Nationalism In The Ganapati Utsav Of Maharashtra*. This collection edited by Richard Davis, as a whole speaks of the visual iconography that plays a fundamental role in the imagination of the nationhood. Arguing with the presented visual imagery he responds to the question of Anderson in imagined communities: how is it that so many persons have been persuaded to sacrifice and die willingly for something so recently imagined into being as the nation?

The articles of **Hari Kumar** a journalist of *The Deccan Herald* newspaper, responded to a very serious situation during the Gokak and post-Gokak agitation movement, questioning the integrity and identity of Kannada. Critically arguing on the sociopolitical circumstances, he published an exclusive additional magazine page as a answer to the questions of the Kannada intelligentsia.

Sugata Srinivasaraju, a journalist, writer has written several articles and books on the overarching issues of Kannada and Karnataka in the contemporary context. His arguments and supportive evidences have been quoted to justify the circumstancial need for Identity.

K.V. Narayana, a noted senior linguist of Kannada has penned various essays as questions to the post-modern lingual issues that Kannada faces. Issues such as the originality and Kannada identity in the language and its contribution are some of his major subjective debates.

S. V. Srinivas

S.V. Srinivas's work *Fans And Stars: Production, Reception And Circulation Of The Moving Image*, is one of the rare works on the subject of the fan culture and its peripherals. His focus on the fan culture, on how a viewer is to be judged, and how a film viewed by such viewers engaged in the process of fan culture, has been a supportive reference for my study. With a case study on Chiranjeevi the Telugu film star of Andhra Pradesh, he discusses and argues on the concept of "audience" and "fans".

Janaki Nair

The Promise Of The Metropolis: Bangalore's Twentieth Century by Janaki Nair, is a study based on Bangalore and its past and present understanding. The planning,

influence and the social structure of Bangalore are thematically presented in great detail. Bangalore's evolution: spatial, social, religious, economic, the colonial rule and its impact on town planning, architecture, local economy, consumption patterns and habits, post-Independence public sector impetus and finally its metamorphosis into the IT hub are delineated. With a question of 'where does the city begin?', in the early chapters Janaki explains Bangalore's four and a half centuries of existence. "The history of Bengaluru/ Bangalore is thus a tale of two cities, a western part or pete that dates back to at least five centuries and the eastern part that is no more than two centuries old", referred to as Bengaluru and Cantonment respectively,

She highlights the "irrelevance of the Singapore to the Bangalore case" by comparing the transport system of Bangalore with that of Singapore with its mass rapid transit, area traffic control and curbs on private vehicle ownership. For present Bangalore she says, "between the technocratic imaginations of planners, leaders of the new economy, and the bureaucrats, on the one hand and the social life of various groups , on the other, lies a very wide and contested range of meanings of urban space. This gulf may not be bridged by a revolution powered only by information technologies."

In Nair's words, "The metropolis, thus, enjoys only a partial existence, and remains a promise, refracted through many remembered cities and villages, and real and imagined political identities." Janaki Nair's study was rooted in the social space of Bangalore city, especially the infrastructure planning, economy and the cultural space. Her methodology, like that of other social scientists, was one of the references in understanding the complexities of the city called Bangalore.

THE ARGUMENT AND THE OVERARCHING RESEARCH QUESTIONING AND FINDINGS:

This research explores the history of a local identity through visuals with their engagement and reflection in the social, cultural and political spheres from a local, national and global perception. The identity chosen here is the iconography of Kannada Mother Goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari with her beloved mother Bharat Matha in a parallel contrast of nation, from the pre-modern times to the contemporary space of the cosmopolitan Bangalore, the Silicon Valley of India. The title 'Visual Culture Of Contemporary India: Assertion of Kannada Visual Identity In The Context of Globalization', investigates the vernacular visual representations in Local Bengaluru versus Global Cosmopolitan Bangalore, overarching the concept and the peripherals of iconography and representation of Sri Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, the Mother of Kannada and her Kannada flag, subjective to the contemporary Kannada popular visual culture, debating on the politics of the visual language and its representational symbols and iconography, the areas of representation, domains, public sphere, visual conflicts, identity chaos, multi-faceted versions and avatars.

Questioning the analysed problem in assertion of visual representations in Kannada visual identity, the argument is based on the contradictions, or rather the complexities, that exist in the representations of the Kannada visual culture, specifically the symbols of Bhuvaneshwari and the Kannada flag and the loss of its assertion in the public domain, the popular culture, and thereby asserting the value of the Kannada visual culture in the context of globalization. In the dispute between the Bangalore [global] and Bengaluru [local] the iconic representation results in the making of a popular phase of icons, thus arguing upon the assertion of the Kannada nation's identities in terms of its visual, popular, cultural making.

This research explores the rise of the concept of Mother Goddess of Karnataka Thayee Bhuvaneshwari from the early Kannada unification movement to the present state of representations. The evolution of these pictorial representations has a very varied PAGE 22 OF 413 form and function with the respective time and space of multi-faceted aspect of this concept. Today Bhuvaneshwari has a large, majestic and emotional value alongside the Bharat Matha existence, with her life establishing through the vernacular exhibits and nature. The public domain and the raw popular culture of these symbols are continually emerging and evolving within the political complexities of Kannada culture in Karnataka, specifically Bangalore, that co-exist, are very sensitive yet inter-related and of varied nature. The visual of the post-modern Kannada culture of Bangalore is a very potent element of its political life and sustenance. The debate or the argument, hence, arises about the semi-historical connection of the semiotic-symbolisms of the present Kannada culture, especially the element of evidences like the Kannada flag [chrome yellow and poster red], Kannada Mathe – the concept of Bhuvaneshwari and the Rajyotsava day celebrations, despite choosing the rich cultural heritage of Karnataka. Was the burst of such an urgent need of the status symbol the necessity of the circumstantial political uprise for monopoly due to the minority insecurity or patriarchy or genuine patriotic intentions?

With the present state of these symbols now appreciated and used in the most popular form of availability in the public domain, the concept seems to be constant, yet the functions seem to be more abstract in various circumstances. With the culturally correlative co-existing politics and complications with visual nature in excessive and unquantifiable, continuous and over produced resulting on saturated horizons in the public domain, these are no more mere image icon but more than any social potential weaponic synthesis

Apart from the conventional research questioning — such as why and how did the Kannada visual identity emerge? Why did the culture chose a mother, irrespective of the available well established mighty deities? How did these ideas develop into a cultural symbol and a state iconography that grew to a potential cause for lives to be offered, that subsequently lead to a reason for a state formation? What medium and influences did these transcend in forming a visual popular culture? — The investigation

discovers a new array of subjects to a much debatable spectrum of thinking. The research has not only asserted the identity of the local in the global circumstance, but also exposed the underlying unanswered questions such as: the masculinity issue, territorialism, "the officially unofficial flag" "bhuvaneshwari to the statue of liberty", caste and their icons, local versus global, elite versus the non elite, How was the growth of sub-nationalism in political terms visual in the growth of nationalism? And how did this sub-nationalism in turn add to the whole of nationalism? And in a larger picture, was this case similar to the other sub-nations of India? Has Kannada nationalism been a subset of Indian nationalism? Why were the visuals "beyond the rational"? How did the "flag" demonstrate and make a statement and the visuals address not only through the means of logic but mentally animate The research finally attempts to answer these in a debating discipline, which finally results in "redefining the local ethos over the national ethos, larger localization of nationality", "the art that constructed the visual appearance of Kannada mother".

The research also touches on the peripherals, asking: Did this local sub-nationhood on the parallel of nationality address its concerns through a non-national style of visual representation? Did nationality influence the sub-national visual trend in its style? What stylizations did the Kannada visual transcend to in making the visual culture the identity of contemporary Kannada? What factors of global influences did it have to survive? And how did these visuals get localized against the global images?



*The Design inspired from Popular Visual Culture of Kannada Auto-culture



CHAPTER I

PROLOGUE: INTRODUCTION

The overarching concern of this study is to evolve a theoretical framework and an analytical tool that help us understand how visuals are read and what viewers' interpretations situated in specific historical, socio-political cosmopolitan space and context, bring to bear upon their engagement with their visual culture. Considering the centrality of the representation in public as an audience for a study like this one, which focuses on the evolution and criticism of images and representation, the argument is how these images are to be conceived or judged upon which articulates in the public domain being the represented and its identity concerns. Given the variations among the public visual representations in various demographical structures of the floating population in Bengaluru, like class, caste and gender, and the currency of influential narratives that accentuate and essentialize these differences, can we speak purposefully of the icons portrayed as the representative symbolic icons? These problems are brought into sharper relief in this research investigation, with evidence and examples in the context of the particularities of the situation in Bengaluru.

The idea of nation and its structural notion begin from a well conceptualized creation of an authoritative hierarchical icon and its representation. So, do these representations, either visual or otherwise, need the cognitive content of identity to support the authenticity of that specific native nationhood? Are these visuals of representations the seed or the idea?

And if the seed represents the start, then what about the existence of the seed as a part of the process from its parental source further to the next growth? And these representative visuals, as a making of history treat visuals as their mere reflections or as the maker of the future history? That this study is not about the history of art but about history made by art, is what I have struggled to establish here, and the illustrative visuals here are not just the history of visuals, but the process which circumstantiated these pictures being the integral elements of history in its making.

In the parallels to the existence of an image and the purpose of its establishment for power of any kind, we need to explore the needs of the images too, keeping in mind the thoughts of WJT Mitchell's 'wants' of the images as strategy attempt to 'refine and complicate our estimate of their power', and that we invite images to speak to us, in the process revealing 'not just the surface, but a face facing the beholder'.

It was during the Independence and post-Independence period that this questioning arose about the need for the identity of the Kannada nation. This concern was the centralized issue which was much discussed and activated by the then literary and Kannada activists. The role of participators cannot be categorized in one segment as there were many concerns of local, regional and national scale participation in parallel. The much-disputed question of "which language is the most ancient" is not what is emphasized here, neither is the discussion here on the legacy of Kannada literature, which has an illustrious history. The central argument that I strike here is on the most lightly handled yet sensitive and vulnerable epicenter of the Kannadiga's heart and face of representation: the flag - Kannada Bavuta, and Kannada Thayee Sri Bhuvaneshwari — the Mother of Karnataka. The guestion is: why such a lack of clarity over the identity and representation? Or is it the over-concerned and overdone result which has influenced the symbols' existence and evolution over their identity in due course of time? These influencers belong to a large population amongst the various multiple castes and classes of Karnataka, but here I am restricting the scope to Bangalore and specifically to the representation of namma Bengaluru ('our Bangalore' in local parlance) only. One of the prime reasons is, Bengaluru being the capital and the stage for exhibition for all the grievances of its public portrayed with continual political displays, dramatics and cultural existence in the silicon valley of India being a cosmopolitan is where the issue of representation been such casually presented yet not declared nor bothered to constructively actualize on its existence.

Why is the focus on the study of this iconography — the Kannada Mother Goddess and Her flag — so important? These questions are well debated and illustrated with the conscious awareness of the research invested on these visuals. The identity of the Kannada Mother is not just an over blanketing of the nationality or just a need of the unification movement, but a well-conceptualized and influenced iconography ruling over and representing the concerns of the Kannada nation and its identity from the pre-modern time to the post-modern contemporary space of Kannada geography, and the identity as the goddess of the nation remains till date. This deep rooted socially structured theory and its ideology practically implied is discussed in detail in further chapters, explaining how this concept which initially emerged to fulfil an emergency need was later absorbed and further distributed, creating for the iconography, a local identity in the global grounds.

The representation of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari — Mother of Karnataka, was an urgent need during the post-Independence period. Poets, writers, thinkers and activists held several meetings and events stressing on the awareness for the need for a local

identity and to establish the icon of *Thayee* Bhuvaneshwari in the minds of the common public of Karnataka, following the tradition of the Indian Independence movement, and the visual representation of Mother India — Bharath Matha, which, incidentally, Rabindranath Tagore has linked to the idea of nationalism being borrowed from the English. That the birth of Bharath Matha and her evolutional depiction influenced and set the path for Bhuvaneshwari in Karnataka, with its own vernacular influences and multi-faceted interpretation, making her more of a popular representation, is the crux of my argument.

The Kannada Bavuta, the Karnataka flag, also has its evolution in parallel with the birth of *Thayee* Bhuvaneshwari, from the color symbolisms of the vernacular structure of usage, from the turmeric harishna and vermilion kumkuma extracted from the surrounding influence of the Kannada nation-making movement. The pictorial representation of Sri Bhuvaneshwari is evolved from the roots based on the hypothetical possibilities of three existing derivations: one being the *Hampi Bhuvaneshwari* source, the second from the Kadamba dynasty's traditional goddesses and finally from the Mysore Mumudi Wodeyar palace's Mysore style painting picturization linked to the descriptive source of Sritatvanidhi Lalitha Sahasranama and the Bhuvaneshwari temple of Mysore.

The Kannada nation-making movement was the most highlighted issue during the past few decades, which however, I would only be touching upon through the respective reasoning for the evolution of the identities, and not to comment on or question any Kannada literary or linguistic issues. The nuances of the flag and the goddess shall be of priority importance here in my argument relating to their visual approach only, not to their concept or existence. The state of my argument would be in the questing of, firstly the loss of assertion and the strength of the identity, specifying whether the identity depiction that is seen today in the public domain is true or close to the (original) concept of Sri Bhuvaneshwari, or if this is the final version of the concept of the representations. The question of whose concept and whose version would be elaborated in further chapters with its implications.

The unquantifiable availability of Sri Bhuvaneshwari's images and her continuous progressive evolution is one of the reasons for the popular cultural role of this icon. The image is potentially used as a material in multifaceted avatars of the goddess, leading to the cultural role and its chaotic nature in the public domain. For instance, the Bhuvaneshwari representations are used in various local communications, especially during the celebration of Kannada Rajyotsava (marking the formation of the

State of Karnataka), and in all protests or local voicing as adjectives, prefixes, flexibly as a assembled form, changed, and rearranged comfortably to any extent, altering the structurally firm, impregnable and inviolable quality of the representation. The politics and the nature of these interpretations in excessiveness seen in every street are unquantifiably continuous and over produced within the saturated horizons, with the reminder of loss of assertion of visual representations in the public domain. These cultural elements become common add-ons which correlatively coexist and contradict, resulting in visual politics and chaos with the cry of insecurity, and with the role of existence, pride and prejudice visibly noticeable.

I therefore propose to adopt the concept of hypothetical evolutions as well as some others which are already available. Using them as a starting point, I wish to examine how visuals in India are understood and created in fashioning symbolic representations in the public for a nation-making process. Simultaneously I would like to evolve a framework to engage with the politics of visuals making, including the cultural politics of viewing. My specific focus would be on Bangalore with a case study on the representations of Sri Bhuvaneshwari and the flag of Kannada in the context of contemporary India.

The representations of images circulate in different spheres, acquiring a range of meaning, and bearing a variety of burdens. They are visible in the other traditional media as well: Kannada language newspapers, television — both state-owned and private — besides magazines promote themselves by promoting these representations.

The pervasiveness of the medium in public space raises a question with which I wish to begin my study. What kind of visual sense does the public in Bangalore have? Reading visuals is only a small part of the interaction between visuals and their actual or potential audience. Does this audience have any rights to the contribution to existing identities? Or is it the representational bodies who decide how the representations shall be? Or is it that the audience just loves to be an audience enjoying the show, either being helpless or content with being the spectator? These questions are answered in the further chapters as I discuss and argue on the subject with its nuances.

The commercialization of cultural production in eighteen century Western Europe resulted in a shift away from the court aristocracy, which till the seventeenth century supported cultural production. Habermas notes: 'the shift ... produced not merely a change in the composition of the public but amounted to the very generation of

"public" as such. The public thus formed by cultural consumption made the public sphere a forum "to influence the decisions of the state authority", "to legitimate demands" and "an authority to which appeal could be made" in matters of "common interest". Consequently, coffee houses in England for instance, which began as for the discussion of literature, became the "seedbeds" of political unrest.' Habermas's investigation is historically specific as well as particular to the class and region of the eighteenth century bourgeoisie of Western Europe. These notes of Habermas on the public influence, as stated by SV Srinivas in his Fans and Stars apply here as well to the context of the popular image making from the streets of Gandhinagar to the rescent painted government walls of the BBMP. The public sphere and common interest converge in the common walls of the city.

The signifier and the signified are the components of the sign, itself formed by the associative link between the signifier and signified. Even with these two components, however, signs can exist only in opposition to other signs. That is, signs are created by their value relationships with other signs. The contrasts that form between signs of the same nature in a network of relationships contribute to how signs derive their meaning. As the translator of Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*, Roy Harris, puts it:

'The essential feature of Saussure's linguistic sign is that, being intrinsically arbitrary, it can be identified only by contrast with coexisting signs of the same nature, which together constitute a structured system.'

As far as the terms of usage here (in this whole research) are concerned, I wish to argue that the elite and non-elite categorization correspond with a (not the) qualitative representation and non-qualitative representation. Before I elaborate, I wish to point out that these categories are not given in any unproblematic way. They are relational categories, and one cannot exist without the awareness of the existence of the other. In 'current' usage they are defined in terms of each other, are value-loaded, and invoke behavioral traits which are also cultural traits of the caste/class groups that comprise each category. I would like to use class-audience and mass-audience as descriptive and conceptual categories referring to upper caste middle-class and lower caste/class audience respectively. Despite the difference between them, they are not binary opposites, although they tend to be perceived as such.

Besides this central theme, there is a further thread that I hope runs clearly throughout this book. This concerns the relationship between religious, cultural and political aspects, and its changing configuration. Recent writings on India have

described a new popular religious-nationalistic 'imagery' as a product of a specific time and specific technologies. Many analysts have, for instance, stressed the ways in which South Asians have used new technologies and new electronic media to circulate their vision of the political choices facing India.



The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation

CHAPTER- II

THE VISUAL LANGUAGE

Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. But there is also another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled. – *John Berger* in *Ways of Seeing*

Visual communication has been probably the most powerful medium of understanding, since time immemorial. So is it stated in the Bhagavad Gita: Idrival nayanam pramaindreeyam, meaning, amongst all the sense organs, the eyes are the most vital. Other ancient texts too express this thought. Today the world is embroiled in a chase for global lead and power hierarchy even in the world of words and visuals, and today, the amount of visual production in various media is probably the highest in volume ever. The visual is available to anyone and surmounts boundaries of geography, language, culture. For instance, the films of Rajinikanth seem to release worldwide before their release in India. In fact, specific target audiences like North America, UK and Japan seem to give his films a more excited reception than the Indian audience (outside Tamil Nadu) in spite of the vernacular culture depicted in them. His films have given a tough challenge to the heavily loaded budget blockbusters of Hollywood: his recent film Robot which was showing on some 2,100 screens worldwide was certainly one of the leading films of the world, beating Resident Evil: Afterlife, which grossed \$18 million on 6,000 screens worldwide, according to The-Numbers.com. In fact, Rajini's film totalled \$280 million in its fifth week. The film was made for \$50 million and raked in approximately \$300 million. The website robotthefilm.blogspot.com quotes a distributor in New York who asked not to be named as saying: "This is an awesome gross for any Indian film, particularly a Tamil film. But people forget a number of theatres doubled the admission price for many shows to \$25, some even charged \$40 which would be more than the IMAX admission price for Avatar." Sir Charles Spencer 'Charlie' Chaplin was extremely successful in establishing himself worldwide obviously for visual expressions, with very minimal oral communication. Similarly with Mr. Bean (Rowan Atkinson in a series of the same name). These facts not only stress on the impact of the visual medium but also on its

subjective expressions in specific genres. In similar contexts the visual portraits of Bob Marley and Che Guevara seem to be more noticed in the urban youth culture than any other well branded influential personalities like Obama or proclaimed youth icons like David Beckham or Sachin Tendulkar. Similarly, the *weed* leaf and the *peace* symbol designed for the British nuclear disarmament movement by Gerald Holtom is noticed not only in the First World countries but in selective towns of India too. Interestingly these visuals are not just trend setters or mass promotional exercises, but carry a potential message regarding the reason of their origin and at times even a political reminder. Visual politics has a crucial role in dynamic society today, and has always attempted not only to remind, but to establish, survive and dominate. Many of the assumptions on the factors of visuals based on beauty and intelligence, that people have learnt to look at, no longer are in accordance with the world as it is today. Visual representations thus are not just visual fillers or a visual treat, but a very powerful mystic medium.

Are the visuals in India, just mere visuals? Or are they images? Do these visuals really have a conscious origin, and do they need to play any role in a specific society? And how many of them are chosen for the sense of language or grammar in their content? What I am referring to here is the contemporary context of Indian street art, specifically the Bengalurian non-commercial, commercial and semi-commercial visual elements, and not the public statues or post-modern sculptures. Though the language of visuals is over utilized to such an unquantifiable extent that these hardly get filtered through any intellectual process or even through any mild thought process, both unfortunately and fortunately in India visuals are in such a plethora, that the rare sensible standard image often slips off in the overcrowded visual public presentations. Yet these visuals are the life and the rhythm of Indian street culture, with a fusion of the West and East in the unexplainable visual synthesis without which the texture, look and feel of this contemporary contextual vernacularism would not be complete. Yes, they are fast processed, less thought-out, much hyped, and mass produced, and these are the commercial sustainers, the local choice, the urban image makers and the dominant visual language.

Amongst these polluted population of visuals, a varied contextual element on numerous subjects exists based on the specific geographic demography, surviving, challenging and coexisting in an untamed fashion jostling for space from visibilities of ground to the vanishing points of the sky, in all possibilities of the public eyesight. These visuals further have contexts and roles, defined and dictated by the representative, which range from the politically gaudy on cluttered banners to the IPL posters on the streets in all metropolises. Specifically, a cosmopolitan city like PAGE 34 OF 413

Bengaluru like any other city has its own taste for visual sensibilities, with an untold format of representations and unquestioned exhibitionism of unimaginable immensity of depictions. For instance, when you travel from the new international airport to MG Road in Bengaluru, you tend to notice that the amount of varied representations and visuals that flows across is innumerable, ranging from the contemporary architecture of IT companies to the public statues of the local representative bodies of the early Kannada king Kempegowda, to the auto stand miniature boards featuring actors ranging from Dr Rajkumar to Shankar Nag in a very vernacular style, pitching on to the new tourism initiative of the Bruhath Bangalore Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) wall murals with depictions ranging from the monuments of Karnataka to the matinée idols of the Kannada film industry, and moving on with global brand names like McDonalds and KFC. If you observe closely here, you tend to find a multi-cultural existence which is not an approach cultivated but one generated and degenerated by the pace of time. This 'local versus global' which is well celebrated and in the parallel condemned by the locals has been a subject of dispute to concerned Bengalurian's over the past few decades in all verticals of the Kannada identity. Is this an issue only in Bengaluru or in all metros? No, the issue has been perceived in various situations in other metros like Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad, but their responses to the situations are history. It is specific in Bangalore obviously as it is *case sensitive*, because of its various identity nuances and appertaining crisis. Here the visuals are seen as "their" visuals and "our" visuals, relating to the west as "theirs" and India as "ours", and further Bengaluru itself as "namma Bengaluru" meaning "our Bangalore", which can be seen in all mediums of expressions and their extensions. On the same perspectives Sugatha Srinivasaraju, a very concerned Kannada thinker and feisty journalist had highlighted on renowned Kannada linguist KV Narayana's write up, who made a clear questioning on the identity of Kannada knowledge as to what is the nature of Kannada knowledge. And what is the identity in the framework of Kannada contents?

"... As a city, Bangalore has no distinctive edge or landmark that will make any pictorial representation of it immediately recognizable as in the case of cities such as Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi or even Chennai. This lack of an image is itself a sign of how this reluctant metropolis has grown, as a gradual replication of the low rise, low density structures, separated by green spaces, annexing more and more of the rural to its boundaries. Only more recently has the taller structure pierced the skyline, or made a difference to the lifestyle of the inhabitants. Other aspects of the difficulty of capturing Bangalore as a metropolis in the visual medium are a consequence of its unique history of invisibility: there has been no smokestack industrial growth for instance, which is a dominant feature of many cities. This is far from suggesting that there is no industry

but that it is largely invisible, tucked away into large and distant industrial estates, or more recently, tech parks, or slums which are hidden from the public eye. Similarly invisible are its workers, in an overwhelmingly middle class city. Its green cover masks its high levels of pollution, visually neutralising the tedium of fumes and dust which frustrate its inhabitants. And the blandness of innumerable middle class layouts hides the sheer scale of the problem of housing." From the work on Bangalore, *Beladide Noda Bengaluru Nagara*! Janaki Nair further says: "Yet, in a democracy such as ours, people make their own meanings of urban space, in both physical-material and mental-imaginative ways. The two dimensional map may be only one limited way of getting to know the territory of the city. Territories are marked and used in ways that were not anticipated by planners and designers. These are moments in a city's history that are not usually memorialised in stone, recorded in texts, or captured in photographs. Yet they tell us much that is different from the triumphal procession of heroes and victors in usual histories of the city.

This exhibition offers a different perspective, free of nostalgia for other times (e.g. the colonial past) or yearning for unreal spaces (e.g. Singapore). Because only an unsentimental look at the city of our time may help us imagine a possible future."

Bangalore to Bengaluru

Bangalore, now "Bengaluru", is definitely a subject and scope for various arguments and controversies like any other growing cosmopolitan capital, starting with the name itself! This cosmopolitan state capital has its sensitivity in its veins intertangled with the nation's global positioning and issues of its own identity and survival. For, the question of what is Bangalore's identity is itself a largely debatable topic; and Bangalore being the capital, does it represent the state or its own geography is another. Another question preferring to remain unanswered is: who is a Kannadiga? Do all 'Kannadigas' trace their origins to this geography? And are all Bengalurians considered Kannadigas? If not, then who are Bengalurians? The descendants of various dynasties that ruled here down the centuries, or those who have owned land here since the last few decades?

If a Kannadiga is person who must know to read and write Kannada, then what about those illiterate farmers who can hardly speak literary Kannada or write it fluently? And according to Sri Alur Venkat Rao, a Kannadiga is defined as one who possesses the property or quality of 'Karnatakatwa', or rather, he is an embodiment and exemplification of the principle of 'Karnatakatwa', but being a Kannadiga does not eliminate his other identities as an Indian and as a human being.

What is Bengaluru is the next question. It's a whirlpool of migrants from neighbouring states and districts, some settled long ago and some settling now, including a number of North Indians too since the boom in the IT-BT-BPO sectors in Bangalore. This, in fact, is the second wave, a result of the change which occurred in the early '70s onwards, with the establishment of several prominent public sector enterprises in Bangalore, like HAL, BEML, BEL, ISRO, NAL, DRDO, BHEL and HMT.

In 1956 during the formation of a united Karnataka by grouping all the scattered Kannada speaking regions, there were a number of minor geographical populations speaking languages like Kodava, Konkani, Byari, Havyak, and so on. These languages had a very strong oral cultural history, but did not have a definite script, and hence were written in the Kannada script. Karnataka unification brought together various such sectors of diverse cultural communities, including migrants from other states. During this process there had been a tremendous socio-political rise in Kannada awareness, and Kannada 'nation making'. These didn't happen over a large time period unlike the Indian independence struggle. However, over the past five decades this struggle for Kannada identity had contributed to several milestones and important incidents which benchmarked the identity making in Karnataka in great challenging circumstances in the time and space of developing India from the post-independence period to the post-modern context, culminating in the global growth of contemporary cosmopolitan Bangalore, the Silicon Valley of India, and the capital of Karnataka.

Though there were parallel state unification or rather language pride and concerns in the neighboring states like Tamil Nadu, AndraPradesh and Maharashtra with their own respective movement and their nation development, for survival and sustenance of their own mother tongue, or for the majority priority or for the hidden political intentions are seen in various contexts, where within there has been notifiable inter diverse, contradictory perceptions and difference of opinion for obvious even with the chase for the economical global growth to make their capitals into metropolitan and cosmopolitans, which is invited in an extravagant style by the IT BT BPO and the involved crowd and the same been contested by a another large crowd on the blame on the loss of identity for instance- in context of massive usage of English in public versus the lack or loss of Kannada usage in public. Here it is not just the language that is the issue, it is more than that. The bigger issue is jobs, with a large percentage of migrants from other cities taking away hot jobs in the IT-BT-BPO sectors, leaving the local youth resentful. Here I am citing the example of the much hyped controversy over jobs for locals vs 'outsiders' that Mr. Narayana Murthy of Infosys found himself in. which was responded by Mr. Narayan Murthy in the obvious wishy-washy diplomatic corporate language to the local Kannada activists. This further was nailed into its crux when he was chosen as the President for the Kannada Viswa Samelana at Belgaum with ruling BJP government immediately after the Kannada Sahitya Sammelana[since 1915], which was held in Bangalore with much debatable talks on the current scenario and circumstances.

God making and Hinduism

Hinduism, a vast cultural tradition, has erupted into countless systems of disciplines which, on dissection, reveal the existence of thousands of representations and probably millions of versions, thanks to the interpretations lavished on its visual synthesis. Each image here has a conceptual theory, and on its involvement through programmed identities reveals its power. Thus each image is a constructive medium of energy, which is incorporated with various concepts like *darshan*, meaning 'seeing and being seen', which also means to dream, visualize intuitions, foresee, wisdom, intelligence, see beyond, etc. 'Seeing' is conceived of as an outward reaching process: "seeing itself is extrusive, a medium through which seers and the seen come in contact, and, in a sense, blend and mix", as described by Lawrence Babb in a context related to various Hindu traditions. Arvind Raigopal has made a similar point: "one is 'touched' by *darshan* and seeks it as a form of contact with the deity." Sandria Freitag has suggested that in India it was the religious and political procession that carved out a public sphere in colonial India. We might here have to step forward in this preformative realm stretching into the incarnative visual field that as a part of practice has privileged the power of the images with visually intensified encounters which have implicit within them the possibility of deity and the metaphorical transformations to a mother goddess for a nationhood forming a backdrop against a new kind of a history sought to be written.



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CHAPTER –III The need for the identity and its soci-political circumstance

To facilitate a specific understanding of the Kannada identity and its historical roots, a list of dynasties and their respective periods is mentioned, to help reach the core thought of what is Kannada culture, and which dynasty has influenced it the most. The identity of the Kannada nation before the naming of Karnataka is referred back to the rulers ranging from the Satavahanas to Wodeyars. But the specifications of who is the true 'personality of Kannada' is again an arguable issue, and which of these rulers spoke Kannada, and what identities they carried, is another debatable subject. And yet the debate is again entangled in the question of who represents Kannada in the modern context. Is it the King Kempegowda, or is it the Wodeyars? Here it is not just the rulers or their mighty legacy that stands on the middle path but the question of which ruler represents which caste. As the caste factors determine the modern vote banks, respective caste leaders are created for representation, rather than their mighty personality.

Here I also wish to illustrate the symbols of each dynasty and their representations, and stress on the fact that even with all of these representations we still are in need of new iconic representations, regardless of the existing authentic line of historic rulers of the land of Kannada.

To understand the nervous system of the Kannada nation and its historical and sociopolitical aspects I here wish to discuss the social history of Karnataka and how these events and circumstances eventually led to the representational crisis and hence to the necessity of identity-making, thus paving the way for the unification movement, and further in the process led to the origin of the concept of Kannada Mathe – Thaye Bhuvaneshwari and the Kannada flag.

Period	Empire	Territory
238-225 B.C.	Shatavahanas	Deccan comprising
		present Andhra,
		Karnataka, Maharastra.
		Areas between
		Godavari anf krishna
345-540 A.D	The Kadambas of	Central, Western,
	Banavasi	Northwestern
		Karnataka
350-999 A.D	The Gangas of	South Karnataka, parts
	Talakadu	of Andhra and Tamil
		Nadu
6 th -12 th century A.D	The Chalukyas of	From Narmada to
	Badami	Cauvery. Parts of
		Karnataka, Maharastra,
		Gujarath, Orrisa,
		Andhra
753-973 A.D	The Rastrakuthas of	Most of south india
	Manyakheta	
973- 1156, 1183-	The Chalukyas of	Parts of Karnataka,
1200 A.D	Kalyana	Andra, Tamil Nadu,
		Madhyapradash,
		Maharastra
985-1346	The hoysalas of	Parts of Karnataka,
	Dwarasamudra	andra and tamil nadu
1336-1565 A.D.	The Vijayanagar	Most of Karnataka,
	empire	Kerala, Tamil Nadu,
		Andra Pradesh.
	The four dynasties	Most of south india.
	ruled over the empire:	
	Sangama (1336-1485)	
	Saluva (1485-1503)	
	Tuluva (1503-1565-	

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	1570)	
	Aravidu (1570-1646-	
	1681)	
1358-1481	Bahamani	Gulbarga, bidar,
	Kingdoms(many kings)	bijapur, daulatabad,
		Warangal,
		rajamahendri, mahore,
		gorilla, junar. Deccan
		area etc
1489-1510	Adil shahis(sultans) of	Bijapur and adjoining
	bijapur	deccan areas
1400-1734	Wodeyars	
1499-1763	Nayaks of Keladi ikkeri	Most of south and
1499-1703	Nayaks of Kelaul IKKell	deccan regions
1495 1770	Noveks of shitrodurge	_
1485-1779 17- 18 th century	Nayaks of chitradurga	Chitradurga and other
		Regions
	Maratha Interlude	Maharastra, goa and
		neighbouring regions.
1513- 1728	Yelahanka nada prabhu	Capital:Bangalore:
	(Kempegowda I -1513-	magadi
	69)	
1761-1799	Hyder Ali and Tipu	Deccan and some parts
	Sultan	of andra, tamil nadu
		and kerela
1799- 1831	Krishnaraja Wodeyar III	Old mysore regions
1831- 1881	British Takeover,	Old mysore and other
	Commissioners of	regions.
	British	
1895-1940	Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV	Old mysore regions
1940-47	Jayachamaraja	Old mysore regions
	Wodeyar IV	
1956	State of mysore	Old Karnataka map
1973	Renamed as the State	Karnataka map
	of karnataka	

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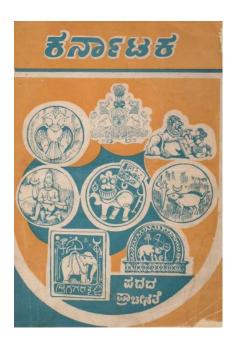


Figure 1 The front page of a book on Karnataka with the most prominent symbols of

ancient Kannada dynasties.



Figure 2 The Hoysala royal emblem at the Chennakesava Temple in Belur, Sala fighting

the tiger, the symbol of Hoysa la Empire at Belur, Karnataka



Figure 3 The Ganga Emblem - 10th century copper plate



Figure 3 Chalukya emblem of Aihole in Karnataka depicts Vishnu in Varaha form. A 6th

century stone emblem



Figure 4 Vijayanagar empire: Royal Insignia: boar, sun, moon and dagger



Figure 5 Mughal Empire: Shāhān-e Gurkani

PhD Thesis - Unni Krishnan K. Dept. of Art History & Aesthetics, Faculty of Fine Art, M.S. University, Baroda, India



Figure 6 The Kingdom of Mysore



Figure 7 The Gandaberunda emblem in the Mysore Palace.

Kingdom of Mysore/Princely State of Mysore



Figure 8 The State Emblem of Karnataka

Karnataka, a state in South West India, was officially formed on November 1, 1956, with the passing of the States Reorganisation Act. What was initially named as the *State of Mysore* was renamed as *Karnataka* in 1973. Thus the **Unification of Karnataka** refers to the formation of the Indian state of Karnataka, then called as *Mysore State*, in 1956, when several Indian states were created by redrawing borders on the basis of linguistic demographics. The formation of the State of Mysore was the culmination of a movement that had started several decades earlier during British rule, when the first demands for a state based on Kannada demographics had been put forward.

Almost the entire southern half of Karnataka was then under the Wodeyars of Mysore, with Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar and his dewan Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya who was a notable engineer, scholar, statesman and a recipient of the Bharath Ratna, at the helm. With Kannada as the spoken language the public were living with respect and dignity under Wodeyar's rule. But the northern regions of Karnataka were under the British and the Nizam of Hyderabad, and suffered under the misrule of these governments. As a result of this suppression, the seeds of the Ekikarana (unification) movement were sown in the northern parts of Karnataka, and all its most important protagonists were from there. One of the earliest and most important organisations that spearheaded the entire movement — the Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha germinated in Dharwad. The Sangha, established in 1890 by R. H. Deshpande with the objective of working for the revitalization of the Kannada language which had been marginalised under the rule of the Bombay Presidency where Marathi was the declared language, was a structurising point in the history of the movement. The Vidyavardhaka Sangha became the umbrella under which leaders from all over Karnataka gathered to further their protest and movement. The assertion of the Vidyavardhaka Sangha initiated many organisational forums throughout the geography of Karnataka, one such being the Kannada Sahitya Parishat which was establish in Bangalore in 1915. Subsequently the branching out of such voices was necessary to bring the diverse population under one roof, and thus the Karnataka Sangha (Shivamogga) was seeded in 1916, and the Karnataka Samithi was born in Kasargod in 1955.

The Kasargod Karnataka Samithi advocated the merger of Kasaragod with the Karnataka state and several volunteering individuals fought for this initiative: late Sri Umesha Rao, popularly known as 'Gadinadu Gandhi', late Sri B. S.Kakkillaya and late Sri U. P. Kunikullaya.

With such movements and agitations teaming up with the Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha for a united struggle as early as in 1856, the pace of the movement was further quickened with the entry of Sri Aluru Venkata Rao. Aluru Venkata Rao drew up a strategy for integrating all Kannada regions of Madras Province and North Karnataka with Mysore kingdom, at a meeting of the Sangha in 1903.

With the nationwide protests over independence and reorganization taking a critical turn, Aluru found it the apt time to accelerate the movement to a larger dramatic turn. He roped in literary figures for the All-Karnataka Writers' Conference in Dharwad in 1907 and 1908. Later, with the effort of the Sangha, Deshpande and Aluru established the Kannada Sahitya Parishath in Bangalore in 1915. The Parishath subsequently picked up steam with annual writers' conferences and other initiatives, which culture continues to date. Aluru then sparked the idea of a Karnataka 'provincial' unit of the Indian National Congress. This idea later took the shape of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee.

First Kannada text

Kavirajamarga dating back to 9th century AD (814 – 877), is the first known Kannada manuscript, which describes the geographical boundaries and speaks of the 'national identity' of the then Kannada universe. The text starts with poetic verses outlining the geographical area of Karnataka, then ruled by King Nrupathunga of the Rashtrakuta empire, who was also called Amogavarsha Nripathunga. There is a dispute over the authorship of the text, with some scholars crediting it to Nrupathunga, and others attributing it to Srivijaya, who is believed to have host-written texts for Nrupathunga. The controversy continues to date. According to the inscription Kannada land extended from the river Narmada to the river Cauvery as revealed by this availability of edicts that belonged to the Badami Chalukyas. Nrupatunga in his 'Kaviraja Marga' has described Kannada Naadu, the land between Narmada and Godavari. By the 9th century *Karnataka* had been shrunk up to the boarders of the Godavari.

Of the inscriptions found in the areas surrounding present-day Karnataka, from Maharashtra alone around 1,000 are available, of which 300 are in Kannada and 76 in Marathi. According to these inscriptions, the ancient map of Kannada land included present-day Goa, some parts of present-day Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, specifically Kolhapur, Sangli, Solapur, Usmanabad and Namded districts. Marathi

scholars acknowledge that South Maratha once belonged to Kannada regions. This is also stated in the book *Kannada Kannadiga Karnataka*, published by Kannada Pustaka Pradikara. In Nasik and Nagpur, even today Kannada is spoken, especially by the backward community, as litterateur Chidanandamurthy points out in his book *Bashika Bruhut Karnataka, Nilgiriyinda Nasik Varege*. In present-day Andhra Pradesh, Kannada inscriptions are found in Nizamabad, Medak, Mehboobnagar, Kurnool, Ananthapur and Chitoor. Similarly, in Tamil Nadu they are found in the Nilgiris district, and in Kasargod district of Kerala. Hence it is fair to infer that present-day Karnataka has lost Goa and the above mentioned 13 districts spread over three states.

Other inscriptions that historically landmark the existence and identity of Kannada land are the Halmadi inscriptions and the Talagunda Pillar inscriptions dating back to 450 AD, and the Ihole inscriptions dating back to 635 AD.

Sri Shankaracharya

Shankaracharya (788-820) one of the great scholar, a social reformer is refered as father of vedic philosophical thought. Besides his critiques on "Prasthana Traya" considered as his greatest contribution, his other contributions such as "Advaitha Philosophy" also called Maya philosophy or "kevaladvaita Veda" "Upadesha Sahasri", "Viveka Chudamani", "Soundarya Lahari" and many more. Shankara gave importance to the communal worship of Shiva, Vishnu, (Surya) the sun, Ganesha, Kumara and Goddess Shakti. That is why he was called the "Shanmatha Stapanacharya" (one who established the six cults). This means he did not urge for the worship of single God. This must have been an attempt at the integration of six (out of many) most popular cults of those days. Religious integration leads to national integration. Prompted by this need he travelled all over India and established many Mutts. The four Mutts that were establishes were in the East at Puri, Orissa, Govardhana Mutt, with Vedic Heritage of Rig Veda and West at Dwaraka in Gujarat, Kalika Mutt with Sama veda, and in the North at Badari in Uttar Pradesh, Jyothir Mutt with Atharvaveda and lastly at South at Sringeri , Karnataka, Sharada Mutt with Yajurveda.

Similarly many social reformers such as Ramanujacharya (1017-1137), Madhavacharya (1238-1317) and many more whose names all are not mentioned had contributed to the social System.

Sri Basaveshwara

One of the most important philosopher and social reformer, who was against the Caste system. Basaveshwara (1132-68) was the leading light of Veerashaivism movement in 12th century. Being born to the Brahmanical tradition when he was made to undergo "Upanayanam" he threw off the sacred thread by saying that "By birth I have the Lingadiksha and there is no necessity for an upanayana". Basaweshwara became a disciple of the saint Jathavedamuni, under whose guidance he learnt Vedas and worked towards liberating the superstitious mass from the clutches of misinterpreted tradition. He was invited by Bijjala, the kalachuri king and made him the minister, with which he was able to bring about many reforms relentlessly in order to wipe out the superstitious practices and belief that were deep rooted in society.

Basaweshwara who began a movement against castism brought into practice, intercaste marriages. The Brahmin Madhuvaiah gave his daughter in marriage to the son of Haralaiah who was a Harijan under the guidance of Basaveshwara. This led to voluntary changes in the static traditional society. He went to the house of an untouchable by name Nagadeva and ate in his house. Even those who have been kept out of the society as Pariahs (out-castes) were given 'Shivadiksha' by Basaveshwara and induced in them a new religious awareness. He took step to stop inhuman sacrifices of animals that were taking place In the name of religion. In this context he declared "pity is the source of religion".

Akka Mahadevi was a prominent figure of the Veerashaiva Bhakti movement of the 12th century Karnataka. Her (about 430 Vachanas) Vachanas in Kannada, in a form of didactic poetry are considered her greatest contribution to Kannada Bhakti literature. Yet the term 'Akka' (elder Sister) which is an honor given to her by great Veerashaiva leaders like Basavanna, Chenna Basavanna, Kinnari Bommayya, Siddharama, Allamaprabhu and Dasimayya speaks volumes of her contribution to the movement that was underway. She is seen as a great and inspirational woman for Kannada literature and the history of Karnataka. She is said to have accepted the god Shiva ('Chenna Mallikarjuna') as her husband, traditionally understood as the 'madhura bhava' or 'madhurya' form of devotion (This is similar to how 8th century Andal declared herself marriable only to lord Vishnu or as centuries later Meera, a 16th century saint, considered herself married to Krishna)

Kempegowda

Yelahanka is about 8 miles from Bangalore and during the early 15th century a principality came into existence and flourished here. The rulers were called Yelahanka Prabhus. Rana Byregowda was the first of the dynasty. He was originally from Yanamanji Puthur (Alur) of Kanchi in Tamil Nadu. Rana Byregowda left Aluru, crossed Palar river with seven families of his brothers and selected 'Ahuthi' village near Nandidurga for his stay. Among his brothers Malli Byregowda, Sanna Byregowda, Veeregowda were prominent. Rana Byregowda had children by name Jayagowda, Sanna Byregowda, etc. These people were called 'Morasu Vokkalu' (the Morasu family) as Kanchipuram was also known as 'morasu Nadu'. Rana Byregowda son Jayagowda (1417-33) went to Yelahanka and acquired the title "Yelahanka Bhupala" (The protector of Yelahanka country) became a vassal of Vijayanagar. Kempegowda (1513-69) is titles as "Bengaluru sthapaka" the founder of Bangalore, "Yelahanka Nadu Prabhu".

The foundation of Bangalore

Kempegowda selected the place of present Bangalore for the capital. The Present day Doddapete and Chikkapete junction known as the "Bellichowka" became the centre of the city. A fort was also built in order to protect the city. The Halasur Gate to the East, the Sondekoppa gate (at the end of Aralepet, on the Kempambudi tank bund) to the West, Yelahanka gate to North and Mysore gate of the city with Towers. The capital city started attracting people other than officials. The emperor of Vijayanagara, Achyutharaya was happy at the news of the establishment of new capital and as a mark of appretiation he bestowed a gift of 12 "Hoblis" Bevur, old Bangalore, Kengeri, Hesaraghatta, Jagani, etc with a net income of 30,000 pagodas (Varahas). The folk stories also says that building of the main gate was not possible even after repeated construction, it fell until the priest announced that if the gate was to stand firm, it needed the sacrifice of a pregnant woman, and Kempegowda's eldest daughter-in-law Lakshmamma, who was pregnant went to the gate and sacrified herself.

Kempegowda II (1572) came to throne after him, during his reign many Tanks, reservoirs, and also temples were built. He renovated the Someshwara temple at Ulsoor and scenes from "Girija Kalyana" are carved on the walls of the temple. With Magadi as his capital he ruled for many years. Thus the dynasty was called the "Kempegowdas of Magadi" from his time onwards.

The magnum opus — Karnataka Gatha Vaibhava

Sri Aluru, also known as 'Kannada Kula Purohita', meaning the high priest of the Kannada clan, published several articles and books, predominantly — *Karnataka Gatha Vaibhava* meaning the "past glory of Karnataka", in 1912. This book, which made a great impact during its time on people of every age and class, narrates the glory of the history of Karnataka until the decline of the Vijayanagar Empire, followed by the encroachments of the Marathas, the Nizams, and finally the British.

This book was one of the prime motivators in encouraging the public to associate with the Ekikarana movement. The movement gradually gained momentum and spread taking the form of protests, agitations, rallies and conferences, wherein the focus was both on gaining the independence of the nation and also to building a new state of Kannada-speaking people.

Anti-British Uprising

Anti-British uprising by the end of 18th century, various leaders fought against British, starting from Hyder Ali, Tipu Sultan waged the third Mysore War in 1792. Dhondiwagh in 1800, Venkatadri of igur from Shimoga Dist., Shivalingaiah Deshmukh and Tirumala Rao Deshmukh, Diwakar Dixit, Raoji Raaste, Balaji Deshpande and Settippa Tukkali, Amatur Balappa and Kittur Rani Channamma's Defeat on December 4, 1824 followed by Sangolli Rayanna. Various other revolts such as Nagara Revolt (1830-31), revolt in Coorg (1834-37), revolt of 1857 at Surapur, Naragunda, Mundaragi.

Pre Gandhian freedom movement

Though there were many strong attempt from local rulers and activists in Karnataka the attempt to oust the British or English out of India failed as there were no unified force or combined effort till 1920, after which Gandhian philosophy was unquestionability followed by the nation. But till 1920 all the effort that sparked out did awakening the need for feedom.

In 1885 National Indian Conference was formed in Bombay, in which two delegates had represented Karnataka-Sabhapati Mudaliar and Kolachalam Venkata Rao of Bellary. Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV welcomed this idea of the formation of congress and in the session held at Madras in 1897 and 1902 he had given much contribution. Thus,

he had supported the spirit of nationalism. In the later sessions, leaders like Narayana Rao Chandavarkar, Srinivasa Rao Kaujalagi and Alur Venkata Rao and Kadapa Raghavendra Rao of Dharward were the important ones. With the notion that congress was believed to be the Brahmin Party, non Brahmins did not wish to join it, besides Karnataka state became disintegrated, with west was merged with the Bombay Presidency, the east with Hydrerabad, and the south with Madras presendency.

To educate the people about nationalism, politically awakened activist brought out newspapers, and through them educated the people about Nationalism. The chief ones among the papers were Karnataka Prakasha (Bangalore), Chandrodaya (Dharwar), Hitabodhini (Belgaum) and Kannada Suvarna (Bombay). These papers enlightened the people about Kannada state, language, culture and about the crisis the country was passing through. Prior to Mahatma Gandhi, the congress leadership was taken up by Dadabhai Navroji, Gopalakrishna Gokhale and Balagangadhara Tilak. Many were influenced by them especially lawyers and doctors, landlords began to take an active part in congress meetings. With the nationalism spread through Tilak's 'Kesari' (Marathi) and 'The Maratha' (English) which were the most popular all over India, similarly locally Gangadhara Rao Deshpande, published paper 'Kannada Kesari' and enlightened the people about freedom.

With the split in congress, the extremists became Tilak's followers and the moderates supported Gokhale. In the congress session, kannadigas like Srinivas Rao Kaujali, Alur Venkat Rao, Gangadhara Rao Deshpande, supported Tilak.

The Literary and Cultural Organisations

In preaching the idea of integration, educational, literary and cultural organizations contributed the new method of educational rejuvenated culture of development with the provincial languages and culture that began to defy imperialism. Many organizations were formed such as the Wesleyan Mission was founded in Mysore and opened both English and Kannada medium schools in 1834, The Basel Mission Jesuit Society in Mangalore in 1861, and Banumaiah Educational Institution in 1917 in Mysore. The Karnataka Vidya Vardhaka Sangha 1890, the Karnataka Itihasa Samsodhana Sangha 1916, Karnataka Sabha and Karnataka Education Board 1917, were started at Dharwar. The Basaveshwara Vidya Vardhaka Sangha was started in Bagalkote in 1906. In Tumkur, Siddaganga Educational Institute was founded. And in Bangalore, Karnataka Sahitya Parishad and Theosophical Society came into existaence

in 1917. All of these organizations contributed in the education and spreading awarenss about state, country, language and unity.

Journalists and media

Satyagrahi from Udupi, Karma Veera, Taruna Karnataka, Samyukta Karnataka from Dharwar and Hubli, 'Sadhana' from Hydrebad, 'Kodagu' from Mercara, ' Kanadavrutta' from Kumta, Karnataka kesari from Bellary, 'Prajamata', 'Chitragupta', 'Tainadu', 'Veera Kesari', 'Viswa Karnataka' and 'Deshabhimani' from Bangalore. 'Sadhvi', 'the star of Mysore, 'Kannadiga' from Bagalkote, 'Karnataka Vaibhava' from Bijapur. The other papers published from Bomabay were Kannada Sahitya Parishath's Patrike, Vishwa Karnataka Patrike, Loka Shikshana, Karnataka Vrutta, Dhaurdhari, Jaihind and Hubli Gazatte all these inspired the Kannadigas to demand integration.

Articles that appeared in Vishwa Karnataka edited by Ti. Ta. Sharma, Jaya Karnataka edited by Alur Venkat Rao, Smyukta Karnataka edited by R. R. Diwakar, Karnataka Vaibhava edited by Mohare Hanumanta Rao are certain worth remembering. Many of the publishers and editors were put into prison. Mohare Hanumanta Rao was handcuffed and was taken in procession along the streets. All these papers had one common purpose- the need for integration.

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee

Luminaries like Gudlappa Hallikeri, Siddappa Kambli, R. H. Deshpande, Rangarao Diwakar, Koujalgi Srinivasarao, Srinivas Rao Mangalvedhe, Kengal Hanumanthaiah, Goruru Ramaswamy Iyengar, S. Nijalingappa, T. Mariyappa, Subramanya, Sowcar Chennaiah, H. K. Veerangowda, H. C. Dasappa, H. Siddaiah and Anakru, the popular orator, were in the forefront of this mission with Sri Aluru Venkata Rao.

In 1920, a Karnataka State Political Conference was held in Dharwad, presided over by V.P. Madhav Rao, at which a unanimous resolution was passed, demanding the unification of all Kannada speaking areas. The meeting also called upon all Kannadigas to attend the **Nagpur Congress**, at which eventually the Indian National Congress took the landmark decision to create the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee. This further brightened the aura of the Ekikarana movement and of leaders like Gudlappa

Hallikeri and Kengal Hanumanthaiah, who played an active role in the movement, and who later became the chief minister of Karnataka.

Karnataka Ekikarana Sabha

The newly formed Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee of the Indian National Congress held a historic conference in Belgaum, presided over by Mahatma Gandhi and attended by Kannadigas from all over the state. Incidentally, the conference was held at the same venue where the first Karnataka unification conference presided over by Siddappa Kambli was held. These two meetings drew numerous leaders, writers, poets and intellectuals from all over Karnataka. They drew attention to the glory of Karnataka with numerous inspiring speeches and poems. Incidentally, the well-known song *Udayavagali namma cheluva Kannada nadu*, meaning "May our charming Kannada land rise," was first sung at the first Karnataka unification conference.

Thanks to the valuable support of the Indian National Congress, the national views of the Karnataka Ekikarana Sabha were politically strengthened. This was a very important event in the history of the Karnataka. The Karnataka Eikikarana Sabha was later renamed as Karnataka Ekikarana Sangha.

The Belgaum congress

Belgaum congress was held on December 21, 1924 presided by Gandhiji. It was conducted from Dec. 21 to 30. Several committees were formed and various subjects were discussed such as Nationalism, upliftment of Harjans, removal of untouchablity, Khadi propaganda, the Hindu Muslim unity, the co-ordination between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins, the basic education and rural cleanliness. The Belgaum session had in mind the bringing together the swaraj party and Muslim leaders, as swaraj party leaders such as Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das and other who were not satisfied with the principle of non-violence left congress and the Muslim leaders such as Shaukat Ali, Mohamed Ali and Mohamed Ali Jinnah who kept themselves away from Congress or the Karnataka state.

At the same time in 1924 December 21 and 23, Kannada Sahitya Sammelana also took place, in which Huyilagola Narayana Rao's famous song "Udayavagali Namma Chaluva Kannada" laid the foundation stone

Recommendation for unification and the election

Noted litterateurs like Kuvempu, Bendre, Gokak, Shivaram Karanth, Kayyara Kinhanna Rai M. Govinda Pai, S.B. Joshi and Betageri Krishna Sharma were supported in their demand for the unification of Kannada speaking areas, by newspapers as well as college and public bodies. In 1928, the Nehru committee recommended the formation of a single province by uniting all Kannada speaking areas. The man behind this recommendation was Gudlappa Hallikeri. This recommendation came as a boost for the unification activists.

In 1937, followed by the Simon commission, he Congress demanded formation of Karnataka and Andhra states. This demand met with resistance from both the British and the princely states: the latter feared the loss of territory, and the British were unclear about what this would entail. Meanwhile, there were attempts by Siddappa Kambli to approach the Simon Commission, which was tactically prevailed & prevented by Aluru and the other leaders, as they had boycotted the Commission. With the circumstances politically weakening the movement with the rulers of the princely states, Gudlappa Hallikeri sought the support of the Maharaja of Mysore. The Maharaja obliged by addressing gatherings in all Kannada speaking provinces of Bombay and Hyderabad, resulting in massive support to the unification movement from all over.

The year 1946 was very significant for the movement. A massive conference inaugurated by Sardar Patel on January 10 that year in Bombay declared that the interests of all linguistic groups would be of top priority for the new government of independent India. This was to have a bearing on the Constituent Assembly that met the same year. Incidentally, the All-Karnataka Convention too was held that year at Davanagere, the geographical centre of Karnataka — a very high profile event which drew thousands from all over. It was presided over by the then Revenue Minister of Bombay M.P. Patil. A strong appeal to create linguistic states was made to the Constituent Assembly by influential leaders who attended the conference, namely, Gudlappa Hallikeri, Kengal Hanumanthaiah, T. Mariyappa, H. K. Veerangowda, H .C. Dasappa, H. Siddaiah, Subramanya and Sowcar Chennaiah.

After 1947

After the declaration of Independence, Kannada linguistic regions were grouped under five administrative units of the Bombay, Madras, Kodagu, Mysore and Hyderabad princely states.

With the unification issue not being addressed, the Karnataka Ekikarana Parishat met in Kasargod, demanding a unified Kannadiga state.

Meanwhile, the Lingayat minority in the regions of Bidar, Gulbarga and Raichur who were under the Nizam of Hyderabad expressed their grievance at having been neglected. Eventually, with the overthrow of the Nizam's rule by the central government, its citizens were finally independent on September 17, 1948, celebrated by the Karnataka government as the Hyderabad Karnataka liberation day.

The same year, the government appointed the Dhar Commission under Justice S.K. Dhar, to look into the question of linguistic reorganisation of states. The Commission rejected the idea of linguistic reorganisation. In December, the same year, the JVP Commission was appointed to look into the issue. (The Commission was so named as its members were Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya) This Commission, while favouring the creation of Andhra state, rejected the demand of the Karnataka Ekikarana movement. This was seen as a betrayal by the Congress, as in its 1951 manifesto, the party had promised priority for creation of linguistic states. The hurt Ekikarana leaders formed a new party, the Karnataka Ekikarana Paksha, to contest the 1951 elections. Hand-holding them were all the literary stalwarts and leaders of the region, like C. M. Poonacha, the Chief Minister of Kodagu, Kengal Hanumanthaiah, S. Nijalingappa and Gudlappa Hallikere.

In 1953, the Congress session in Hyderabad passed a resolution favouring the creation of Andhra Pradesh and clearly rejecting the proposal of Karnataka. This was the last straw for the Ekikarana Paksha. A.J. Dodameti, a senior leader and member of the Bombay Assembly resigned and began a hunger strike in Dharwad. There was rioting in Hubli, which left many injured, and many courted arrest. The Congress candidate was trounced by the Karnataka Ekikarana Paksha's candidate. Under pressure, Prime Minister Nehru again constituted a states reorganisation committee, called the Fazal Ali Commission, which was headed by Justice Fazal Ali.

Meanwhile Mysore government also suffered another defeat, with the fact-finding committee headed by M. Seshadri who opposed the unification , which was rejected PAGE 56 OF 413

with being overwhelming support of Mysoreans led by the statesman Sir M. Visvesvaraya. This situation was further electrified by Gudlappa Hallikeri who made an impassioned demand before the states reorganisation committee, demanding unification of states based on linguistic demography. This recommendation was eventually made by the commission to Parliament, which was at last ratified it.

The State of Karnataka, 1973

On November 1, 1973, during the chief ministership of Devaraj Urs, Mysore State was renamed as Karnataka, as the name 'Mysore' was not inclusive of all other regions and 'Karnataka' represented the totality of all Kannada linguistic regions. Though the Fazal Ali Committee's recommendation made the Kannadiga population unified under the State of Mysore sigh with relief initially, it soon began to rankle that a few important regions were not included. Especially the non-inclusion of Kasargod (which went to Kerala) was a serious disappointment as ironically, it had been a consistent supporter of the Ekikarnana movement. Leaders like Kayyara Kinhanna Rai continued to fight for Kasargod's merger with Karnataka even after the State formation.

In the book on U. R. Ananthamurthy omnibus edited by N. Manu Chakravarthy, Ananthamurthy says: "The nightmarish experience of the state of national emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi in 1975 and the cumulative effect of the economic policies pursued by the Indian state beginning with the Nehruvian era did make an impact on the political character of the Indian national-state that had to be properly contextualised by someone with a socialist bent of mind. The nature of parliamentary democracy — with all the manipulations of all the political parties, irrespective of the ideology they professed but never really practised — had to be interrogated if one were to arrive at any kind of fair estimate of the state of Indian democracy.

"The last two decades of Indian life — socio political and economic — have witnessed the powerful impact of the phenomenon of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. The phase of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation has ushered in a post-modern world, in the sense that earlier notions of tradition and modernity have undergone unbelievable transformation. It is no longer possible to understand tradition and modernity as one used to earlier. Moreover, the very concept of a nation has altered radically. Similarly the understanding of the value of culture is at sharp variance with what it meant earlier. The divergences are quite strong and are spreading quite forcefully. But one also beholds much continuity from the past that resists these changes. India is a nation and a culture lost at the crossroads today."

The vision of Sri Aluru Venkata Rao in the process of shaping Kannada identity

A student of Fergusson College in Poona, Aluru was positively influenced by the nationalistic fervour of leaders like Tilak. In his journal *Jaya Karnataka*, he writes "... Karnataka is not just land (*nadu*). Not just language. Not just art and architecture. Not just history. Just like the individual person, a country (*desa*) is said to have three levels of the body (*deha*): the gross (*sthula*), the subtle (*sukshma*) and the spiritual (*karana*). Just as an individual attains salvation (*moksha*) through development of the triple bodies, so does a *desa* (land/country) attain progress (*vikasa*) through these bodies. In his book *Imagining Unimaginable Communities*, K. Raghavendra Rao discusses Alur's life and his views on nationalism. The gross or the external body of a *desa* is made up of its political, social, educational and similar institutions, and its subtle body comprises its language, history, art and architecture, and culture. But its spirit or spiritual core is its religious life (*dharma*). The journal *Jaya Karnataka* was a tool to awaken the people of Karnataka, specifically the educated middle-class urbanites, and also to bring together all the writers split across the fragments of geography.

Aluru condems the Indian tendency to talk about cosmic welfare at the cost of nationalism. He asks the direct question, "What is a nation?" According to him, the immediate answer would be to identify it with a country, a language, a religion or a race (*vamsa*). Citing the case of Russia and England where the nation is multi-racial and multi-ethnic, he rejects the racial concept of nationalism. Citing the case of multi-lingual Canada and Switzerland, he rejects the linguistic identity of the nation of nationhood. He rejects the religious identity of the nation by showing how nations were multi-religious collectives. The reason why he undertakes this negative exercise is to expose the wrong notions prevalent in India, especially the wrong notion that India cannot be a nation because it is multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious. He answers this with a link to the ancient seers, the identity generated millennia ago, on the concept of *sanatana dharma* (eternal religious tradition) recognised by others as Indians (*bharathiyaru*) and condemns on the irony of our non-acceptance of this ancient concept.

The concept and the terminology of Karnatakatva originates from a self-conscious, theoretically formulated concept Aluru outlined in a letter to a senior leader Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, popularly known as the Lion of Karnataka, on June 14, 1926, in English: "... From my experience of the public life of Karnataka and also from my experience in other fields, I have come to the conclusion that no movement,

political or otherwise, is possible unless there is Karnatakatva in us. By Karnatakatva, I mean the sum total of all our feelings and duties towards Karnataka (like Hindutva), so it is that from the political field, I turned to this less ambitious but more solid work. My Karnataka is somewhat different from 'provincialism'..."

Mahajan Commission, 1976

After the integration, areas such as Kasargod, Nilgiris, Solapur, Akkalakote, Jatta and Gadhinglaj with Kannada speaking populations were left outside Karnataka, having been merged with neighbouring states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Andhra. A one-man commission headed by Sri Mahajan was formed to settle the border dispute between Mysore state and Maharashtra. Both states promised to abide by his verdict. Mahajan, after an intensive survey reported that Akkalakote, Jatta and Kasargod should go to Mysore, and Nippani, Khanapura and Halyala should merge with Maharashtra. Belgaum was to be retained within Mysore. Maharashtra was disappointed. Hence, it rejected the Mahajan Commission verdict. The Maharashtra stand is that a vast majority of people in the state (Belgaum) speak Marathi, not Kannada. This view, based on statistics, was rejected both by the Commission and by Parliament. Every state in India contains minority groups. So numbers cannot be the sole factor to decide the issue, it was felt. Though discussed several times in Parliament, the problem has remained unresolved.

Mahajan Report

This report talks of the areas of contention between Karnataka and Maharashtra. Of 814 villages of Belgaum, 264 were given by Karnataka, and of the 516 villages demanded by Karnataka, 274 villages were given by Maharashtra. Karnataka demanded Kasargod from Kerala, but this demand was rejected by Kerala.

Gokak Report fuels Gokak Chaluvali agitation

Karnataka had adopted three languages — Sanskrit, Hindi and English — as the medium of instruction in schools. With the move towards globalization and new-age careers demanding knowledge of English, the Kannada-speaking population began to move towards English, just as people in other states had. Additionally, since Sanskrit was offered as a choice in schools, students could finish their schooling without studying Kannada at all. Fears that this would lead to complete marginalization of

Kannada, led to a movement against retaining Sanskrit as the first language in schools. This movement was supported by teachers, writers, scholars and others. With pressure mounting on it, on July 5, 1980 the government constituted a committee to study the issue. It was headed by Jnanpith awardee and former Vice-Chancellor of Karnatak University Prof V. K. Gokak.

Gokak Report

The report submitted by the committee recommended that the government should accord first language status to Kannada with the primary facilities that the language needed for its implementation. However, even before the government could make any announcement, there was opposition to the report from several sections of the public such as the non-Kannada-speaking minorities. This resulted in minor protests from pro-Kannada and Karnataka organisations.

The Kannada film industry jumped into the fray, and under pressure from the industry and from the Kannada movement leader G. Narayankumar, matinee idol Dr Rajkumar agreed to promote the cause of Kannada. With several other top artistes of the industry, Dr Rajkumar took out a rally from Belagavi to Bengaluru, giving speeches about the importance of Kannada. Work in the film industry ground to a temporary halt as its members joined statewide rallies. The presence of stars in huge numbers added momentum to the movement, and succeeded in drawing the attention of the common public. The entire movement, known as the Gokak Chaluvali, emphasized on primacy for Kannada.

Government accepts Gokak Committee report

As the movement snowballed, Chief Minister R. Gundu Rao announced that the government had accepted the Gokak Committee report and assured the activists that Kannada would be the official language of communication throughout the state in all government departments, and that the language would be nurtured as the mother tongue of the people.

1990 Language compulsion

Kannada Abhivrudhi Pradhikara, a dedicated department for the development of the Kannada language was set up on July 6, 1992 (DPAR182kol92 Bangalore dated July 6,1992). The demand for implementation of the language at the working culture, Administration must be in Kannada, Dr sarojini mahishi report must be implemented

with immediate action, all government office must be advised to use Kannadaon language with literature training, service exams, advise must be given by the government that Kannada must be communicated in all government and state office all over.

In front of state officials and the dept Kannada language must be used, if violated necessary action must be taken. On 29 4 1994-5 government also ordered that the primary and high schools must implement Kannada in schools.

Dr Sarojini Mahishi Varadhi – Job employment

Government studies the submitted report and apply Dr Mahishi report, Ci228ris90Bangalore dated 21-04 1995. The following conditions were stipulated and rules laid down to describe a Kannadiga and to protect his entitlements. To qualify as a 'Kannadiga' or a citizen of Karnataka, a person must have resided in Karnataka for a minimum of 15 years and should be able to give proof of this in the form of either a ration card, a school certificate or birth certificate. He or she must also be able to read and write Kannada. Industries which had acquired lands from farmers were under obligation to give a job to one member of each family from which they had acquired land. The personnel officer must be a Kannadiga. Districtwise committees must be established to ensure employment of Kannadigas and oversee the implementation of the Mahishi report recommendations. A report must be sent to the government periodically on such implementation.

The report made it imperative for new industries to hire Kannadiga staff. On failing to do so, they would forfeit any facilities extended by the government. The district committees were tasked with checking and verify these terms. Further, it was made mandatory for technological institutions to get government approval for the syllabus, career support and placements.

By implementing the recommendations of the Sarojini Mahishi report, it was sought to ensure that Karnataka got its rightful share in all Indian jobs, and especially make sure that jobs in the Karnataka government set-up went to Kannadigas. It also intended to wrest control of the seat of power at the Vidhana Soudha, which in popular perception was seen to have been captured by migrant lobbies.

The Wodeyars and the Kingdom of Mysore

The **Kingdom of Mysore** (1399–1947 AD) was a kingdom of southern India, traditionally believed to have been founded in 1399 in the vicinity of the modern city of Mysore. The kingdom, which was ruled by the Wodeyar family, initially served as PAGE 61 OF 413

a vassal state of the Vijayanagara empire. With the decline of the Vijayanagara empire (circa 1565), the kingdom became independent. The 17th century saw a steady expansion of its territory and, under Narasaraja Wodeyar I and Chikka Devaraja Wodeyar, the kingdom annexed large expanses of what is now southern Karnataka and parts of Tamil Nadu, to become a powerful state in the southern Deccan.

The kingdom reached the height of its military power and dominion in the latter half of the 18th century under the de facto ruler Haider Ali and his son Tipu Sultan. During this time, it came into conflict with the Marathas, the British and the Nizam of Golconda which culminated in the four Anglo-Mysore wars. Success in the first two Anglo-Mysore wars was followed by defeat in the third and fourth. Following Tipu's death in the fourth war of 1799, large parts of his kingdom were annexed by the British, which signalled the end of a period of Mysorean hegemony over southern Deccan. The British, however, restored the Wodeyars to their throne by way of a subsidiary alliance, and a diminished Mysore was now transformed into a princely state. The Wodeyars continued to rule the state until Indian independence in 1947, when Mysore acceded to the Union of India.

Jayachamaraja Wodeyar (July 18, 1919 - September 23, 1974, rule: 1940-47) was the 25th and the last Maharaja of the princely state of Mysore, ruling from 1940 to 1950. the He was only son of Yuvaraja Kanteerava Narasimharaja Wodeyar and Yuvarani Kempu Cheluvaja Amanni, and was well known as a litterateur, philosopher, musicologist, political thinker and philanthropist. Being an academic and an art lover, he travelled widely, meeting connoisseurs, artists and scholars. He ascended the throne of the Kingdom of Mysore on September 8, 1940 after the demise of his uncle Maharaja Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. After the princely states were annexed by the Indian union in 1956, Jayachamaraja Wodeyar was appointed the "Rajapramukh" (Governor) of the state.later he became the Rajapramukh of Madras. Being a part of unification movement of Karnataka state on November 1, 1973 he aptly lit the sacred lamp in the temple of Kannada Thayee Bhuvanehwari, at Hampi, when the state was renamed as "Karnataka".

SIR M Vishweshwariah (1912-18)

Sir M Vishweshwariah is the most famous amoung the architects of modern India and thus was awarded with the title of Bharata Ratna in 1953 along with Rajaji and Nehru. He was one of the modern reformist of Karnataka, with his intelligence, and admisnistrative qualities that had brought outstanding revolutions to the state. Introdution of 'block systems' to irrigation, building of Dams, Paddy and sugarcane research farms, Iron and Stell works at Bhadravathi in 1916, several small scale factory productions, silk research centres, Sandal oil factory, Hindustan Air Craft Factory were all outcomes of his genius. He wrote many books on the economic policies of the state: A Vision of Prosperous Mysore, Reconstructing India, Rapid Development of Industries, Planned Economy for India, Memoirs of my working Life (Autobiography)

As Dewan of Mysore Vishweshwariah played a worthy vital role both in terms of administration and involvement in unification of Karnataka.

Andanappa Doddameti (1808-1972)

Andanappa Doddameti, a fearless freedom fighter known for his Kannada patriotism, was a patron of the Harijans and strove for their upliftment. He was born in Jakkali village, and was educated at Dharwad. Deeply influenced by Gandhiji's speech at Belgaum, he plunged into the freedom fray, actively participating in the non-violence movement and was imprisoned many times. He was responsible for bringing Jamkhandi into the Indian Union. He undertook fasts unto death for the cause of Karnataka integration. Representing Rhona taluk four times in the State Assembly, he became Irrigation Minister in 1970. His most significant contribution to Kannada, *Kannada Mahimna Stotra* has been discussed and produced as a evidence supporting the argument in this research in subsequent chapters.

Bellary Siddamma

Among the thousands who sacrificed their lives for the nation during the Karnataka unification and pre-Independence struggle are a large number of women whose names went tragically unrecorded and who are hardly remembered today. Siddamma was one such freedom fighter. Married to Murigappa, a freedom fighter from Davanagere, Siddamma was not educated, but actively participated in the freedom movement with her husband, inspiring many to join the fray. In the Aranya Satyagraha Movement led by S. Nijalingappa, she played an important role. On one occasion, she was badly beaten up by the police while she was addressing a gathering. Undaunted by the blood pouring out of her wounds, Siddamma continued with her speech. She was imprisoned for 18 months by the British. The Mysore Government had passed orders forbidding the hoisting of the national flag. She defied the orders and hoisted it during the Mysore Congress session and again at Shivapura in 1938. Many were arrested. A PAGE 63 OF 413

mammoth gathering of nearly 25,000 people praised her dauntlessness on the occasion. She started an organisation called Mathru Mandira for the welfare of the wives of the freedom fighters, destitute women and children in Davanagere.

Dr Rajkumar (Singanalluru Puttaswamayya Muthuraju) - 1929 - 2006

Born and brought up in Chamarajnagar in rural Mysore, Muthuraju became an icon of Kannada cinema under the screen name Rajkumar. This Dada Saheb Phalke awardee with an awe-inspiring fan following did not have any outstanding academic background. Rather, he had studied only up to the third standard. However, he had a passion for theatre, and plunged into the world of drama, working with theatre groups and performing all over Karnataka. Interestingly, Rajkumar used a different dialect of Kannada: not the Kannada that is spoken in his native village, but a standard Old Mysore Kannada termed as 'Shistabhashe'. He used this elite dialect with ease. His films brought him superhero status. His involvement in the Gokak *Cheluvali* movement Varadi and his rally from Belagavi to Bangalore raised his stature in the eyes of the people, who saw him as the son of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari during these periods.

Abduction of Dr Rajkumar

The abduction of Dr Rajkumar by jungle bandit Veerappan on the night of July 30, 2000, came as a shock and wreaked havoc in Karnataka, especially in Bangalore. The actor, who was 71 then, was abducted along with his son-in-law Govindraju and two others from his farmhouse at Dodda Gajanur, which was in the princely state of Mysore prior to 1947, and is now a part of Erode in Tamil Nadu. In exchange for the hostages, Veerappan demanded the release of his gang members who were jailed under a defunct anti-terrorism law. The abduction drama, which played out for 108 days, shook the entire state and stretched the government machinery to its limits. Rajkumar fans and Kannada activists went on the rampage everywhere, burning buses and other vehicles, assaulting motorists and declaring a bandh. Initially the government had to declare a holiday to save the common people, especially school children, caught up in the violence. During the three and a half months when the abduction drama played out, the entire State was in a state of mourning, with Rajkumar's songs and films being over-played and his fans and Kannada activists overreacting. After 108 long days of herculean efforts and intense negotiations, Rajkumar was finally released on November 15, 2000. Incidentally, the abduction heightened the tensions between Karnataka and the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu, as Veerappan was a Tamilian. It did not help that the two states were already at loggerheads over

the Cauvery water-sharing issue. Probably this was the period which saw the maximum amount of flag usage and (Karnataka) goddess representation in the socio-political public sphere.

Shankar Nag

Shankar Nagarkatte (9 November 1954 - 30 September 1990) popularly known as **Shankar Nag** was a one of the most popular actors and directors of not just the Kannada film industry, but of the Indian film industry as a whole. His outstanding evergreen works such as the tele-serial *Malgudi Days*, based on celebrated novelist R.K.Narayan's short stories, is a work of artistic brilliance. He did not limit himself to Kannada films, but had worked in films of other languages as well. For example, his *22 June 1897*, which won a National award, was in Marathi. His career flowed in two parallel streams: he worked in popular films and used the money raked in by these commercial hits to make intelligent films with artistic sensibilities. Thus his body of work represented a rare confluence of an elite working culture and a non-elite commercial career.

Vishnuvardhan

Matinee idol Vishnuvardhan (18 September 1950 – 30 December 2009) was born **Sampath Kumar** in a Mysore Brahmin family to H.L. Narayana Rao and Kamakshamma. His father was an artist, music composer and scriptwriter. The family lived in Chamundipuram of Mysore, and thus the cultural inheritance of Mysore had an influence on him. Though his high school and college years were spent in Bangalore, he is referred to in the Karnataka film industry as the pride of Mysore. **Vishnuvardhan** acted in about 220 movies, including 200 in Kannada. He also featured in Hindi, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil films. Vishnuvardhan was popularly known as *Sahasa Simha* ('valorous lion') and *Abhinava Bhargava* (Emperor Of Acting). He is also referred to as 'The Phoenix of Indian Cinema'. He adopted the screen name Vishnuvardhan at the insistence of legendary director Puttanna Kanagal, who directed his maiden film, *Naagarahaavu* — one of the finest movies ever made in Kannada. This movie gave him the image of 'the angry young man of Kannada cinema'.

There are several other important figures whom I haven't discussed in this chapter, such as K.C. Reddy, S. Nijalingappa, Kengal Hanumanthaiah, Gangadhara Rao DeshPande, R. R. Diwakar and Hardekar Manjappa, among others, who were equally important in the making of the Karnataka State and contributing to the Kannada

identity, since my research is restricted to an area of visual cultural studies and to the making of the Kannada identity.

Ambareesh

Malavalli Huche Gowda Amarnath or **M.H.Amarnath** — **Ambareesh** to his fans — was born on 29 May 1952 in Doddarasinakere village near KM Doddi of Maddur taluk in Mandya district of Karnataka. This hugely popular star, also titled 'Rebel Star' and '*Mandyada Gandu*' is also a prominent politician. His grandfather was the legendary violinist Tirumakudalu Chowdiah, after whom the famous Chowdiah Memorial Hall and Chowdiah Road in Bangalore are named. Being born into a Gowda family there was pressure on him to lead the Vokkaliga community. Ambareesh was elected to the 12th Lok Sabha from Mandya parliamentary constituency on a Janata Dal ticket. He later joined the Indian National Congress and represented Mandya Lok Sabha constituency for two more terms. He was Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting in the 14th Lok Sabha, but resigned over his dissatisfaction with the Cauvery Dispute Tribunal award. However, the resignation was not formally accepted. Though he was defeated in the May 2009 General Elections, he still continues to be in politics with a parallel career in films, and acting as a mentor to the Kannada film industry.

Chidanandamurthy and Aluru

efore moving further with the discussion on the circumstantial need for identity and representation I wish to quote from the essay titled *Kannada Rashtryiyatheya Swaroopa* from the book *Sahitya Kathana* by Kannada scholar and literary critic D. R. Nagaraj who compares two renowned and celebrated scholar-activists of Kannada nationalism at two points in historical time and space during the evolution of Kannada culture — Aluru Venkata Rao and Chidanandamurthy.

He quotes the words of Aluru: "Karnatakatva (like Hindutva) is a focusing lens. Through it we see not just Bharat but the entire world. The rays of the world and the rays of India are embedded in our lens of Karnatakatva... we should not forget that the idea of Karnataka is bigger than that of Kannada... the health of a state is not determined by the health of the linguistic majority, but by that of the linguistic minority... when in Dharwad a Marathi library was about to close down, I took away all the books, integrated it with my library and returned it to the Marathi speaking community when PAGE 66 OF 413 they felt confident about restarting it... Columbus discovered America, I too had to search and find anew Karnataka, I found it after a lot of effort and study."

Nagaraj juxtaposes it with this text from Chidanandamurthy: "Arise, awake, Kannada people! Intellectuals and politicians are cheating you by invoking pseudo terms like 'international brotherhood', 'national unity' and 'linguistic chauvinism'. A Kannadiga can never be a chauvinist; have faith in your tradition... let us respect people speaking other languages, but if they come to Karnataka and try to colonise us we should not tolerate it... the kindness of a person with self-pride is different from the kindness of a weakling, Karnataka should digest the good in other cultures but should retain its own identity."

These similar texts are quoted and discussed by Sugata Srinivasaraju in his book Keeping Faith With The Mother Tongue. He points out that "Nagaraj argues that while Aluru has a vision of self-confidence, Murthy speaks from a position of insecurity. If Aluru sways towards 'spiritual nationalism', the nationalism that Murthy professes stems out of fear and anxiety. For Aluru nationalism should become a spiritual tool, instead of it becoming a mere political tool, to integrate the memories and minds of the people. He says "nationalism is a form of spiritual anger". But Murthy builds his nationalist logic on hatred, and in fact traces the starting point of Kannada culture to a trivial incident that takes place when the Kadamba king Mayura Sharma goes to Kanchi in Tamil Nadu. He says that Kannada pride was awakened when Mayura Sharma was insulted by the Pallavas. Nagaraj not only questions such imagination of starting points of cultures, but says that Murthy makes a minor wrestle into a metaphor of profound historial dimensions". Here Sugatha mentions that the trend of Kannadigas having a 'tense' relationship with neighbouring Tamils is a result of such spurious imagination. In the narratives that relate to the release of the Cauvery river water to Veerappan's kidnapping of Kannada filmstar Rajkumar and to the debate on the according of classical language status to Tamil, this imagination of hatred plays a major role.

Nagaraj further argues that there is a symbiotic relationship between Kannada nationalism and the idea of a Hindu state or Hindutva. In Aluru it gets downplayed because of his other "liberal and sensitive" pursuits, but in Murthy it has become the truth, sprawled across his sub-conscious. Then he goes on to point out that unlike the beliefs of the two revered Kannada scholars, modern Kannada sensibility has been hugely enriched by Christian and Muslim thought streams. Quoting a research work he says, of the 240 folk poets of the 19th and 20th centuries listed in north Karnataka, 24

were Muslims. This is the second largest number after the 116 poets from the dominant Lingayat community. Then, it was the Christian sensibility that readied us to face the 20th century. Missionaries educationally revived Kannada and even gave the language its first dictionary. "Forget languages for a moment, even when it comes to architecture, how can we leave out the influence of Islam in the northern districts of Raichur, Bidar, Gulbarga and Bijapur? Similarly, can we leave out the splendour of the churches and their music in coastal Karnataka? To peg the idea of Karnataka on just Hindutva, is tantamount to weakening the foundation," he forcefully argues, and adds that since Murthy fails to take all this into account, his chariot of Karnataka is stuck in the medieval ages.

In his final argument, Nagaraj points to the three models of Kannada nationalism. One is a model that treats Karnataka like a shrine, a static reality, and professes an angstridden nationalism with (Kannada) language at the centre. This is Murthy's model. The second rejects the cultural reality of Karnataka and views it as a convenient unit of administration or a model political entity. This nationalism operates on abstract ideas, which escape the familiar route of language and culture. Nagaraj does not cite an example for this form of lifeless nationalism, but then we see this model shaping up with the surge of the IT industry in Karnataka. The third model that Nagaraj envisages is that of Karnataka as a turf of multiple realities. He re-imagines the Karnatakatva of Aluru as one of the authentic forms of protest against the global monoculture that is developed as a result of growing capitalism.

Then Sugata says that the nationalist model based on grand assumptions of the past, alienated from the dynamics of the present — the one that Nagaraj identifies as model number one — can often be tragic because it soon hits a conceptual dead-end, with a good example of the self–immolation bid that Chidananda Murthy made on a Saturday afternoon in August 1997. Out of sheer frustration that Kannada was losing ground in Karnataka, he jumped into the Tungabhadra river near Hampi, the very same historical site where many unification meetings and vital events had taken place. Luckily he was saved by a boatman. I reproduce here the translated excerpts of his self-immolation note. Incidentally, it also gives a snapshot of Kannada activism in the last three decades:

"...I had taken that vow eight to nine years ago in Hampi before Lord Virupaksha in the presence of several people. 'I will bring about a pro-Kannada awareness in entire Karnataka. If I cannot, I will offer myself to the river Tungabhadra as a sacrifice, right

here.' This was no secret. That vow was a firm vow, a vow taken after thinking at great length; it was not a vow taken in the heat of the moment...

...To bring about awareness, I (actually it should be 'we') built an organisation. Kannada tasks were done — some of them. But a general awareness could not be brought about. To build an organisation, money is required, and the money has to come from the rich. How can I ask the rich for money? To get money from them is to lose the moral right to talk about injustice and exploitation. The rich have to be praised. Is all this possible? I could not create a state-level organisation. It was not just shortage of money; I also lack some qualities necessary for building an organisation. Be that as it may, I had been thinking for some months that I should do as an individual what I could not do through the organisation. I had not forgotten the vow... what I could not do through the Shakthi Kendra, I have set out to do through self-immolation.

Once I was seized of the idea, it haunted me like a ghost for two or three days. I could not see the charm of Hampi. It scared me. It was a veritable fear. On the top of it, I suffered from cold, fever and weakness. I tossed and turned in the bed. Right under the window of my room was the river, the Tungabhadra, the way to my salvation.

'The weakness of the will is abominable, give it up. Rise, oh Arjuna!';

'Arise, awake, stop not till the goal is reached'; 'power'.

'Chandi, Chamundi, demand what you want.'

'If manly enough, will you sacrifice yourself?'

'Stamp on the clay, climb, stamp again and again, let the arrogance perish.'

I remembered such poetic tenets of noble origin. The Sharanas, their courageous life, their talk, their sacrifice also came to my mind. So also did the Haridasas. I recalled the brave spirits of those who had sacrificed themselves in the cause of great values. Akka Mahadevi, who treated death as it were nothing, came to my mind. In fact my life was shaped by the teachings of such persons, the guidance of great gurus. After two or three days, fear and anxiety receded, and my resolve became stronger.

Self- sacrifice should not be a momentary decision. Knowing fully well that the imperative of fulfilling my vow continued to remain, I thought of alternatives before me if I stayed alive. Within the framework of my strength, I could not see any

alternative. I guarded myself against any imaginary alternative that may spring from a desire to live for some more time.

My *jalapravesha* is not a 'suicide'; it's self-immolation. Suicide is a sin; it's an act that takes place in a weak moment. If such a moment passes, the person may continue to live. To take a recent example, the death of Potti Sriramulu was not a suicide, it was self-immolation. I am citing it, though everyone knows about it. The Indian tradition has condemned suicide but has permitted self-immolation, though without glorifying it...

... I am afraid my writing may become a mere speech. Some have ridiculed me as one who shoots his mouth off about Kannada and does nothing else. Ours is not merely a language struggle. On that pretext, our struggle has spread to all spheres of life. These are things you know well. The Kannada Shakthi Kendra played a unique role in a number of Kannada-related issues — an independent Doordarshan; the Mahishi commission report and the Kannada Development Authority which was meant for its implementation; Kannada University (the Kannada Shakthi Kendra also played a major role in giving a fillip to the sidelined technical university and its establishment); the Gokak agitation and the language formula; the making of the statues of two poets; the installation of the Kittur Rani Chennamma statue; Belgaum-Kasargod issues; the naming of Da Ra Bendre Road; the order on name boards; useful books on the Cauvery-Krishna water disputes (as many as 10,000+ 10,000 copies have reached the people); the stoppage of Urdu news telecasts; the South-Western Railway Zone at Hubli (unfortunate that it was not done); retention of the subject of Karnataka history in CET and PUC examinations; mother tongue as medium of instruction; naming of 'Sulekere'; streamlining of the Kannada Sahitya Parishath; inquiry commission on Cauvery riots; drought relief fund; relief fund for the earthquake-hit and so on. Even so, the matter of bringing about a general awareness is unsatisfactory. You and I have struggled. There is a common awareness about Kannada in Karnataka. But that is not at all enough. By 'not at all enough', I mean exactly what the words mean.

And this is precisely what makes me burn with dissatisfaction. It has disturbed my peace of mind. It haunts me like a ghost day and night.

What next if this goes on? What next?

Where would Karnataka be?

The solution: collective awareness.

It's the awakening of the Kundalini shakthi of the Kannadiga in all his magnificence.

All this is abstract, stylized.

In fact, what has to be brought about is awareness in the chief minister, ministers, legislators, officials, litterateurs, artistes, farmers, in everyone. The regret. The desire to become the life-force of a new enthusiasm.

Let my self-immolation bring this about.

No one is pained about Kannada (except a few people). I am going with all the pain they ought to have had. They — not all of them — committed a sin by neglecting Kannada. I am carrying the burden of all their sin.

I said, 'barring a few people'. 'How many?'

How many among the highly visible people? They can be counted on the fingers of my hand.

And activists? One hundred? Two hundred?

Is this enough, oh Lord Virupaksha?

I found it difficult to go from town to town, and from person to person to propagate the cause of Kannada. It was something I could not do. Look here, I will enter everyone's mind through my self-immolation.

I will touch their inner consciousness; I will pray, call them with love; I will cry, I will haunt them. In their consciousness, I will become lightning, thunder, a thunderbolt.

Oh, the people of Kannada, don't just warm up to this as mere poetry. It is my lord, the anguished call of a brother who was born with the same blood that runs in your veins...

...Bless Karnataka, bless India. I am smiling as I enter the river. My *namaskara* to everyone.

Jaya Bhuvaneshwari Jaya Pampambika, (Hail Bhuvaneshwari, hail Goddess of Hampi)

Jaya Virupaksha, (Hail Virupaksha, the diety of the Hampi temple)

Jaya Bharata jananiya tanujathe, (Hail the daughter of Mother India)

Jaya he Karnataka Mathe ... " (Hail the victorious mother of Karnataka)

This highly emotional and expressive tale of anxieties is Chidanandamurthy's brand of nationalism which is not similar to Aluru Venkata Rao's or A.N. Krishna Rao's nationalism.

This note is presented here to mark the fact that the nationalism that each activist preached, had identities of a similar kind, though the idealism and the method of expression differed. Here, Chidanandamurthy, like Aluru Venkata Rao followed the visual appraisal and the declaration of motherhood of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari. Kuvempu, in a poem discussed in a subsequent chapter, refers to Mother Bhuvaneshwari as the beloved daughter of Mother India.

Fortunately, at least the visual representative structure of form remains the same in the above cases too. The letter also illustrates the emotional expressiveness of the nationalism impressed on the supremacy of the Mother Goddesss. In fact none of the frontline activists dared to go against the national Gandhian idealisms in the local structure too.

The "Where would Karnataka be?

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It's the awakening of the Kundalini shakthi of the Kannadiga in all his magnificence.

All this is abstract, stylized."

mentioned in the letter of Chidanandamurthy refer to the same visual narration of the 'Shakthi Peetha', (shrines of goddess powers) which links further to my upcoming evidence and its role in the identity-making discussed in the further chapters on the conceptualizations of "Andanappa Dodametti's 16 goddess representations in direct reference and abstract symbolization on the existing Shakti Peethas of Karnataka of various regions of the geography of the State, thereby representing the respective demography and public." In the divided demography of the State, this had a very serious purpose and role to play — of unifying to fight for the common issues of land, language and identity, thus merging all of these prime focuses into a single line concept of Mother Goddess Bhuvaneshwari and her represented flag as the symbolic statement of the State and its sub-nationalism.

In this context, the place where Chidanandamurthy attempted self-immolation is very crucial. It is the very same place where gatherings for the unification movement had taken place, and which had echoed with pledges and prayers for the fight for identity. It is the very same place which was once the capital of the Vijayanagar empire. And it is the same place where the temple of Lord Virupaksha and the shrine of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari stand. That the theatrical attempt at self-immolation took place here, adds to the notion of Kannada, and the trigger of nationhood revives to another level with the staging of a sacrifice to the goddess.

Asserting on the value and the iconography of the goddess, here I wish to point out that the concept of the Mother Goddess created for the sole purpose of the unification of Karnataka and to give it a sense of identity, tended to gravitate to a higher order of superpower for whom an activist like Chidanandamurthy attempted to sacrifice his life. Here a close parallel that can be drawn from the national movement is the case of Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekar Azad, Sukhdev Thapar, Rajguru, Ram Prasad Bismil and others But it fails to transcend to make the most of this opportunity to lavish it on the visual medium, with such a potential real-life incident the visual makers fails to transmigrate such sensitive breaking news to the best poster of the decade on the nation of Kannada.

But even with such ground-breaking real-time inspiration, despite the fact that it was termed "emotional" or that it marked high "anxiety" why did these cases failed to make it into the visual plethora? Why didn't these sensational happenings get translated into a powerful visual medium?

Why is it that these weren't either demonstrated as tableaus or great patriotic actions?

These questions may require a different deviation to answer, but to a greater extent one of the most important aspects here is the crowd awareness, the wish of the crowd to *see* and not *read*. The prevalence of illiteracy even during the period ranging from the 1950s to the 1990s had the similar issues, but several such incidents went unnoticed in the visual world.

Incidentally, another literary stalwart, B.M. Srikantaiah, a Professor of Kannada, with a very strong base in English, Greek and Sanskrit literature, had given a speech at Dharwad in 1921, titled *Kannada Mathu Taleyattuva Bage*, meaning 'my mother tongue raising its head', which served almost as a de facto manifesto for the Kannada cause in the early years. In a note that he prepared for the Mysore census report of

1941, he refers to 'resurgent' Kannada and speaks about its 'trends and aims'. He highlighted eight main points, under which the following thoughts were expressed: "rouse the men, women, children for Kannada in a re-unified Karnataka; reorganise the standard language; purify, strengthen and discipline it; absorb world-culture... in the great literatures of the East and West. Let there be in Karnataka a few specialists in each, to bring in light from all quarters; establish a living catholic taste. Experiment in freedom. Work out the old things and new in a sympathetic imagination, to ennoble and enrich the human spirit; no more meaningless conventions or flourishes for pedants. Write for the people: simply, sincerely, strongly."

B. M. Sri (as he was fondly known) offers a universal approach. In his poems too, he compares both the mother of England with India along with her daughter Kannada Mathe with respect to both the worlds and with sheer compassion and devotion as a universal appeal. The point here that I wish to highlight is that the concept of Kannada mother is again an accepted formula.

Kuvempu, celebrated as the Rashtrakavi (national poet) was born in a Vokkaliga family, considered a low caste in Karnataka. He, however, offered a different contribution to the making of the Kannada identity. He wrote using Brahminical elements like Sanskrit words, verses from the Bhagavad Gita, Vedas and Upanishads. However, his novels had unconventional themes. He sought emancipation from his Shudra origins and the low caste dialect of his birth (in Kannada each caste uses a different dialect) by using language as a tool: using Sanskrit, and English which doesn't have any caste connotation.

Kuvempu's very simple poems, and his spectacular magnum opus *Ramayana Darshanam*, plays, and novels such as *Kanooru Heggadathi* and *Malegalalli Madumagalu*, are even today considered great contributions to the literary tradition of India.

Kuvempu even wrote against the Mysore Maharaja, , though he ironically did learn and teach at in the Maharaja's College, Mysore.

From a Vokkaliga Kannada speaker, Kuvempu consciously moved to a non-Vokkaliga identity through creative emancipation to English and Sankrit, and then back to Kannada, this time very consciously using Shudra language, thereby proving his intellectual calibre. As a writer and a very serious poet, he can be compared to Tagore too. Very interestingly, in his writings he uses references to the *kajana*, a bird found in Tirthahalli, in contrast to *kogile*, the cuckoo, based on a belief in Malanad areas that the *kogile* has a negative connotation, symbolizing lack of rain in the coming season.

These subtle symbolic representations which went against established conventional thought were the main features that made Kuvempu stand out.

In contrast was Da. Ra. Bendre, whose mother tongue was Marathi. Though from a Brahmin background, he liberally used folk elements in his works — even his lines borrowed from the Upanishads had a folk style of expression, sung as a celebration. The local dialect and the folk language he used even for serious poetry, appealed to a large spectrum of audience including children, the language he employed being so simple that even labourers could sing his compositions, though they delineated the philosophy of the Upanishads. He was also a master in balancing with complexed works of philosophy like Kuvempu.

Writer Masti Venkatesh Iyengar served as a govt employee, District Collector, known as the father of Kannada short stories. He used the form of the modern short story to the fullest extent, almost creating this genre in Kannada. Serving government as District Collector Masti was known for his historical novel and was known as the father of Kannada short stories.

Shivram Karanth, on the other hand, was an all-rounder. Active in theatre and Yakshagana, he also painted, made films, and was a prolific writer, penning detective novels, poetry and articles on science. He can be credited with reviving the Yakshagana art form almost single-handedly. He also contributed to the science encyclopedia and was an educationist with a concern for teaching methodology.

Kuvempu represented Mysore, Masti represented and was Bangalore-based, Bendre represented Dharwad, and Karanth represented South Kanara(Karnataka). However, though, their work was anchored in specific regions, all of them were pan-Karnataka writers, extremely popular in all regions. Incidentally, Kuvempu's first poetry collection was published by Masti in Bangalore!

All these poets supported and contributed to the Kannada movement, and accepted and glorified the figure of the Kannada Mother Goddess through their works in their own style. None of them ever stood against the theory of the Mother Goddess or the concept of the flag or the idea of the Kannada State.

A. N. Krishna Rao, a progressive novelist, leader and Kannada activist, a friend of writer Mulk Raj Anand and celebrated artist Nandalal Bose, was culturally magnanimous, with a fine understanding of Western literature and culture. In his autobiography *Barahagarana Baduku* (A Writer's Life) mentions a curious incident:

"Every Friday, Gurudev Tagore read out his new works to teachers and students of Shantiniketan. After the reading, students were allowed to ask questions and clarify their doubts. One Friday, after reading, Kudja Garji and one Bengali student got up together to ask a question. Gurudev turned towards Garji and said: 'Please sit down, let me answer my Bengali friend first.' I was surprised and wondered if a world-poet and a universal human being too could reside in such narrow compartments."

Krishna Rao wrote the foreword to Andanappa Dodametti's *Karnataka Mahimna Stotra* which contains illustrations of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari by artist Kondacharya. Krishna Rao vociferously acknowledges the concept of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari and her representation for the cause of identity-making.

These examples of Kannada poets, activists and leaders are crucial to understand the trajectory of the Kannada movement and its subtle and varying incandescence, in contributing to the concept of the Mother Goddess of Kannada and to the identity and representations of Karnataka statehood.



The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation

CHAPTER –IV: THE CONCEPT OF KANNADA MOTHER GODDESS "BHUVANESHWARI" AND HER FLAG

- A. The flag the colour [the first flag representation, the colour, political party]
- B. Mother, goddess, Thayee Bhuvaneshwari

A. THE FLAG THE COLOUR [THE FIRST FLAG REPRESENTATION, THE COLOUR, POLITICAL PARTY]

The Kannada Bavuta the Karnataka flag also has its evolution in parallel with the birth of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, from the colour symbolisms of the vernacular structure of usage from the turmeric arishina and crimson kumkuma extracted from the surrounding influence of the Kannada unification movement.

In an essay Janaki Nair says: "In its early stages, the political models of the Kannada movement were those of Tamil nationalism. The geographies of violence during the mid-1960s anti-Hindi movement in Bangalore revealed clear patterns of Tamil-led street protests: apocryphal tales still circulate of Kannadigas being "shamed" into resisting Hindi imposition by the "gift of bangles" from Tamil activists. We may note the very specific ways in which language politics was gendered even in its early stages, masculinising the movement for linguistic solidarity, even while the language itself was symbolically feminised as "Kannada Bhuvaneswari", a female deity to be worshipped and protected. Many Kannada activists cut their political teeth within the Dravida Kazhagam (DK, rationalist) movement. The Kannada flag designed by Ma Ramamurthy in the 1960s bore more than striking resemblance to the flamboyant colours of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam flag, black and red, although perhaps not unwittingly, evocative of the sacral colours of Hinduism, red and yellow."

Recently in the State Legislative Assembly, an MLA sought a uniform flag for the State. In response to this, the Kannada and Culture Minister said: "The Flag Code does not allow flags for states. Our national flag is the symbol of integrity and sovereignty of our nation. If states have their separate flags, it could diminish the importance of the national flag. Besides, there are possibilities of it leading to narrow-minded regional feelings." This issue was under the spotlight during a much-hyped controversy when a Kannada activist group had flashed the flag of Kannada with a present-day leader's portrait in the centre of the flag (which central space is usually dedicated to Thayee Bhuvaneshwari). This led to a debate in the media over the misuse of the flag of Kannada and a petition was filed against the president of this activist group. The issue reached the High Court which said: "The State cannot hoist any flag other than the national flag. You can use the colours for decoration, not as a flag." The functional flag thus got legal clarity for not to be hoisted, though it had been in use all around Karnataka since 1956.

As per the research of C. R. Govinda Raju and R. N. Chandrashekar, the history of the flag begins from the post-Kannada unification movement. Until then it was much discussed but had never transformed into an idea or a functional flag. The flags of two important local parties, namely Kannada Paksha party of M. R. Murthy and Kannada Chaluvali Paksha of Vatal Nagaraj, were the first flags to represent Kannada activism and identity. The first flag was yellow, with a Karnataka map in the centre with a sprouting ear of corn. The form was similar to early temple flags with two triangular corners on the right side. This flag was conceptualized at a 1966 meeting where the M. R. Murthy group and Vatal Nagaraj group agreed on the issue of the flag in Bengaluru at Mysore Vanijya Bhavana. At this meeting, titled as 'Akhila Karnataka Kannadigara Bhruhat Samavesha' Mr Murthy took up the presidentship & Vatal nagaraj inaugurated the meeting, in the presence of other members of the party.

Later with M. R. Murthy's rejection of the old flag (due to differences of opinion and political reasons), the second flag was created in Arlepette of Bangalore, now called Cottonpet, by Karnataka Mitramandali's B. N. Eshwarappa and others. Opposing the DMK flag, they mooted a contrary colour scheme of red and yellow. The flag was to be rectangular, with no map on it. This was approved by R.M. Murthy, and the new flag, suggested as the functional flag for Karnataka, was also adopted as the party flag.

During 1966-68, R. M. Murthy declared this flag as the activist flag, while Vatal Nagaraj continued to use the old flag as his party flag. With two flags in use, there was confusion over which one was to be used as a state flag and which one represented the party.

There were three major reasons for the formation of the two local parties, Murthy's Kannada Paksha and Nagaraj's Kannada Chaluvali Paksha. The first was the 1967 elections, the second reason was the growing DMK activism and the third, the Mahajan report., thus Kananda Paksha Party was formed by M R murthy and Kannada Cheluvali Paksha by Vatal Nagaraj.

The functional flag of Kannada adopted from the Kannada Paksha Party thus transformed into the identity of Kannada and Karnataka, and the usages of this flag, in Karnataka led to two major factors of interest, which I wish to analyse. The first is the installation of the flag in practically all the streets of Bengaluru, visually reaching saturation point as countless flags fluttered on poles painted red and yellow and mounted on cement pedestals decorated with fancy tiles carrying pictures of goddesses perceived as Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, or images of gods such as Lord Ganesha or any other god images. These installations were the territorial reaction to the early Tamil attack in Bengaluru, and seen since then as a cautioning symbol, which proclaims the land as Karnataka. Though the flag was an immediate reaction to strengthen and represent Kannada and Karnataka, this image installation became an imitation of other regional expressions, which question the authenticity of the native culture.

Of similar symbolism is the massive entrance gate built at the entrances of all major Kannada colonies and streets of Bengaluru with these gates being titled as 'Vijayanagarada Hebbagilu', meaning, the great entrance of the Vijayanagar empire. Another similar public domain symbol is the flag painted in the autorickshaw stands of Bangalore that proclaims regional control and territorialism.

The second major factor I wish to analyse is: are these symbols used, overused or misused, especially in the post-modern circumstances? If the symbols strengthen the identity and security of Kannada and Kannadigas in Karnataka or elsewhere, do they not, in the meanwhile, threaten immigrants and other regional communities in Karnataka? Are we even today living in a territorial space, much like the innocent people in Jammu and Kashmir or in North East India, living under the shadow of hostility? Or like the tragic Tamil victims of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka? Or those caught up in the crossfire of the Telengana issue of Andhra Pradesh, or of the dwellers of regions such as Kannur of the Malabar coast of Kerala, who need to think twice before flaunting any party symbols like the communist red or tri-coloured attire, for party politics is known for the highest crime in this region. If these symbols are used for all protests regardless of the reason in Karnataka — the issues ranging from toll collection on the road to the new international airport to jobs for Kannadigas in the IT sphere!

Doesn't installation of such symbols otherwise also proclaim that these territories (where they figure) are claimed and declared as Karnataka? By extension, does it also mean that other peaceful areas of Karnataka where there are hardly any such symbols visible are not the regions of the claimed Karnataka? These symbols tasked with the function of strengthening the local identity, have with the pace of time, also been shorn of their true purpose, thus leading to a loss of assertion of the local culture. Another striking symbolic cold war seen in the cosmopolitan public domain is in the Bengaluru city mall culture, where the flag installations are strongly asserted in the visually riveting advertisements of the global corporate identities and brands such as McDonalds, Pizza Corner and KFC. Interestingly the chances of noticing the flag are minimal, and the visual merchandising of the brands in the window shelves and in the massive flex is highlighted within the centralized air-conditioned space. This in turn implies that the installations are not the prime form, but the 'form for the sake of form'.

In this context I wish to quote the lines of Partha Mitter from his work The Triumph Of Modernism on engagement on the issues of artistic production and the construction of national identity in late colonial India. "Instead of using 'influence' as a convenient tool to describe the introduction of modernism in the non-western societies, we may turn to the concept of 'paradigm change' postulated by Thomas Kuhn in the history of science. The adoption of the new language of modernism by (the) Indian artist was necessitated by the change in artistic imperatives in a rapidly globalizing world, which prompted them to discard the previous artistic paradigm centering on representational art. Second, influence as art historical category misses out more significant aspects of cultural encounters, as for instance, the enriching value of cultural mixtures that have nourished societies since time immemorial. The claimed purity of cultures is simply a nationalist myth fabricated in the nineteenth century. Arguably, the strongest cultures have often developed through constant cross-fertilization and crossing of cultural frontiers, though the original forms and ideas necessarily acquire a new meaning in the new environment. But what one must remember is that these exchanges of ideas and forms need not necessarily be a question of domination and dependence nor do they represent a loss of self." Thus, to theorise the argument that I discussed here, the contemporary visual culture, here the popular visual culture may not necessarily be influenced by the inherited culture of the defined geographic traditions but a paradigm change that has developed through constant cross-fertilization. Here, in this context, the south Indian symbolic art and style and its crossing of cross-cultural frontiers, though the form circumstantially acquires a new dimension to the existing meaning in the changing environment of contemporary cosmopolitan Bengaluru.

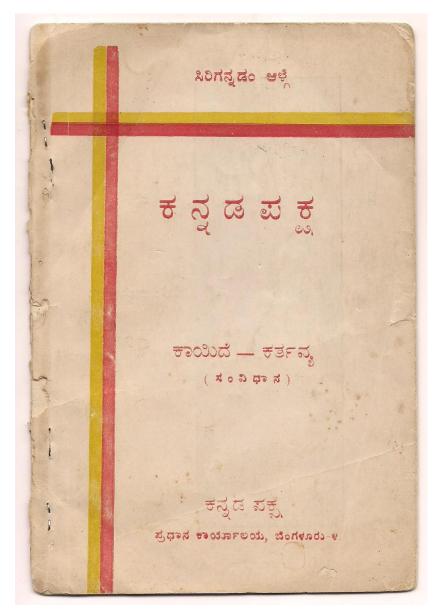


Figure 9 Brochure of Kannada Paksha, rare evidence with flag colour representations. 1960

B. MOTHER, GODDESS, THAYEE BHUVANESHWARI

In a land with countless kinds of gods and goddesses, in the closing decades of the nineteenth century was born a novel deity named Bharat Matha who overshadowed the rest of the deities, and stood as the prominent anchoring deity over the following decades throughout India, even to the present times. It is this iconic representation that overthrew the empire which had ruled most of the world., and it is the same empire that had to withdraw their colony to Free states of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. It is this symbolic representation which wielded the power to attract and unite the scattered mass population fissured by caste, language, religion and regional sentiments, challenging the irrevocable rupture caused by catastrophical incidents between the two dominant religious communities of Hindus and Muslims.

This chapter is about the parallels in the source of the concept of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari and the principal iconic representation of Bharat Matha and her entanglement in the process of the freedom struggle since the 1880s, and how this parallel concept is drawn in the smaller geography of Karnataka and how the implications of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari engage upon the making of the Kannada nation. Through the visual existence of both the concepts, here I would be analysing the myriad ways of portrayal of the goddess in print, poster art and other forms of visualizations, with a view towards a key proposition. Here I would like to draw the perceptions of Sumathi Ramaswamys Goddess And the Nation, as the context and cases examined are of more or less close to my subject, and since the concept of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari is drawn from the nationalistic movement of Bharat Matha, the direct references are obvious.

Circumstantially the avatars of both goddesses have been presented in a venerable antiquity, tangled between the new and the old of a sceptical, conflicted and fraught modern India with the history of colonial experience. The visual image of both seems to have a hesitant novelty and ambiguous modernity, considering the diverse pictorial appearances from numerous poetry and prose offerings clothing the goddess in archaic terms and rooting her in an immemorial past.

Here the visual being used as a powerful tool tactically applying sentimental and emotional values for a constructive strategic approach to attain freedom is just one side of the scene. These visually anthropomorphized concepts act as a weapon in the public domain with its varied multi-faceted versions from sacred to political persuasion. With the concept of motherhood being borrowed from European thinkers as pointed out by Rabindranath Tagore, here the evolution of Bharat Matha from the European concepts is manifest in the visual evidence illustrated. The parallels were the emergence of the flag and goddess in a time of need for Karnataka. The movement parallel to the freedom struggle was the cry for a separate state along with the cry for freedom.

Due to the inapplicability of the concept of Bharat Matha, due to lack of awareness of the local, accepted, visual symbolic representations of how Bharat Matha was visualized and its north Indian characterisation, specially due to its Bengali and Marathi influence, in south India the Telugu and Kannada speaking populations could not connect to it, and thus devised a new parallel concept of their own homogenized, vernacular and personalized version of the goddess. The power of the sentimental values of motherhood and godhood and the fusion of the context led the thinkers to derive a formulated version that could act upon every member of the public relating to the socio-political need. This situation led to the search for a local popular established iconic figurisation as to be supplanted to the same reference of goddess. Here the adaptation of Bhuvaneshwari as the goddess emerges in the public domain, pushing the boundaries of the walls of temples as well as perceptions of the idea of a deity to a broad and representative mother goddess visualization for all.

Before we get to the identities of motherhood and nation, I would like to debate on the context of the notion of nation. Rabindranath Tagore in the context to nationalism says: "I have not come here, however, to discuss the guestion as it affects the future of all humanity. It is not a question of the British government, but of government by the nation — the nation which is the organized self-interest of a whole people, where it is least human and least spiritual. Our only intimate experience of the nation is with the British nation; as far as the government by the nation goes there are reasons to believe that it is one of the best. Then, again, we have to consider that the west is necessary to the east. We are complementary to each other because of our different aspects of truth. Therefore if it be true that the spirit of the west has come upon our field in the guise of a storm it is nevertheless scattering living seeds that are immortal. And when in India we become able to assimilate in our life what is permanent in western civilization we shall be in a position to bring about a reconciliation of these two great worlds. Then will come to an end the one-sided dominance in which history of India does not belong to one particular race but to a process of creation to which various races of the world contributed - the Dravidians and the Aryans, the ancient Greeks

and the Persians, the Mohammedans of the west and those of central Asia. Now at last has come the turn of the English to become true to this history and bring to it the tribute of their life, and we neither have the right nor the power to exclude this people from the building of the destiny of India. Therefore what I say about the nation has more to do with the history of Man than specially with that of India.

"I am not against one nation in particular, but against the general idea of all nations. What is the nation? It is the aspect of a whole people as an organized power. The organization incessantly keeps up the insistence of the population on becoming strong and efficient. But this strenuous effort after strength and efficiency drains man's energy from his higher nature where he is self-sacrificing and creative. For thereby man's power of sacrifice is diverted from his ultimate object, which is moral, to the maintenance of this organization, which is mechanical. Yet in this he feels all the satisfaction of moral exaltation and therefore becomes supremely dangerous to humanity. He feels relieved of the urging of his conscience when he can transfer his responsibility to this machine which is the creation of his intellect and not of his complete moral personality. By this device the people which loves freedom perpetuates slavery in a large portion of the world with the comfortable feeling of pride in having done its duty; men who are naturally just can be cruelly unjust both in their act and their thought, accompanied by a feeling that they are helping the world to receive its desserts; men who are honest can blindly go on robbing others of their human rights for self-aggrandisement, all the while abusing the deprived for not deserving better treatment. We have seen in our everyday life even small organizations of business and profession produce callousness of feeling in men who are not naturally bad, and we can well imagine what a moral havoc it is causing in a world where whole people are furiously organizing themselves for gaining wealth and power.

"Nationalism is a great menace. It is the particular thing which for years has been at the bottom of India's troubles. And inasmuch as we have been ruled and dominated by a nation that is strictly political in its attitude, we have tried to develop within ourselves, despite our inheritance from the past, a belief in our eventual political destiny."

By the above statements of Rabindranath Tagore, with the perception of nationhood being borrowed from the British, the subject again gets more entangled within the realm of the main question of Bharat Matha or Kannada Matha? The whole notion of the need to visualize a Bharat Matha to unify the nation and to give a form of PAGE 87 OF 413

representation itself stands at a juxtaposition and ambivalent state of view. Here I would also draw attention to the thoughts of Aluru Venkata Rao "...Karnataka is not just land [naadu]. Not just a language. Not just art and architecture. Not just history. Just as the individual person, a country [desa] is said to have three levels of the body [deha] the gross [sthula], the subtle [sukshma] and the spiritual [karana]. Just as an individual attains salvation [moksha] through development of the triple bodies, so does a desa [land/country] attain progress [vikasa] through these bodies. The gross or the external body of a desa is made up of its political, social, educational and similar institutions, and its subtle body comprise its language, history, art and architecture, and culture. But its spirit or spiritual core is its religious life [dharma]..." explaining his concept of Karnataka in his journal Jaya Karnataka.

So, here we are, with the two contrary sides of the same subject related yet entangled, but to analyze the subject of nationhood to the mother goddess, in this argument is sceptically forced. In both the perceptions we find the result ultimately converging into one unified proposition.

Thus. with the quest for the nationhood and its representative symbolic visualization of Bharat Matha seem to have very tactical, mystical roots of theory in relation to the nation and its notion. Sumathi Ramaswamy in The Goddess And The Nation, states the process of the making of the goddess from Bengal's very own Abanindranath Tagore [1871-1951] in the Swadeshi nativist movement around in 1905, for a further understanding of the emotional emergency of the need for the icon: "With a neo-Bengal revivalist style of depicting the female form as ethereal and austere, even wispy ...printed in a local magazine with the caption titled The spirit of the motherland: in this picture – which would need to be enlarged and printed... in two or three bright but delicate colours — we have a combination of perfect refinement with great creative imagination. Bharat-mata on the green earth. Behind her is the blue sky. Beneath the exquisite little feet is a curved line of four misty white lotuses. She has four arms that always, to Indian thinking, indicate the divine power. Her sari is severe, even to Puritanism, in its folding lines. And behind the noble sincerity of eyes and brows we are awed by the presence of the broad white halo. Shiksha-diksha-anna-bastra [education, sacred advice, food, cloth], the four gifts of the motherland to her children, she offers in her four hands."

Initially named as Banga Mata [Bengal mother] and later called as Bharat Matha, probably one of those well attempted and critically appreciated works as a nationalistic aesthetics of modern India, this work did have its native influence of the

look of Bengali women, but the divine stature and the enunciation of the pride and the power did deliver to the context, making it the "native" concept, with the visual representation not just a mere interpretation but a symbolic iconic status, set apart from the innumerable predominant Hindu temple depictions and wall paintings which make it challenging to cut across the established visual language and culture of depiction. Neither did this image anyway lined on those of the academic illusionist style with which the not many references further were draw in the posters and calendar art forms, instead totally new versions of Bharath Mata were pushed to the boundaries and reprinting the mechanic chromolithograph production to a burgeoning popular image culture. Here we observe two paths taking shape in terms of stylization, one the Bengali style and another, the academic and Ravi Varma style.

Mother India and the journey of her metamorphic evolution have contributions from Tamil Nadu, then the southern presidency of Madras, where a 1907 cover illustration showed a sari-clad seated woman with one arm extended to bless a group of men attired to represent diverse communities paying homage to her. This image, which was aimed at welcoming a Goddess of New Year, was identified as Bharat Matha, with a globe focusing on the map of India. In parallel, the movement for Kannada identity and its freedom activism took shape with the quest for the identity of Karnataka and Kannada. These parallel emotional yet tactical intellegencia of the socio-political momentum was the objective that was sought by the leaders then, initially for territorial uprise of unified strength though in comfortable language, but driven by common interests and to a single binding force for freedom and unification.

Here, the interesting fact is that many in the south did get highly influenced by the fiery oratory of Bipin Chandra Pal [1858-1932], such much as Tamil poet-patriot Subramania Bharati [1882-1921].

Further, thanks to other geographical poets the image creation sprouted in respective versions.

Here I wish to point to the concept of the mother in the popular phase of ipre-modern and modern times of India, by referring to one of the most well known paintings of Raja Ravi Varma, which



Figure 10 Sita Bhoopravesam, Ravi Varma, Imitations

Illustrates a specific incident in the Ramayana, where Sita parts from Rama in the arms of her mother: Mother Earth. Though this epic is quite popular and has various interpretations, the concept of Mother Earth is predominantly evident. In fact all Hindu religious texts specify earth as "mother" with the name such as "Bharatha" had been in the subcontinent of India since Vedic period. The fact I wish to highlight is that the concept of mother, and the emotional, relative, contextual usage of the word 'mother' acts as a great concept that can overrule any factors of questioning, making it so powerful that it has transformed into a visual representation for which patriots give up their life. Its power is evident in the the contemporary context too: sample the usage of the catch phrase "Save Mother Earth" even in public transport in the United States.

The unimaginable exquisiteness and the unchallenged potential of the concept of mother, especially in India with its emotional connection, is unscalable. Thus this concept of mother is not borrowed from the west. In fact, the early Indus Valley Civilization and its archeological evidence of the Mother Goddess, would perhaps be sufficient enough to prove it scientifically and intellectually.



Figure 11 Figurine of the Mother Goddess, Indus Valley Civilization

THE 'BHUVANESHWARI' CONCEPT

In *On the Concept of History*, Walter Benjamin in 1940 said: "The true picture of the past *whizzes* by. Only as a picture, which flashes its final farewell in the moment of its recognizability, is the past to be held fast. "The truth will not run away from us" – this remark by Gottfried Keller denotes the exact place where historical materialism breaks through historicism's picture of history. For it is an irretrievable picture of the past, which threatens to disappear with every present, which does not recognize itself as meant in it."

The pictorial representation of Sri Bhuvaneshwari is evolved from roots based on the hypothetical possibilities of existing three derivations. One, the Hampi Virupaksha temple source and the second from the Kadamba dynasty's traditional goddesses and finally the representation of Sri Bhuvaneshwari from the Mysore Mummadi Wodeyar palace's Mysore style painting picturization linked from the descriptive source of *Sritatvanidhi – Lalitha Sahasranama*.

The concept of Bhuvaneshwari and its origin is found in the Hindu Sanskrit texts based on *Devi Mahatmyam*.

The *Epigraphia Carnatica* Vol 5, published by the Institute of Kannada Studies, University of Mysore, 1976, states two strands of material evidence of Bhuvaneshwari representations:

First in the inscription number 157, Chamundi Betta: "Records of the presentation of a gold jewel decorated in the form of star shaped garlands, *nakshatra-malika*, with 30 verses in Sanskrit engraved thereupon to the Goddess Chamundi, at the Adi Chamundeshwari temple, by Krishnaraja Vodeya-III, dated 1857 AD, October 27." In the sixtieth line on *Bhuvaneshwari, Vagreshwari* is mentioned. These are implicatory verses on Goddess Chamundi, who is praised in several names.

The second is stated as inscription number 277, Mugur, "These are the labels in the 19th century characters, giving names of the various figures in mortar," in the temple of Goddess Tripurasundari of Mugur by Amritavasani a servant of the Mysore king in the 19th century. In the information on the inscriptions, 42 sculptures and the name of each is detailed, in which the 32nd is Yogakshari Bhuvaneshwari Ammanavaru and the 33rd is Bhuvaneshwariammanavaru.

The description of the goddess:

"The complexion of Bhuvaneshwari is the red colour of the rising sun and she has three eyes. Her crown is adorned with the cresent moon and she is seen wearing all ornaments including *kundalas, hara,* a broad belt round the waist and *kankanas* set with rubies. She is seated upon a *padmasana*. In two of her hands are the *pasa* and the *ankusa* and the remaining hands are held in the *abhaya* and the *varada* poses."

This is mentioned in page no: 371 of *Elements Of Hindu Iconography* by T.A. Gopinatha Rao, in volume 1 part II, which deals with Aditya and *Nava Grahas* (nine planets) and their symbolic features and images worshipped, devi , *parivara devatas*, and measurement of proportions in images.



Figure 12 A, & B. Ruins of the Bhuvaneshwari on the temple at Mugur near Mysore.



Figure 13 The kadamba dynasty goddess, at Bhuvanagiri, the temple diety Bhuvaneshwari

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Figure 14 The above visual is from the original illustrated manuscript from Shakthi nidhi, Sritatvanidhi volume 1 oriental research institute publication. Bottom firsts from the left is the visual representation on Goddesss Bhuvaneshwari.

The third one with connections to the Mysore Wodeyar versions of Bhuvaneshwari, has links to *Sritatvanidhi*, the nine-volume magnum opus of H.H. Sri Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar (1794-1868), covering almost all aspects of Indian traditional knowledge in a nutshell. *Sritatvanidhi* is a compendium dealing with different themes of traditional knowledge. As declared by the author in the opening verses of Shaktinidhi, the Vedas, *agamas, tantras, puranas, dharmasatras, itihasa, mantrasastra, jyotisa and silpa* are the perennial sources for this encyclopaedic compilation. Among the nine, the first is the *Shakthinidhi* that offers a rare concept on the iconographical enumeration of the seven *chakras*, popular in *tantra and hathayoga* treatises.

This volume is named after 'Shakti'; an epithet of Goddess Chamundi, the family goddess of Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Shakti is the designation of the Supreme Mother. *Shakthinidhi* delineates the various icons of the mother goddess; the cosmic force and the source of the world. Shakthi appears as Chamunda, Mahakali, Rajarajeshwari, Mahalakshmi and Saraswati, the goddess Lalitambika dwelling in the Srichakra, the nine forms of Durga, Vagisvari, Tulasi, Gayatri, Savithri, Annapurna, Aastamahalakshmis, Catuhsastikaladevis. Also iconographically described are more than a hundred female divinities of Hindu mythology and religion collected from various sources like *Lalitopakhyana* and *Tripurasundarikalpa*.

On page number 338, the description and meditation on Goddess Bhuvaneshwari reads: "I contemplate on goddess Bhuvaneshwari. Her lustre resembles the brilliance of the rising sun and she defeats even a fresh hibiscus flower in colour. She wears the crescent moon. Her garland has luminous stars. She has three eyes. Her ear ornaments shine with various gems. She is seated on a lotus. She is adorned with necklaces, garlands, a girdle, many gems and bangles. She wears rich clothes. She carries a noose, a hook, gesture of granting gifts and that of giving fearlessness in her hands. She is the first among goddesses."

This visual evidence is presented here to justify the roots of the visual depiction and to trace it back to authentic Hindu epic texts. This visual also implies the form and identity of the Mother Goddess in her *mantra sloka*, ie, her descriptive hymns. This does not connect directly to the idea and the origin of the Kannada national goddess, the daughter of Bharat Matha. But the availability and the significance of the nature and the context of the goddess, and her well established image through tantric traditions could point to the probability of this goddess having been adopted or borrowed by the Mysore Palace, and the king, as the Mother of Kannada in the Mysorean context.

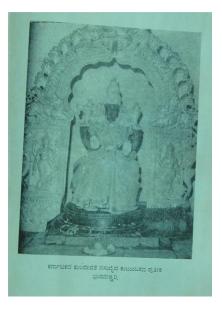




Figure 15 A & B: Image of the Kannada mother goddess at Hampi, Archival picture of prayers being offered to her on November 1, 1973, to mark the Karnataka State naming ceremony. Why hampi is been emphasizes? Hampi according to the Historians, was the central seat of the rulers of vijayanagara. Hampi was also known as Vijayanagara or Vijaya Vidyaranya Nagara. Several Shasanagalu (Inscriptions) states 'Karnatakapuravdeshwara'.

The temple of Bhuvaneshwari was built at 11 century on the stylistic construction can be dated to the construction of 11-12 century and can be ascribed to Kalyani Chalukya period. In 12 century Hampi was the central seat of great poets and laureates, where Bhuvaneshwari was refered as Pampampiga.

Hari hara (12 centruy ad) wrote Girijakalyana a Kannada prosody when he lived in Hampi, Girijakalyana inspiredby the theme of kumarasmbhava by kalidasa (5th century ad) the hero and the heoine of Girijakalyana are none other that Shiva and parvathi. Harihara was very much intended to characterize Virupaksha and Pampambika the presiding deities of hampi as inspiration to his work.

Pamapabika *alias* Bhuvaneshwari is portrayed as the mother of universe. Invocatory of Kalidasa's Raghuvamsham speak that parvathi and Parameshwara are the devine couple and parents of the universe, probably hari hara who lived in Hampi who was a great devote of shiva (virupaksha) composed Girikalyanam possibly on the same lines. The intention of Hari Hara clearly assetains Bhuvaneshwari as cult goddesss.

When Alur venkatrao who was also the great literary laurate in the beginning of the 20th century probably having known about Hari Hara and kalidasa both also having known about Bhuvaneshwari as cult diety at hampi (it also interesting to note that hampi vijayanagara kings were knowns as rulers of Karnataka deahsa, their inspriptions accredit them mighty savoreings of Karnataka and andra contry) and this possibly motivated Aur Ventaka Rao to choose Bhuvaneshwari of Hampi as Karnataka Bhuavneshwari the culty deity of yet to be born Karnataka.

In the above three derivations, each seems to have its own justifications found valid in the light of the evidences such as the traditional old stories and archeological findings, but here I wish to point out that none of these have the history of been referred to as the Bhuvaneshwari of Karnataka or Kannada.

If the Kannada Ekikarana movement has focused on the Bhuvaneshwari of the Hampi Virupaksha temple, it can also be assumed that the Kadamba goddess Bhuvaneshwari was being referred to. And to contradict these two we also have the Bhuvaneshwari version from the Mysore Wodeyars. The three derivations thus seem to have their roots in the early history of pre-modernity, but lack the authentic reference to the Kannada Bhuvaneshwari to the pre-modern times.

Nevertheless, these contradictions are themselves the base to argue upon the identity of the Bhuvaneshwari form and figure. The figures found in all the above identities seem to have an early temple structural influence, whereas the Bhuvaneshwari that we are now referring to the present times seems to nowhere have any relationship to these figures.

The visual appeal given to the early Bhuvaneshwari stylization in making of the novel deity is, of course, derived from the poetic submissions of the stalwarts of the Kannada Ekikarana movement. These poem gives the visual picture of the Bhuvaneshwari of the modern times. Here, the focus was to emotionally awaken the heterogeneous population to collectively visualize the described pain of Mother Kannada, to unify the State and its linguistic population.

Here I wish to specify a few very important and crucial poems that were used as a tool for the unification of Kannada, which presented the forms and figures of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari - Kannada Mathe, in her multifaceted versions that added upon the visualization in the public domain for the first time. Here, she has been referred to as the victorious Karnataka Mata, as the beloved daughter of Bharat Matha, personified as the mother of the land of flourishing greenery, rivers, knowledge spread with the wealth of saints, glory and opportunity, in a typical renaissance literature style by one of the key poets of Kannada, Kuvempu. "Victory to thee, Karnataka mathe".

Kuvempu

Kuvempu (1904- 1994) (the *nom de plume* and the abbreviated form of Kuppali Venkatappa Gowda Puttappa), a recipient of the Padma Vibhushan, and referred to as the poet laureate of Karnataka, played a very crucial role in the Kannada unification movement and in the making of the Kannada identity. His poetry was very simple, easy to assimilate, and very powerful. His command over languages, especially English and Sanskrit, was highly renowned. In fact, he kept a diary in English. Being from a non-Brahmanical class and from a rural background, he established himself as an avant-garde litterateur, and reformed the narrow perceptions of looking at languages as class-based discrimination. Here his poems are produced as an evidence in the argument for nurturing the visual image of the mother goddess in the minds of the public, deep rooting the holy characterization of mother in the local context spreading across the Kannada sphere.

"Jaya he karunataka mathe"

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Daughter of Bharata Matha, victory to thee

Land of lovely rivers and forests, And of men gifted with vision, and saints, That new crest-jewel of mother earth, Sandal and gold sing thy worth — O daughter of Bharata Matha who gave birth To the great souls Madhusudana and Raghava — Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha, Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Vedic hymns, thy mother's lullaby,

Life mother, thy devotion to her —

Rows of lush green hills,

A garland for thy neck —

Daughter of India, celebrated by Kapila,

Gautama, Jina and Patanjali —

Victory to thee, Karnataka mata,

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Sanctuary of Sankara,

Ramanuja and Basavesvara —

Ranna, Sasaksari, Ponna,

Pampa, Laksmisa and Janna,

A cradle of poets

Her nightingales.

Daughter of India, mother of Ramanand,

Of Nanak and Kabir,

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Land of Tailapa and Hoysala,

Home of Kakkanna and Dankana —

Krsna, Sarasvathi, Tunga,

And Kaveri run here, their playground —

Daughter of India, mother of Chaitanya,

Of Paramahansa and Vivekananda —

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Bower of peace to all peoples,

To the cultivated eye, a tempting vista of loveliness -

Abode of Christians, Mussalmans,

Hindus, Parsees and Jains -

Land of ideal monarchs like Janaka,

Land of singers and players of veena,

The place where flourishes the Kannada tongue

The embodiment of the Kannada race —

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha,

Victory to thee, Karnataka Matha.

Here the tactical role played by the poet illustrates the visual majesty of the image of Kannada Thayi, describing her in the terms of the geographical map and the territory, addressing all its dwellers. In the further poems mentioned here the poet arouses the emotional sentimentality to take a pledge for Karnataka, visually applauding the greatness of the depictions of the Kannada Matha.

A sacred pledge for Karnataka

Take a pledge today;

Tie the sacred thread round your wrist today to show

Dedication

Kannada land is one

Forever, it will be!

Nrupathunga's crown of royalty as witness

The dust of Pampa's feet as witness

The feet of Koodala Sangama as witness

The honoured poet of Gadag as witness

Take the pledge today....

Swear on the Sahyadri

Swear on Kaveri

Swear on Chamundi

Swear on the great teacher Gomatha

Take a pledge today ..."

By the power of poetic delivery and the enunciation of the the Kannada mother here, the poet takes the depiction to greater heights and invokes the relationship of mother and child, begs to do or die for the language and Mother Kannada. Here, the identity of mother is appealed to in perceptions of linguistic emergency and territorial unification, demanding action.

Mother Kannada's Benediction

Fight for Kannada

Kannada child:

Protect Kannada

O, my joy!

This is the blessing of lullaby

Do not forget, my loved one;

If you forget, my loved one;

If you forget, alas,

It is like forgetting me!

Like milk from the breast

It is honey-sweet to taste

Like a mother's embrace

It is pleasing to the body

Like the caring words of teacher,

It is success in life

Do and die for the mother tongue

Gain prosperity here and hereafter!

Trust Ranna and Pampa

Utterance in Kannada

Admire Basavadeva

Win over Harihara

Naranappa's courage

Quiver and bow;

Before you kill Kannada,

O, kill me!

Whatever the pretext may be

A language from outside is indeed a burden;

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You are the master of your land;

Shun the enemy

In land of Kannada

Flaunt Kannada

Fight for the mother

Preserve the mother tongue!

Kannada is being caught now

By parasitism;

If you sleep now,

It will kill

Wake up, child,

Pick up a sword!

A disease in guise of a sprout

Push away the parasitism!

Please, my child

I beg you;

Mother Kannada's blessing,

Do not forget, beloved!

If you forget, alas,

It is like forgetting me;

Fight for Kannada

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Like a brave warrior, my precious!"

Here the poem targets the meek imitation of the European by the native public, and asks them to "stop and think" and to get back to their true identity.

Identity

O my lovely little lamb,

Your sight overflows my heart -

That endearment surging within,

Licks you up tenderly.

You are an orphan, I know,

Thus my grief is intensified too

Out of compassion!

Everything is right with you,

O my lovely little lamb,

Except one:

That's my heart-burn —

That's your separate identity,

A great pity!

Should you and I be one,

Certain then, the end of your trouble.

O my lovely little lamb,

Why stand apart, away,

And suffer the agony thus?

Come, come closer still

And be one with me

Union is life,

Disunion is misery, suffering.

I'll never utter those words

What my ancestors said

To your ancestors then:

'Water, you lap-polluted.'

Nor would I say: 'why you scolded me?'

'if not you, be it your father

Won't that sin be transferred to the son?

On such pretext, what your father did -

I'll not kill you, unrighteously

And eat you up.

There is plenty of space

At heart:

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Where you can graze your fill across,

So vast is inside me,

That you may seek all pleasures.

Why do you require, a separate language?

Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba! Baa! Baa! Baaa!

That's mere the tongue of the hills;

Mine is universal language!

International language!

Illusion, that I am different,

Is the root to make the world turbulent?"

This poem crafted only to awaken the sleeping giant population of Kannada to be proud and confident of what they are, and to beat the tabor of Kannada, eventually became very famous as it was very short and simple to spread.

Kannada tabor

Beat the tabor of Kannada,

O, Shiva in the heart of Karnataka!

Strike awake those who appear dead:

Bring together those that fight

Shed tears to put out the fire of envy

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Bless so that life can be lived together.

Beat the tabor of Karnataka,

O, Shiva in the heart of Karnataka!

Each unholy action warning away Let there be bliss in every mind: Poets, sages and saints as ideals Let there be awakening in all! Beat the tabor of Karnataka O, Shiva in the heart of Karnataka.

There are many poems that have not been mentioned here due to the restrictions of this research that cannot afford to deviate from the focus on the visualizations of the Mother and her identity. Nevertheless other poets like Huilagol Narayana Rao's *Udayavagali Namma Chaluva Kannada Nadu*, Shanthakavi's *Rakshisu Karnataka Devi Samrakshisu Karnataka Devi*, Mangesha Pai's *Thayebare Mogavathore Kannadigara Matheye Harasuthaye* and B. M. Sri's *Yerisi Harisi Kannadada Bhavuta* were early poems that were legendary in the making of the Mother in the most patriotic and lively form.

The pictorial representation of Sri Bhuvaneshwari is evolved from the roots based on the hypothetical possibilities of the existing three derivations. One being the *Savithatida Yellama* source and the second from the *Kadamba* dynasty's traditional goddesses and finally the representation of Sri Bhuvaneshwari from the Mysore Mummadi Wodeyar palace's Mysore stylize painting picturization linked from the descriptive source of *Sritatvanidhi – Lalithasahasranama* and the Mysore Wodeyar's temple structure dedicated to deity *Bhuvaneshwari*.

The representation of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari — Mother of Karnataka was an urgent need of the situation during post-Independence period. Poets, writers, thinkers and activists had held several meetings and events to create awareness on the need to create such an identity and to establish the icon of Sri Bhuvaneshwari in the minds of the common public of Karnataka, following the tradition of the Indian independence, and the visual formation of Mother India — Bharat Matha which according to Rabindranath Tagore's thoughts in nationalism talks about the idea of nationalism being borrowed from the English. That the birth of Bharat Matha and her evolutional depiction influenced and paved the path for Karnataka's Bhuvaneshwari coloured by its own vernacular influences, and that the multi-faceted interpretation made her more of a popular representation is the crux of my argument.

In the context of the emergence of the mother here in close comparison with the state anthem of Kuvempu *Jaya Bharatha Jananiya Tanujathe, Jayahe Karnataka Mathe,* there is the contrasting past of the creation of the identity of Bharat Matha from Bankim's version and the close parallels to Rabindranath Tagore's patriotic poems and hymns celebrating the land as the living mother, especially around 1905 when Bengal was faced with partition. One of these was *Amaar Sonar Bangla* (my golden Bengal). which later transformed itself as the new nation-state of Bangladesh in 1972. Like Bankim's *Vande Mataram* it is saturated with the vocabulary of the anthropomorphicsacred, with nary a place for the cartographic form of land and country: "My golden Bengal, I love you.

Your skies, your breezes, ever with my breath play the flute,

O mother, in *Phalgun* (spring) the perfume of your mango groves drives me mad.

Ah,

Mother, what honeyed smile have I seen in your laden fields in *Agrahan* (autumn).

O what light, what shade, what boundless love, what changing bonds,

What sari's border have you spread round roots of banyan trees, on the bank of rivers.

O mother, the flow of words from your lips strikes my ear like a stream of nectar;

Ah,

Mother, when the skin of your face draws tight, O mother, I float in tears....

O mother, I offer at your feet this my lowered head;

Give me, O mother, the dust of your feet, to be the jewel upon my head.

O mother, whatever wealth this poor man has, I place upon your feet,

Ah, I die,

I shall no more buy in the house of others, O mother, this so-called finery of

yours, a noose around my neck."

Or consider another revealing poem, replete once again with the somatic imagery of land as mother and the citizen as child:

"O earth of this my country, I lay my head upon you.

In you is spread the border of the sari of the mother of the universe, of her with

whom the universe is filled.

You have blended with my body,

One with my heart and mind;

.

O mother, my birth was in your lap,

My death upon your breast,

My play on you, in sorrow and in joy.

You it was who raised the food to my lips,

And with water cooled my fever,

You who bear all, bear all, O mother of mother.

Much have I eaten of yours, much have I taken, O mother,

And what have I given in return?"

Sumathi Ramamsway in her work *The Goddess And The Nation* narrates an incident which illustrates the power of these poems (especially Tagore's poems) that were expressively recited by a person named Ullas Dutta who was sentenced to death for anti-British activities, that made all the European sergeants in the courtroom freeze into silence:

"Blessed is my birth — for I was born in this land.

Blessed is my birth — for I have loved thee.

...I do not know in what garden,

Flowers enrapture so much with perfume;

In what sky rises the moon, smiling such a smile.

...O mother, opening my eyes, seeing thy light,

My eyes are regaled;

Keeping my eyes on that light

I shall close my eyes in the end."

"And yet, Tagore increasingly became worried from around the middle of 1907 about the danger of countering the "dust" of colonial geography by turning to the imagery of divinized anthropomorphism, for this seemed to only produce a Hinduism-infected geo-piety that inevitably led to the alienation of Muslims and other non-Hindus. It was at this juncture that he apparently refused a request from Bipin Chandra Pal to compose a song that would celebrate the motherland as Durga, and even dared to mock the mother: 'nfatuated by your seven crore children, O mother, you have left them as Bengalis, but haven't brought them up as human beings.' 'In the words of Nikhil, one of his fictional heroes from 1915-1916 who refused "to accept the spirit of *Bande Mataram*' and who might well have been Tagore's own alter ego, 'I am willing to serve my country; but my worship I reserve for Right which is far greater that my country. To worship my country as a god is to bring a curse upon it.' In his prescient critique of nationalism published soon after in 1917 Tagore in fact tellingly wrote that 'even though from childhood I have been taught that idolatry of the nation is almost better than reverence for god and humanity, I believe I have outgrown that teaching.'

In the discussion on the comparative contrast between Tagore and Bankim and their ideologies, Sumathi continues: "It was this complex man and poet who composed the hymn titled "*Bharata Vidhata*" (Sustainer of India), a piece that eventually went on to be invested as independent India's "national anthem" in 1950. In contrast to Bankim's "*Vande Mataram*" as well as countless other patriotic poems and songs in India's many languages, "*Bharata Vidhata*" (more popularly known as "*Jana Gana Mana*" from its opening words) does not begin by invoking the land as a fecund or powerful mother/goddess. This apparent from Tagore's own translation (from 1919) of the first verse of the highly Sanskritized-Bengali poem that he sang in 1911:

"Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people,

Thou dispenser of India's destiny.

Thy name rouses the hearts of the Punjab, Sind, Gujarat, and Maratha,

Of Dravida, Orissa, and Bengal.

It echoes in the hills of the Vindhyas and Himalayas,

Mingles in the music of Jamuna and Ganges,

And is chanted by the waves of the Indian Sea.

They pray for thy blessing and sing thy praise,

Thou dispenser of India's destiny,

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee!"

Where Bankim's "Vande Mataram" leaves the subject of its poetic praise unnamed, Tagore explicitly names it as Bharata (in Bengali) and India (in English). While Bankim's "Vande Mataram" transforms the land itself into an object of worship — so necessary for geo-piety — in its very opening phrase, "I worship the mother", Tagore's poem refuses this idolatrous gesture: to paraphrase him from a slightly later (fictional) context, he was willing to praise the country but not worship it as deity. In a letter Tagore wrote years later in 1927 he offered the following explanation for why he felt compelled to memorialize India in this fasion:

"In the course of our history, India had once deeply realized her geographical entity; she established in her mind an image of her own physical self by meditating on her rivers and hills... In my song of the victory of Bharat Vidhata composed a few years ago, I have put together a number of Indian provinces; Vindhya-Himachala and Yamuna-Ganga have also been mentioned. I feel, however, that a song should be written in which all the provinces, rivers and hills of India are strung together in order to impress upon the minds of our people an in dea of the geography of our country. We are nowadays profuse in the use of the term national consciousness, but what kind of national consciousness can there be, devoid of actual geographical and ethnological realization?"

The anthropomorphic-sacred imagery of the mother goddess in Tagore and Bankim's verses in the attempt to awaken the notion of motherland through visualizations that enhance these poetic tributes as a patriotic verses, are in this study more similar. The ambiguousness in Jana Gana Mana of Tagore and Bankim's personification and anthropomorphization of land as a mother are the contrasting features. The universal approach, which is termed to have smart and tricky standpoint perceptions, or probably the vast broadminded consciousness, is what is seen in the works of Tagore. Whereas it is Bankim's perception that is PAGE 115 OF 413 mirrored in the works of Kuvempu, especially his *Bharata Jananiya Tanujathe*, where acceptance of Bharat as mother and Karnataka as her beloved daughter is personified in similar lines. Personifying Karnataka as the land that has given birth to great seers, kings and poets, on lines similar to Bankim's poetic perception is seen in Kuvempu's verse, but the highlighting factor that distinguishes the contrasting criticism of Tagore and Bankims is the fact that Kuvempu carefully introduced the last lines including the minorities of the non-Hindu population, thereby clearly making it a representative vision of Kannada nationalism in a broader context. Probably Kuvempu had realised the art of representing by studying the crisis of representation from Bankim's and Tagore's versions and the resultant contradictions and controversies, thus sensitively and creatively crafting the visualization and inclusive patriotism for all.

"Bower of peace to all people,

To the cultivated eye, a tempting vista of loveliness -

Abdode of Christians, Mussalmans,

Hindus, Parsees and Jains —

Land of ideal monarchs like Janaka,

Land of singers and players of veena,

The place where flourishes the Kannada tongue

The embodiment of the Kannada race —

Victory to thee, Karnataka mata,

Victory to thee, Karnataka mata."

In the context of the above presented evidence one of the factors that raised a controversy in Kannada was the non-inclusion of seer Madhavacharya. The poem was revised in the 1990s, to include the name 'Madavacharya', and it was continued as the state anthem.

In the discussion on the motherland and nationalism Sumathi points out another quote from Aurobindo Ghose's answer to his interlocutor when he was employed as a college teacher in Baroda, on how to become patriotic. Pointing to a wall map of India hanging in his classroom, he is reported to have stated: "Do you see this map? It is not a map, but the portrait of Bharat Matha, children are her nerves, large and small... concentrate on Bharat (India) as a living mother, worship her with the nine-fold bhakthi (devotion)." Around the same time, in a suggestive work called Bhawani Mandir (temple for Bhawani), he described India as a "mighty shakti" called Bhawani. It was most emphatically "not a piece of earth". Not least, in a revealing letter to his wife, penned in August 1905, Aurobindo even confessed to a third "madness" that reminds us as well that ever so often, love for one's own country, even one imagined as one's mother, can take on an erotic charge: "My third madness — a few meadows and fields, forests and hills and rivers — I look upon my country as the Mother. I adore her. I worship her as the mother. What would a son do if a demon sat on his mother's breast and started sucking her blood? Would he quietly sit down to his dinner, amuse himself with his wife and children, or would he rush out to deliver his mother?"

If Aurobindo being a revivalist, with universality as his standpoint, has seen Bharat Matha as his mother, he has thus not failed in contributing to the making of the Kannada mother either. The influence of Aurobindo and *The Mother* on Kannada nationalism has been very evident. In the further pages I wish to present one of the most prominent and key evidences on how visuals created the history for the pride and identity of Kannada, Kannadiga and Karnataka in the modern context.

Term 'Bhuvaneshwari' in Temple Architecture

In the Vesara or Hoysala style architecture, for example in the Chennakeshava temple of Belur, a symbol of all the features of Hoysala style, the roof of 'navaranga' is called as Bhuvaneshwari, is miniature of carvings. Amoung all the carvings that at Bhuvaneshwari needs special mention. Bhuvaneshwari at the centre (here at Chennakeshava temple is atleast 20 feet high, 13 ft. square) is always eye capturing and detailed. Similarly all ancient temple architectures of Hoysala refers to the centred circular decorated roof of 'navaranga' as Bhuvaneshwari.

PhD Thesis - Unni Krishnan K. Dept. of Art History & Aesthetics, Faculty of Fine Art, M.S. University, Baroda, India

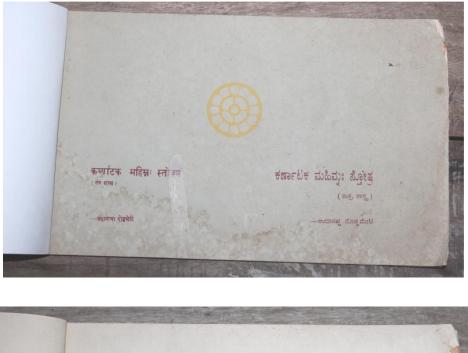
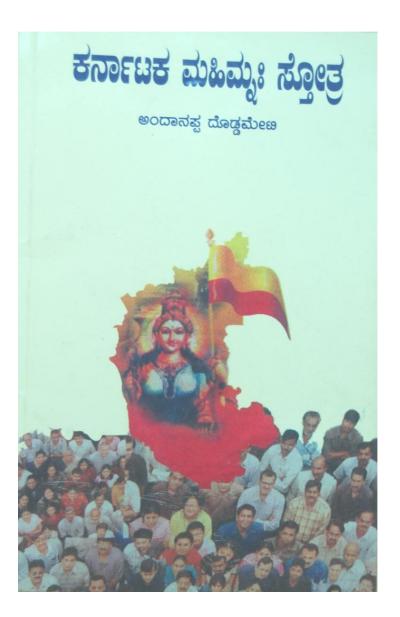




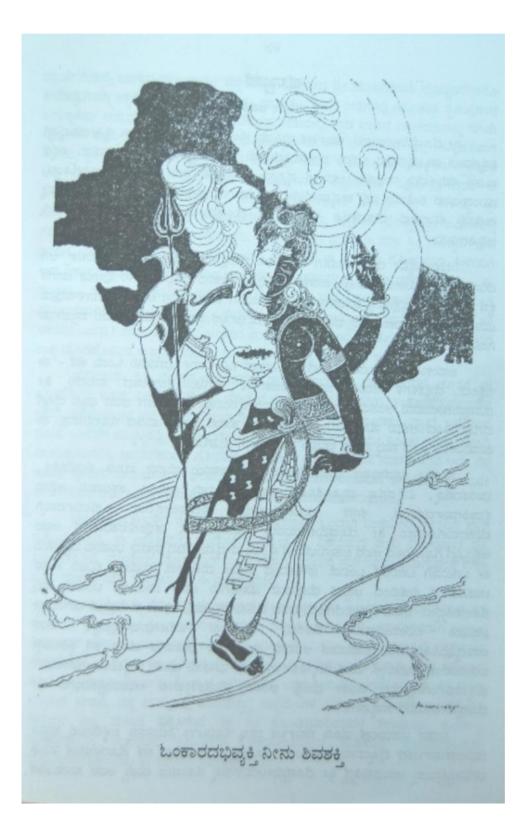
Figure 16 A: Front Cover page Design: Karnataka Mahimna Stotra-I 1957 Publication, Below: II 2006 Publication



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Karnataka Mahimna Stotra, by Andanappa Doddametti, one of the key frontline activists who worked with A. N. Krishna Rao and Aluru Venkata Rao, was a conceptualized visualization on the Kannada goddess for unification. The book was released in 1953 and again republished in 1957 after the declaration of the State of Mysore. In this body of work, he explains about sixteen versions of the Kannada goddess, based on the *shakthi peethas* ('prime goddess temples') as a structural framework to establish the ancient authentic connection of ancient versions of the goddess to the new avatar of the same goddess but in the form of Kannada goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari. The illustrations produced as a very crucial evidence here are all by an artist named Kondachary, an intimate friend of Andanappa Doddametti, the line drawings showing the influence of various forms of art across India. When asked about these illustrations, Kondachary is reported to have said: "I have strictly referred and been influenced by the *shilpakala* styles of Hampi, Badami, Aihole and Pattadakal sculptures, thus to present our Kannada art as a unique style to the world."



Omkaradabhivyakhti ninu Shivashakthi, (From the source of Om, you are Shivashakthi) **Figure 16 B** Titled as Shivashakthi.

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation The representation is initially stated with the well-established form that none in Kannada land would fail to recognize it. Here, what we understand is the tactical visual psychology that the idea takes up and uses as a tool to inject into the thinking of common minds. The process here itself justifies the value and content of visual interpretation in the context of the socio-cultural space. The interesting observation is that irrespective of the same god and goddess being applied, the sense of its utility turns multi-faceted.

The process of creation of these illustrations of the mother goddess is similar to the making of the traditional temple sculptures and goddess idols. The main inscription on the goddess would be made available to the artist, and the artist further, from his imaginative visualization would 'deliver' the respective goddess. Here, Kondacharya was given the *Dhyana stotras "mahimna stotra"*. With this reference he completed the sixteen illustrations with the guideline of relating visually to corresponding geographic ancient temple goddesses. The naturally influenced stylization of modern goddess sculpture forms and functions is clearly evident in these illustrations, as he was considered an expert sculptor, an "authoritative shilpashastra expert from Gadag" as mentioned in the book *Kannada Mahimna Stotra*.

The influence is not merely the sculpture stylization, and these stylizations were often found in the modern and post-modern magazine illustration. These do have a close similarity to those of the Mysore style paintings and Tanjore style paintings, with the "s" form of the body's standing postures and with the same visualization of Shiva Shakthi representations often found in the ancient Indian temple architectures. A study of the illustration reveals that it is meant to be perceived as a 3D three-layer illustration. The first being the early map of Bharat with Pakistan and Bangladesh in a single outline, inked in black. The second layer is the Shiva and Shakthi together in a unifying posture of their symbolic coexistence, also interpreted as positive and negative energy, or symbolized as time and space, and also as the *yin yang* concept. The same standing posture is also available in popular poster versions with multiple permutations and combinations of Shiva and Shakthi in countless thematic displays. The third layer of this illustration is the convergence to the unified form of Shiva and Shakthi together in a single body and mind. The final form and function is to establish in the public mind that unification is the need of the hour, through an emotionally bound, religiously entangled and spiritually intertwined visual message. The

establishment of this stage, beginning from an accepted hierarchical order which has a very little chance of rejection was the priority, but clearly, here, the 20 per cent of the Kannada population of other religions and aesthetics, who neither reject nor accept it, as the form fundamentally is unarguably that of a prominent Hindu god and goddess, is excluded.

Single body and mind is a traditional usage of referring to Shiva- Shakthi (the most prominent god and goddess of the Hindu religion, who are a married couple) which further is again referring to a married couple, often used as a saying or also as a customary tradition, especially during Hindu marriages. For more information on the interpretation of Shakthi and Shiva and the tantric concepts of preaching and visualizing of god and goddess, refer to Shakti and Shakta and other series of Sir John Woodroffe, and the numerous texts on Tantra Shatra. The sculpture creation system advocated in the Shilpa Shastra is the base for all temple sculpture visualization, also referred to as creative visualization. For scientific interpretation of these concepts in the modern context, the books of Fritjof Capra could be referred.

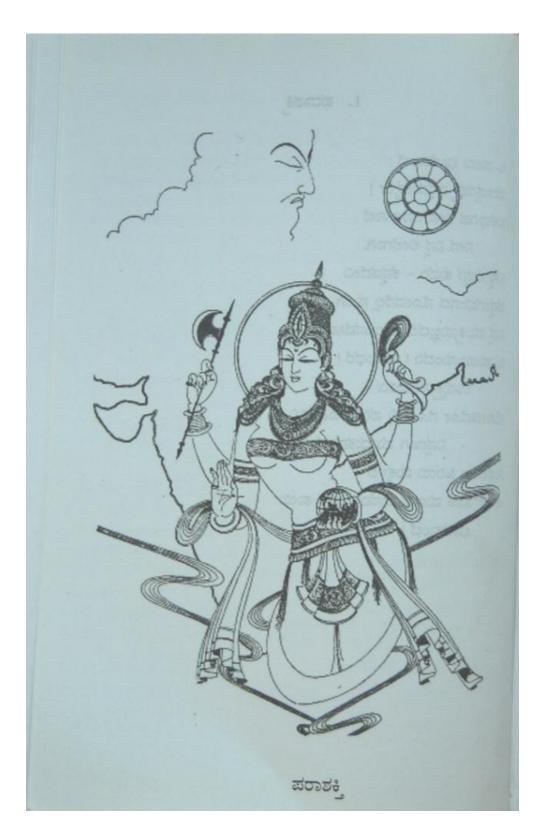


Figure 17 Titled as "Parashakthi"

The author starts the peom for *Parashakthi* with the opening line: "O Thayee bharathambe, parathwarashakthi parameshwari! Ekalagiha nine anekalade..." (Oh Mother Bharat, the natural energy combined, both internal and external, the wife of the prime god Shiva, as a single form you are in varied forms...) The poet indulges in a very sentimental, emotional and patriotic sense of worship, and he is seen largely questioning the goddess on the situation and the cause for the socio-political crisis of Kannada, as the central theme of Kannada and its unification as the priority of the poet revolves around all its peripherals, attempting to unify with a visual strategy.

The figure above is referred to as Bharat Matha, described as Parashakthi. The visual here itself carries the influencing factors, the sources from which the poet has drawn a huge sense of patriotism and universal approach as the concept of mother! The circular form in the right top of the visual is, in fact, the symbol of Sri Aurobindo Ashram's concept of The Mother, representing the unification of all goodness.



Figure 18 The symbol of The Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

The concept of the circle, according to the Ashram: The Central Circle represents The Divine Consciousness. The four petals represent the four Powers of the Mother — Wisdom, Strength, Harmony and Perfection. The twelve petals represent the twelve powers of the Mother manifested for her work. The twelve psychological attributes are: Aspiration, Perseverance, Gratitude, Humility, Sincerity, Peace, Equality, Generosity, Goodness, Courage, Progress, and Receptivity.

This clearly suffices the factor of influence and inspiration, the relationship between Sri Aurobindo and Kannada nationalism has been very deep and vast. Noted Kannada poet Dattatreya Ramachandra Bendre's (Da Ra Bendre) in folk style work expression showing the influence of Vedanta was probably an interlacing and an attempt to understand Sri Aurobindo and his interpretation of Vedanta and Indian philosophy. In PAGE 127 OF 413 an interview to U. R. Ananthmurthy, Bendre once said: "I am a better poet than Aurobindo."

The poem on Parashakthi describes her thus: "You are perceived in one form as well in many forms, your daughter is Kannada Thayeee, Your beloved daughter is suffering, for freedom, Bless your daughter, dear Bharat Mathe." The establishment of Bharat Matha here is found necessary as the visual of Bharat Matha during the Independence and pre- Independence movement was not asserted in a manner that it was in North; but the south version of Bharat Matha in this avatar is different from any other Bharat Matha visualized ever. The south influenced style, with more of temple sculpture influence with an into force, establishing the Republic of India; Pakistan was a dominion until 1956. Incidentally, even after the re-publication of this book in 1957, the map remains the same. Here I argue on this very important note that the cultural space of Bharat Matha is not the same as modern India, and the time and space of Bharat Matha is inclusive of Pakistan and Bangladesh, and not excluding those territories. This territorialism in cultural dimension has an emotional attachment and appeal which probably is very rare and hardly noticeable.

The above line drawing is represented as the form of Mother India, Bharat Mathe. Obviously the connections have to be established for strengthening the concept, neither to contravenethe ideas of Bharat Mathe, yet co-existingly connect, "to pass on to" the subsequent change of the central icon. The goddess here has a grid globe in her bottom left bottom hand with the map of India and Asian countries in focus, in her top left hand is the pasha, which is used as an instrumental tool representing control, in her top right hand is another tool, rather like an axe, called *parashu*, and her bottom right bottom hand in in the *abhayamudra*, the gesture of reassurance and safety, a hand pose which dispels fear and accords divine protection and bliss to the devotee. In this *mudra* (gesture), the right hand is held upright, and the palm is facing outwards. This is one of the earliest *mudras* found depicted in a number of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain temple images. And the earlier discussed symbol of Aurobindo Ashram and the male dominant face of India in the regions of Kashmir, representing the face of Shiva as the Himalayan range, begins from the Kashmir sector. Another important note is that the goddess is presented with closed eyes, as is Shiva, also reasserting that the modern goddess Bharat Matha is turning a closed eye to her daughter, in a nonexpressive state on all concerns of her beloved daughter.

overlayer of updated trend influence from popular poster and calendar visuals, similar to some elements of Mysore and Tanjore style paintings is what is most interesting here in these visuals.

The mother goddess here is represented as a universal mother, yet with an allegory of the other Bharat Matha. The irony here is that the map depicted behind the goddess is the early map of India before Independence, despite the fact that the Indian Independence Act of 1947 created the independent dominions of India and Pakistan. India remained a Dominion of the Crown until 26 January 1950, when the Constitution of India came





Figure 19 Titled as Bhuvaneshwari

This illustration focuses on the Hampi Bhuvaneshwari goddess, in the aura of the Virupaksha temple of Hampi. On the right of the goddess is the depiction of a completed sculpture of Ganesha, referring to the existing Hampi Ganesha idol, and to the left of the goddess is the incomplete Vijaya Vittala temple. Here the goddess is depicted sitting in the Padmasana posture, with her bottom right hand in abhayamudra,. She is titled as Kannada Mahashakthi in the poetic verses picturised in the background of Hampi, as the Goddess of Kannada land, as Kannada kula devathe — the family deity of Kannada. The poet prays to the goddess, asking her to reside in the hearts of all Kannadigas, reunite our spirits and weave us in one string of thought to fight for unification and Kannada pride! Referring to the goddess residing beside the Tungabhadra, the poet pleads with her to bless her children of Kannada to unite.

Here the Tungabhadra river is asserted again to symbolise the territory for the geographical demography of the people, as the Tungabhadra is considered one of the holy rivers of India and of Kannada. The poem now represents the deified form of respective geographic regions, thereby calling for unification. As the "state was" split into five different zones during colonial periods, here the poet is trying to unite the dispersed regional centres with their respective goddess. Though the poet is referring to all main temples of Karnataka, here the assertion of Bhuvaneshwari is observed as one of the main aspects. The reference to Hampi and the Vijayanagara Empire with its resident goddess, is the only direct relation that we can observe to Goddess Bhuvaneshwari as a historical connection to the concept of Mother Kannada, in this series of Kannada Mahimna Stotra.

The goddess here is seated on a throne in the similar form of all goddess depicted in all Hindu temples, in her bottom left hand is the Shiva linga, referring to the Virupaksha PAGE 131 OF 413

deity and in her upper left hand is the pasha rope as a weapon symbolising control, the upper right hand holds the parashu, the axe as the symbol of destruction and elimination of everything negative, and the bottom right hand is in abhayamudra. The second layer background is decorated with the halo of the majestic entrance of the Virupaksha temple. The goddess is heavily ornamented with the grace of the motherly queen on the throne of Kannada, and here her eyes are half-opened, with a subtle sense of seriousness yet with a meditative inwardly outward presence. The third layer here is the map of Kannada inked in black as the final background.

Padmasana is a term derived from the Sanskrit words padma: lotus, and Sana: seat or throne. It may refer to Lotus position in yoga meditative position.

Hampi (Kannada: ಹಂಪೆ Hampe) is a village in northern Karnataka. It is located within the ruins of Vijayanagara, the former capital of the Vijayanagara Empire. Predating the city of Vijayanagara, it continues to be an important cultural centre, with the prominent Virupaksha Temple, as well as several other monuments belonging to the old city. The ruins are a UNESCO World Heritage Site, listed as the Group of Monuments at Hampi. Hampi was also the capital for the unification movement, as Aluru Venkata Rao gained his inspiration at this place. Virupaksha Temple is the main centre of pilgrimage at Hampi and has been considered most sacred over the centuries. It is fully intact among the surrounding ruins and is still used in worship. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva, known here as Virupaksha, as the consort of the local goddess Pampa who is associated with the Tungabhadra River. Hampi sits on the banks of the Tungabhadra River in the ruins of the ancient city of Vijayanagar, capital of the Vijayanagara empire. The entrance: nine-tiered eastern gateway, which is the largest at 50 metres, is well-proportioned and incorporates some earlier structures. It has a brick superstructure and a two-tiered stone base. It gives access to the outer court containing many sub-shrines.

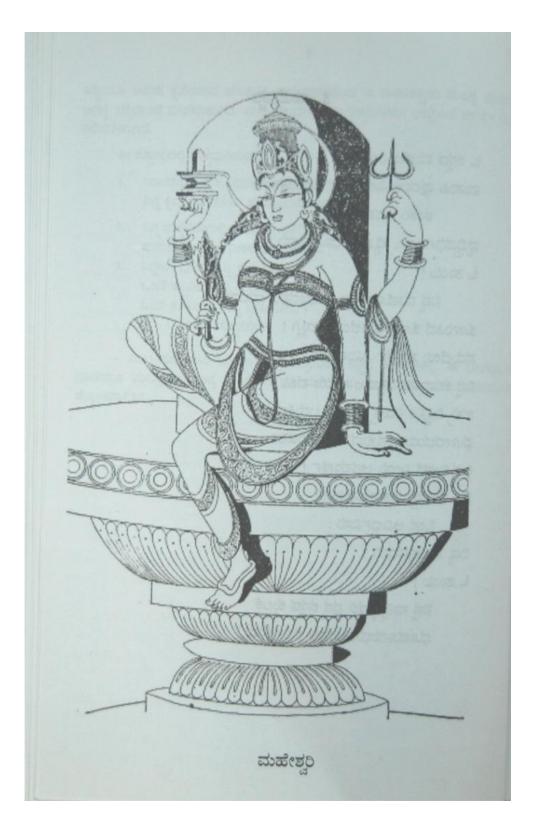


Figure 20 Titled as Maheshwari

Titled as Maheshwari (the prime goddess) the poet refers to this goddess as the residing deity of Vatapipura, Bhanashankari, the deity of the regions of north Karnataka such as Badami, Aihole and Pattadakallu, also referring to her as Annapoorna, the goddess of food, as the regions are blessed with black soil and well irrigated land, and much of the agricultural produce of Karnataka is from these regions. The poet refers to all these aspects of demography, calling for unification.

The goddess is sitting on a shiva linga, in an unusual posture, her body language indicating a monitoring gesture. She has *a trishul* in her top left hand and is resting her bottom left hand on the linga on which she is sitting. Her top right hand subtly balances a smaller shiva linga, with her bottom right hand holding a flower representing crops and fertility. Also resting in the crook of her top left elbow is the rope of control, the *pasha*. This representation is of a most casual nature and in a domestic posture; the halo is replaced with the crescent moon, and the shadow is emphasized.

In the description of each goddess and the relevant *stotra*, for Maheshwari the author quotes the lines of Sri Aurobindo: "There is no greater pride and glory than to be a perfect instrument of the master. The sword did not ask to be made, nor does it resist its user, nor lament when it is broken." The influence of Sri Aurobindo in the making of the goddess in this context is evident, though his ideals have always been on universal plane, beyond the regional space or language. His involvement in approaching the goddess for the unification is probably seen as universal goddess and regional goddess, but here there seems to be no conflict over it.

Also, the author has quoted lines from *Sri Lalitha Sahasranama*, as another source of inspiration, and prayed to Goddess Maheshwari as the goddess of art, referring to the temple architecture and sculptures of Badami and the contributions of the Chalukyas. The initial activism and Kannada unification movement was first kindled in north Karnataka, as the people there had several genuine grouses, while the south was under the princely province of Mysore, and its people were contented. This difference of opinion between the Kannada-speaking people of the north and south was a huge concern, and the effort and the contribution of Andanappa Doddametti and his poetic PAGE 134 OF 413

efforts aiming to unify the two were up to an extent fruitful, and at least documented the polarities that existed in the four parts of Kannada geography.

Lalita sahasranama is a sacred Hindu text dated approximately to 12th century A.D.for the worshippers of the Goddess Lalita Devi, the Divine Mother, in the form of her feminine power, Shakti. Lalita is the Goddess of Bliss, an epithet for Shiva's wife Goddess Parvati. Etymologically, "Lalita" means "She Who Plays". In the root form (vyutpatti), the word "Lalita" means "spontaneous" from which the meaning "easy" is derived and from there the word implicitly extends to "play".

The Shiv Lingam, also pronounced as *Linga*, *Ling*, *Shiva linga*, *Shiv ling*, Sanskrit lingam, meaning "mark" or "sign", is a representation of one of the prime Hindu deities Shiva, used for worship in temples.

The Lingam has been interpreted as a symbol of male creative energy. The lingam is often represented with the Yoni, a symbol of the goddess or of Shakti, female creative energy. The union of lingam and yoni represents the "indivisible two-in-oneness of male and female, the passive space and active time from which all life originates". The lingam and the yoni have been interpreted in several versions by many scholars, while for the practising Hindus they stand for the inseparability of the male and female principles and the totality of creation. Another interpretation suggests that the Lingam represents the beginningless and endless *Stambha* pillar, symbolizing the infinite nature of Shiva as per the Shiva Purana. The symbolic representation is also been interpreted to the scientific version too. Trishul is commonly used as a Hindu-Buddhist religious symbol. The word means "three spears" in Sanskrit and Pali. It is also known as the weapon of Shiva.

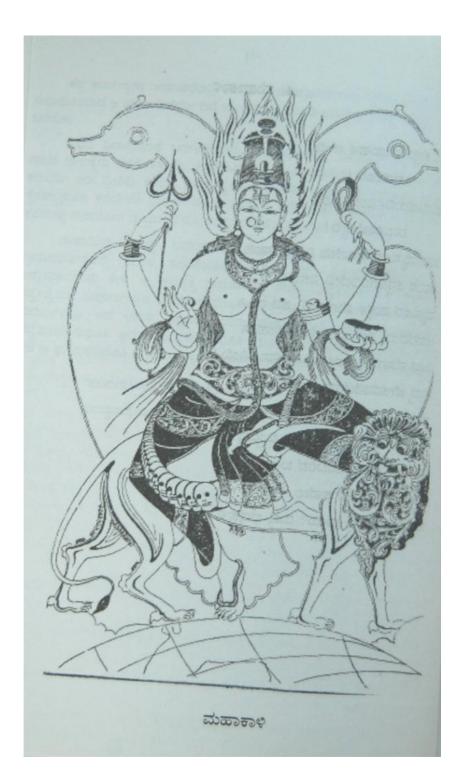


Figure 21 Titled as Mahakali

Titled as Mahakali, the personification here as the Kannada mother is through the prominent and well established goddess of Mysore, Goddess Chamundi associated with the royal Mysore kingdom since decades. The poetic verses here again are in a pleading, prayerful form, but the message internally tried to convey is not in any mood of prayer or in any pleading gesture, but more on a questioning mode, asking and reminding mother Chamundi of the fact that she is not a regional goddess of Mysore alone but of the whole of Karnataka and Kannada, and she too had the responsibility to light the lamp of Kannada unification.

The poet says: "You are not just the goddess of Mysore, but mother of all Kannadigas." Well in the cultural, spiritual context, Chamundi or any goddess definitely belongs not just to Mysore but to the world itself, nevertheless here the intention is to pass on a message to Mysoreans on the pretext of addressing goddess Chamundi, as the support from the populace of Mysore spontaneously or did not come in time, disappointing the unification movement leaders.



Figure 22 The Gandaberunda Emblem in the Mysore Palace.

The above Gandaberunda emblem of the Mysore Wodeyars is today the state emblem of Karnataka. In the picture of Mahakali, this emblem is depicted in the background of the goddess, with the earth as the base, asserting the position of the goddess as a universal mother goddess.

Chamunda also known as **Chamundi**, Chamundeshwari and Charchika, is a fearsome aspect of Devi, the Hindu Divine Mother, closely associated with Kali, another fierce aspect of Devi. She is sometimes identified with goddesses Parvati, Chandi or Durga as well. The goddess is often portrayed in cremation grounds along with Shiva standing on a corpse, by her divinity even the dead giving signs of life.

The **Chamundi Hills** are located close to the palace city of Mysore, India. According to legend, the demon Mahishasura, king of the Mysore, was killed by the Goddess Chamundeswari after a fierce battle. The hills were named after the goddess, and a temple honours her in the hills as the prime deity. The temple has always been patronised by the rulers of Mysore. In earlier days, the Maharajas of Mysore would ride the ceremonial Dasara elephant during the annual Dasara festival; since the 1970s, however, the idol of Goddess Chamundi is taken on an elephant in a grand procession during the Dasara celebrations of Mysore palace.

The **Gandaberunda** (also known as the Berunda) is a two-headed mythological bird of Hindu mythology thought to possess magical strength. This bird has been adopted

as the official emblem by the Karnataka government and had been associated as the royal emblem of Mysore kingdom and palace since decades.

In the verses on Mahakali the poet describes her as the Divine Eliminator of all demons and as the Goddess of all Kings specificto Mysoreans with the official royal emblem of Mysore Wodeyars as the background, connecting to the Wodeyars' Chandi, Chamundi, Eshwari and Rajarajeshwari forms of devotion. Asserting the representation of Mahakali not only for Mysoreans but for the whole of Karnataka as Kannada Kali, the poem prays to her to purify the minds of the people, referring to the holy river Kaveri that flows through Mysore, to eliminate all differences. Here, the poet specifies the perceived indifference of Mysore during the early days of the unification struggle as the province had not contributed much apart from the initial support, primarily because it was not victimized much on important issues unlike north Karnataka. But the development that Mysore Wodeyars and the princely province of Mysore contributed to is undeniable, and later, the contributions of Mysore to Karnataka have been tremendous and overwhelmingly outstanding in all contexts.



Figure 23 Sala fighting the tiger, the symbol of Hoysala Empire at Belur, Karnataka

The similarity of the lion in this early Hoysala temple sculpture to the lion mount of Mahakali in the illustration is in terms of stylization in similar lines. With huge flames of fire forming an aura around her head, she holds a *trishul* (trident), rope and skull-cup (*kapala*) in her hand. Unlike with other goddesses, her breast line is not covered, and she wears a garland of skulls representing the power to destruct and elimination (evil). Her attire is inked in black, and she has a Shivs Linga unusually placed above her forehead, with the crescent moon. As Shiva's consort, she also has the third eye, and is visualised as the powerful protector of the world.

Unlike any other Mahakali, here the goddess is portrayed in a sitting posture with a calm appearance, probably to establish the temple diety form. Since the purpose was not to release this in the commercial popular domain but to an audience which was literate and learned, the representation appears to have been also crafted in an elite stylization.

The next illustration titled as Kannada Mahalakshmi, Kannada Renuka Devi, mother Jagadambe clearly referring to the Savidathi Renukambe deity of Belgaum and surrounding areas. Here the goddess of wealth is merged with the Kannada goddess as the reference is to the most fertile and high yield producing geography — either the Renukambe temple of Shimoga or the famous Saundatti Yellamma temple of Belgaum. Here, in the description of the goddess, the author refers to the greatness of the goddess from *Sri Lalitha Sahasranama*, adding to her divine powers, and attributing to her a metamorphic re-establishment of unimaginable power and divinity. The perception of the author attempting to impel the readers to relook at these goddesses through the prismof Mother Kannada at a stature close to that of the existing popular goddesses of powerful pilgrimage temples is the reformation of the image of goddess, where illustrations are visualized as the goddess itself, with these visuals its certain

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that the visualizations are not perceived as abstract or in any other forms, but these illustrated reference forms either in the appearances of temple sculpture or in the incarnations of highly exaggerated visualizations that match to the modern expectations. Here, Mahalakshmi is depicted sitting in the *padmasana* posture with a conch and *sudarshana chakra*, lotus with wealth *nidhi*, on a lotus, but the unusual representation of Lakshmi with an uncovered upper body is rare, usually such seminudity being associated with Kali images only.

Renuka or **Yellamma** is worshipped as the Goddess (Devi) of the fallen, in the Hindu pantheon. Yellamma is a patron goddess of rural folk of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Her devotees have revered her as the "Mother of the Universe" or Jagadamba. Legends say that Yellamma is the incarnation of Kali, who on one hand symbolizes the death of ego, and on the other hand is the mother who is compassionate to her children.

There is a yearly gathering of approximately 200,000 devotees at the Yellamma Gudi temple in Saundatti, one of the oldest towns in Belgaum district of Karnataka. Another temple of Renukambe, also referred to as Yellamma, is on a hill in Chandragutti, Soraba taluk in Shimoga. This temple is an example of ancient architecture and dates back to the Kadamba period.

Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu is described as bestowing coins of prosperity and flanked by elephants, signifying her royal power. However, in some texts, she has an owl as her vahana. Her expression is always calm and loving, and she is seen holding a lotus, mace, shankha (conch) and chakra (wheel). The lotus also symbolizes the fertile growth of organic life, as the world is continually reborn on a lotus growing out of Vishnu's navel. Nidhi is a symbol of wealth, and prosperity, and in the Puranas is referred to as divine wealth.

Popular classic depictions of **Kali** share several features. Kali's most common four-armed iconographic image shows each hand carrying variously a sword, a trishul (trident), a severed head and a bowl or skull-cup (kapala) catching the blood of the severed head. Two of these hands (usually the left) are holding a sword and a severed head. The Sword signifies Divine Knowledge and the Human Head signifies human Ego which must be slain by Divine Knowledge in order to attain Moksha. The other two hands (usually the right) are in the abhaya (fearlessness) and varada (blessing) mudras, which means her initiated devotees (or anyone worshiping her with a true heart) will be saved as she will guide them here and in the hereafter.

She has a garland consisting of human heads, variously enumerated at 108 (an auspicious number in Hinduism and the number of countable beads on a Japa Mala or rosary for repetition of Mantras) or 51, which represents Varnamala or the Garland of Letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, Devanagari. Hindus believe Sanskrit is a language of dynamism, and each of these letters represents a form of energy, or a form of Kali. Therefore she is generally seen as the mother of language, and all mantras.

She is often depicted naked which symbolizes her being beyond the covering of Maya since she is pure (nirguna) being-consciousness-bliss and far above Prakriti. She is shown as very dark as she is Brahman in its supreme unmanifest state. She has no permanent qualities — she will continue to exist even when the universe ends. It is therefore believed that the concepts of colour, light, good, bad do not apply to her — she is the pure, un-manifested energy, the Adi-shakti.



Figure 24 Titled as "Mahalakshmi"

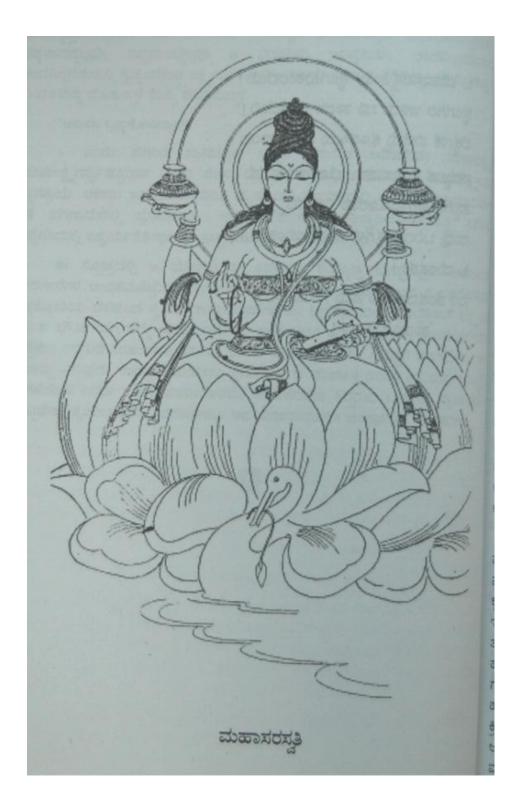


Figure 25 Titled as Mahasaraswathi

Shrungeri sharade is the very well known goddess of south Karnataka, as she is been established by Adi guru shankaracharya as one of the main shkthi peetha, here she has been refered to represent the zones that come under the sharadha petha, the hirearchial hindu monasteries and the respective caste based citizens and south demography. Asking her and her disciples to lead and strengthen the movement. With the manuscripts in her hand symbolizing the wisdom and the beeds in her hand representing the meditaiveness and focus in an *abhayamudra* pose, she also has the *jnan kalash*, the knowledge and swan as her mount. She is sitting in *padmasana* with her eyes closed, representing her inner sight and divine knowledge source. Her hair stylised like the hair of meditative Buddha and shiva, unlike other goddesss she has a large halo.



Figure 26 Popular image of Sringeri Sharadha

The visual comparision of the popular diety image of sringeri sharada Devi and her interpreted verision of illustration has a vast difference in appearance mainly because of the difference in south and north stylization of temples and goddesss. The tantric influence of southern goddesss and her appearences has significant identity and characters to the visualization, more close to all coastal Karnataka temple deities, in terms of colour, customs, decoration methods and perceptions. Thus the author refers her as "yantrarude, the possessor of mantrashakthi, bless us with your tantric powers and control us, bramhani"

The author in quotes the line sof The mother "You must do the work as offering to the divine and take it as a part of your sadhana. In that spirit the nature of the work is of little importance and you can do any work without losing the contact with innerpresence" Sri Aurobindo "A divine action arising spontaneously, freely, infallibly from the light and force of our spiritual self in union with the divine is the last state of this integral yoga of works"

Sringeri Sharada Peetham is the southern Advaita Vedanta matha, located in Shringeri, claimed that it is the first of the four original mathas established by Adi Shankara. The matha is in the temple town of Shringeri on the banks of the Tunga River in Chikmagalur district, Karnataka, India.

Adi Shankara also known as Sankara Bhagavat padacarya and adi sankaracarya was an eminent scholar and philosopher wrote theories and consolidated doctrine of advaita Vedanta. His teachings are based on the unity of the ātman and Brahman— non-dual Brahman, in which Brahman is viewed as nirguna Brahman, Brahman without attributes.

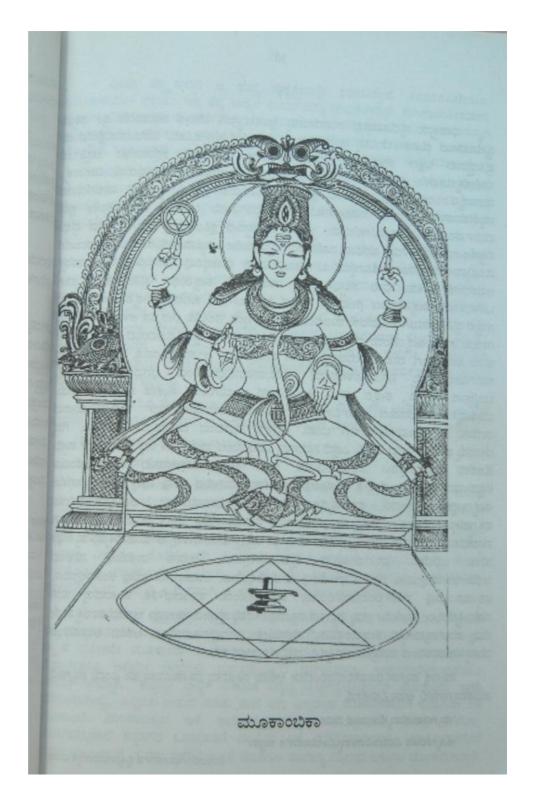


Figure 27 Titled as Mookambika

Kollur mookanbike diety is another shakthi peetha established by shankaracharya in the Western Ghats Referring to the citizens of Southern Karnataka with specifications as Parushurama sketra nivasini, meaning the goddess who resides in the land of the incarnation of Vishnu god- parashurama. Representing the coastal kanrnataka this diety being prominent in the coastal line of Karnataka and kerala is represented to appeal to the devotees and the dominant Hindu communities of these regions, like sringeri sharada representation. Here interestingly the colours used are similar to those of the Kannada flag representation, naturally because of the *kumkuma and haldi*, crimson and the turmeric usages for mother goddesss shakthi being very ritualistic and traditional. The images produced here are the most popular and commercial images of goddesss mookambika, here refered as the metaphoric Kannadadevi.

The goddesss here is sitting in padmasana posture with sudarshanyantra in the upper right hand of Devi and her right bottom hand in chinmudra, with the conch in left hand another in receiving posture, with closed eye in meditative mode; she seated in fornt of shiv ling with base of sudarshanayantra. Here the similarity between the illustration and the temple diety representation is almost similar. The goddesss refered as shakthi consort of shiva here is holding the sudarshana yantra of Vishnu, is one of the rare placements of elements breaking the monotony.



Figure 28 The popular images on Goddesss Mookambika, painted version and photographed version.

The Mookambika Devi Temple stands at the bottom of the Kodachadri peak in Kollur, south Karnataka. The deity is in the form of Jyotir-Linga incorporating both Shiva and Shakthi. The *Panchaloha* image (five element mixed metal) of the Goddess on Shree Chakra is stated to have been consecrated by Adi Shankaracharya during his visit to this place.

Sudarshana yantra is the tantric tool used for protection and sustenance of energy, refered to god Vishnu as its master.

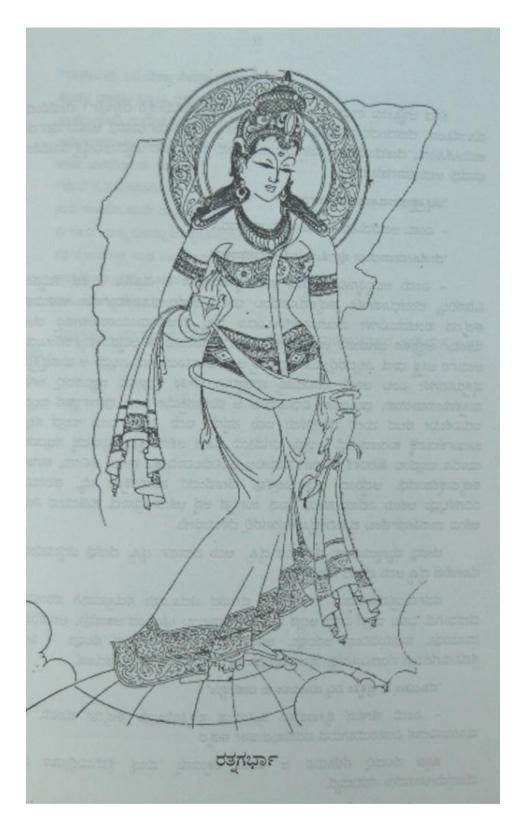


Figure 29 Titled as Ratnagarbha

Ratnabharana, Referring her as "Chandrabaga tatasthe, Thayee Kannada mathe, bharateya tanujathe" You are not just stones, but in forms of fields, water, body, you are in all forms, Kannada mathe, You are Omkara" and its representation. Here too even in an attempt for abstraction the poet ads the cover of Hinduism, declaring this goddesss as a formless goddesss, yet with a visual illustration. This mannerism of incapability of perceiving the formless goddesss by representing with an illustrative figurasition is in itself an irony. These contexts were better depected in the belur-halebidu temple sculptures where a blank space of nothingness was probably perceived as the god or goddesss or beyond. Here the poet personifies this deity as a form of abstraction, generalizing and representing her with a form but stating as a formless goddess. She is standing on the earth, with her aura paralleled by the map of Karnataka, speaking of universal appeal, in context of local diety. Since not all religion believes in idol worship, the space for a formless power was considered necessary to be felt as an abstract goddess, yet still a version of the multifaceted Kannada goddess.

Ttiled as Sridurge, in the next illustration, poet referring her to the goddess of Gokarna for the citizens of the coastal Karnataka there by covering the enire coastal belt of Karnataka called *Karavali*. *Personifying here as* "Expeller of fear, Sri Durge, we will cross the path of fire for your wish of unification, as a sacrifice for you. Chidagnikunda samboothe"

Here the goddess is been visualized with more of a thematic brilliance, making it more dramatic, expressive and narrative. With a path of hardship illustrated and the goddess blessing for those who struggles for the freedom of her land. The tabloid is been staged with three layer of illustrations, in the front is the pathway to struggle and sacrifice, and the second middle is the goddesss herself standing with a passively opened eyes with fire as her halo and trident, sudarshana chakra and blessing hands she stand awaiting for the patriots of her Kannada desha, with the map of Karnataka seen in the backgrounds for the clarity of representation, besides the hills of sahyadri.

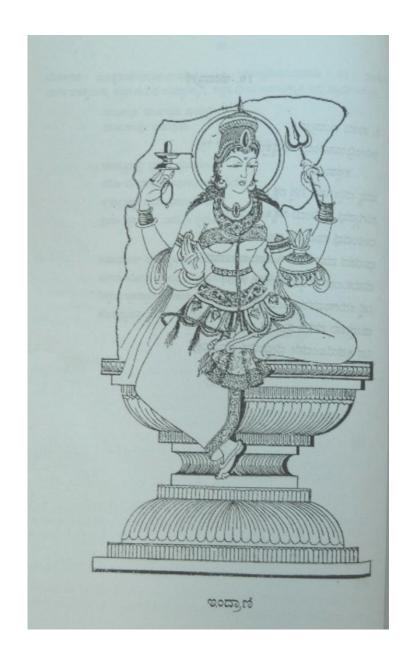
Rooting the goddesss in the light of all worshiped goddesss the author draws inspiration from Sri aurobindo's lines for India " Mother Durga! Rider on the lion, giver of all strength, mother, beloved of Shiva! We, born from thy parts of power, we the youth of india are seated here in thy temple, listen, O mother, descend upon earth, make thyself manifest in this land of India. Mother Durga! India lies low in selfishness and fearfulness and littleness. Make us great, make our efforts great, our hearts vast, make us true to our resolve. May we no onger desire the small, void of energy, given to laziness, stricken with fear.

Mother Durga! When we possess thee, we shall no longer cast thee away; we shall bind thee to us with the tie of love and devotion, come, mother, manifest thyself in our mind and life and body. Come, revealer of the hero-path. We shall no lomger cast thee away. May our entire life become a ceaseless worship of the mother, all our acts a continuous service to the

mother, full of love, full of energy. This is our prayer, O mother, descend upon earth, make thyself manifest in this land of India



Figure 30 Titled as Sridurge





Poet describes "Unexpressive power, Bless us to fulfil our fight, For the sake of humanity (manu kula) Bless and lead your youth." Targeting more on the youth power and young generation for the support and will to unify, goddesss indrani is presented. The map of Karnataka again appears in the background as in case of other representations to symbolically visualize the map as goddess and goddess as the map. This goddesss is almost visualized in the similar lines of maheshwari.

Indrani also refered as the wife and consort of Indira, the Indra is the King of the gods or Devas and Lord of Heaven or Svargaloka in Hindu mythology. He is also the God of War, Storms, and Rainfall



Figure 31 Titled as Varahi

"Remove the land that has sunk of sorrows from the sea of pain and uplift the world of Kannada from the depth of all problems, and arise her to the glory of its wisdom and PAGE 155 OF 413 prosperity, oh varahi mathe, such a manner that never shall this nation ever sleep to ignorance again"

Varahi here is refered to the wife of the third incarnations of god Vishnu, as the feminine version of the power who according to vishnupuran uplifts earth from the cluthches of demons.

The visual here clearly shown as the earth with emphasized south India and specifically Karnataka. The whole idea as in the culture referring back to the epics is one of the most effectient manners of transformation of information, since ages in India, similar to the context of depicting the antagonist Ravana as the british and the incarnation of god Vishnu: Sri Rama as the patriot of Bharath matha in the rural epic Ramayan drama. The mythology and post modernism may be by the order of time and space is of a great difference but in the visual cultural context the factor of time and space too may not exist, instead may collide and combine into a new definition of visual cultural space. Here in the illustration the globe is much zoomed into the peninsular south India with Karnataka in separate outstanding shading. The sense of goddess and map of Kannada as a part of India in the solar system of extra terrestrial space is arguably the initial attempts of universialising the globe and Kannada as its priority and territorial symbol.

Adithi

The next illustration is emphasisd as Adithi "Goddess of light, Bless us with determination & strength". The hand from the extreme right represents the common mans hand and the sacred tread of victory is been tied on to the common man, from the goddess of light and strength as determination, often stated as *kriya shakthi*. The author here finds a huge lack of determination in the movement of unification from the activists, so to highlight these issues through this countering of weakness in another form of Kannada goddess.

The involment of the hand as participation from other world is perhaps to make the goddesss accessable to the common man. Usually potrayed for *Rakshabandhan* celebrations. The interactivity and the declaring spirit for the pride of the land and language is arguably the first of the visual interactiveness, as a representation for the viewer psychology to feel and experience the presence of the holy mother goddesss.

Varahi is one of the Matrikas, a group of seven or eight mother goddesses in the Hindu religion. With the head of a sow, Varahi is the Shakti (feminine energy, or sometimes, consort) of Varaha, the boar Avatar of the god Vishnu. Varahi is worshipped by all the three major schools of Hinduism: Shaktism (goddess worship); Shaivism (followers of the god Shiva); and Vaishnavism (devotion to Vishnu).

Aditi from the verb root "da" (to bind)) in Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language. In the Vedas Aditi is mother of the gods (*devamatri*) from whose cosmic matrix the heavenly bodies were born. As celestial mother of every existing form and being, the synthesis of all things, she is associated with space (*akasa*) and with mystic speech ($V\bar{a}c$). She may be seen as a feminized form of Brahma and associated with the primal substance (*mulaprakriti*) in Vedanta.

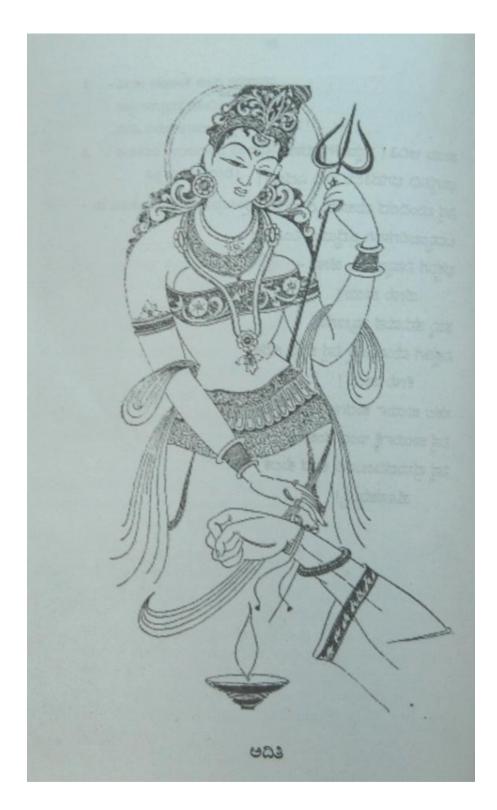


Figure 32 Titled as Aditi

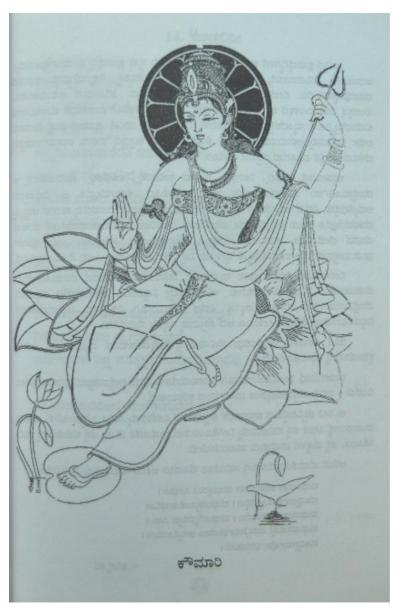


Figure 33 Ttiled as Kaumari

Kaumari means Unmarried goddess, goddesss of Beauty and attraction, drawing a comparision to the flaura and fauna of the Karnataka nature, showcasing the prosperity and wealth of this land.

Speaking of the self sufficiency and mineral weath, wishing for a good, balanced prosperous life. Reminding of the availability of this land and its natural resources. Visually asserting the pride of Kannada land and geography.

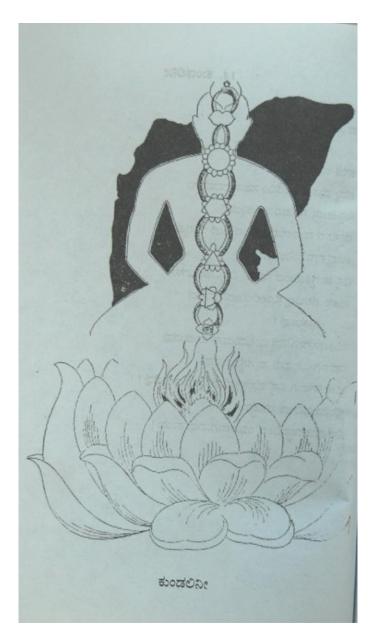


Figure 34 Titled as Kundalini

"Kannada yoga shakthi, Arisie our energy from within. From Mysore as the bottom energy chakra the mooladhara, (the primary energy centre), to the upper Kannada body, Bless us."

The map of Karnataka in the background referring to the inner will power of every person of the land of Karnataka, here the energy is focused as the inner energy source often explained in the context of tantric disciplines. This image here is given to the appeal of enlightment of every person of this land, to awkae and arise to the fight for unification and free nation.

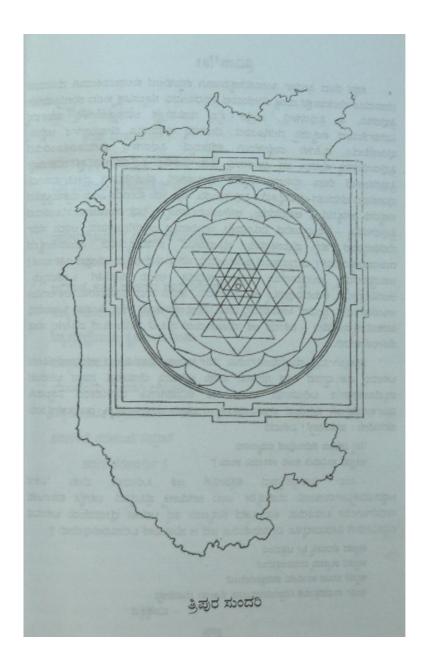


Figure 35 Titled as Tripurasundari.

"Thayee Karnataka devi! Srimad simhasaneshwari! Tripurasundari! Tripurasundari,

Power of Sreechakra shakthi,

For we love you more than our lives."

These lines are display a very arrogantly emotional and sentimental approach of saying 'do it or we will die for it'. By using the tool of tantric discipline called Sree Chakra, the fusion of the devotional abode as the Kannada goddess is what is applied here to glorify the strength and the limitless power of the goddess, pushing the imagination to the highest available source. The Sree Chakra again symbolizes the Hindu tantric devotees and brahminical class, who were then dominant in all sectors. But this also means the exclusion of the non-Hindus and other Hindus who are non-idol worshippers too. The main impact of the Sree Chakra over the map may also be perceived as the highest power establishment and representation, to the supreme divine status, or sealing off the Kannada map as the space for the Shakthi peetha devotes. The map is shown in the background, reminding one of the concept as the map and the map as the conceptual power itself.

Savithri

The next illustration, the last of this series and the concluding and merging visual back to Mother India, rather Bharat Matha is re-established as the mother of the Kannada goddess. The geographical map of Bharat Matha again is inclusive of Sri Lanka. The upper body of Bharat Matha is an abstract formation denoted in a cloudy bloom merging to the hair of Shiva and Shakthi, with the trident and the *damaru*, the symbols of god Shiva and the mother goddess, presented as a unified picture of merging forms. The assertion of the symbol of Sri Aurobindo Ashram declares the unification and the influential elements of this work on Kannada mother Goddess Bhuvaneshwari. The map of Sri Lanka as a bud at the feet of the Shiva-Shakthi map is a territorial questioning, and hereby arguing on the context of questioning, is Bharata (Bharat Matha) the very same concept referring to India? If yes, why is the map of Bharata representation not the same as that of New India, and if no, then how does this relationship or dispute in perception co-exist in performing a similar function concluding on a common point? Or is the concept of Bharata only the intention, and to be perceived as the early Bharata even today? In that case, it is merely nostalgic not realistic. Also, do the regions that are not included in the new India map react to this in the purview of perceiving as the Bharatha even in their cultural context? The primary answer revolves around the core of territory! The visual, though crafted as the supportive medium of realization of the visual goddesses and their transformation as realistic goddesses, inspiring devotion, are not mere illustrations, but a cultural

solution and a social reason for constructional and reconstructional civic thinking which redefines and reshapes the face of the country and its people.

The Sri Chakra is one of the main symbols of the Hindu Tantra system, which is based on the philosophy of Tantra shastra. The Sri Yantra is the object of devotion in Sri Vidya. The Sri Yantra or Sri Chakra is a yantra formed by nine interlocking triangles that surround and radiate out from the central point (bindu), the junction point between the physical universe and its unmanifest source. It represents the goddess in her form of Sri Lalitha Or Tripura Sundari, "the beauty of the three worlds". Five of the triangles point upwards, representing Shiva or the Masculine. Four of these triangles point downwards, representing Shakti or the Feminine, thus representing the union of Masculine and Feminine Divinity.

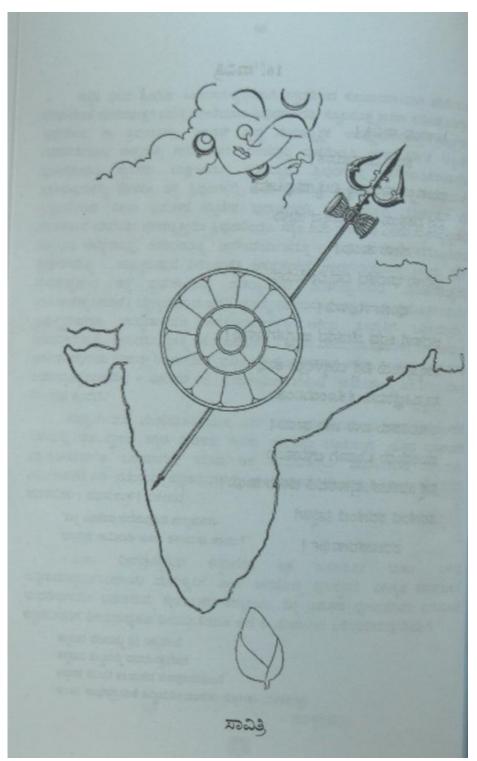


Figure 36 Titled as Savithri

Savithri: Referred to as Bharat Matha the mother of Kannada Mathe. "Kannada Mahamathe, Have you stopped the divided diverse drama amongst you both?

Save our dying Kannada, save Kannada."

The question arising here is of very dramatic circumstances, emotionally entangled and visually interpreting, as the author questions Bharat Matha here referred to as Savithri, "Have you concluded the divided diverse drama amongst you and your daughter Kannada Mathe?",

meaning, has Mother India concluded their much debated diverse detachment and family drama of non-coordination with each other with respect to the non-diclarated of states on a linguistic basis and the struggle that led to achieving it? This question is precisely on the non-coordination factors of the central governance and the National Congress and the Kannada unification movement, that was seen as an irony in the case of Karnataka, with Kannada demands set aside for an intolerably prolonged period, pushing the demand for a separate state to the 1970s.

The book concludes with yet another quote of Sri Aurobindo:

" The synthetic turn is not peculiar to the mystics or to a small literate class or to philosophic thinkers nourished on the thoughts, images, traditions and cultural symbols of the purana and tantra; for the things are only concrete representations of living figures of synthetic monism, the many sided Unitarianism, the large cosmic universalism of the Vedic scriptures.

"The mother of all works through evil as well as good, and through temporary evil she brings about a better and lasting good."

Andanappa Dodametti also initiated another visual representation of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari painted by S.N. Patil an artist from Gadag, north Karnataka. This painting was later established at his residence as his family goddess in the holy devotional space (pooja room). This painting was later photocopied and spread in all of North Karnataka, studing even the award mementos at felicitation ceremonies. This Bhuvneshwari version is in the oil painting medium and is bordered with symbols of Karnataka's historical and rich natural resources. The goddess is depicted in the central composition with the background as universal space. Like the above illustrated drawing inspiration, here too the symbol of the Aurobindo Ashram *wheel* is represented in the right hand side corner. For the first time we observe the inclusion of Muslims and Jains, with the Gol Gumbaz architecture for the former and Gomateshwara of Sravanabelagola for the latter. The style presented here is a potpourri form showing the influence of calendar art and temple architecture.

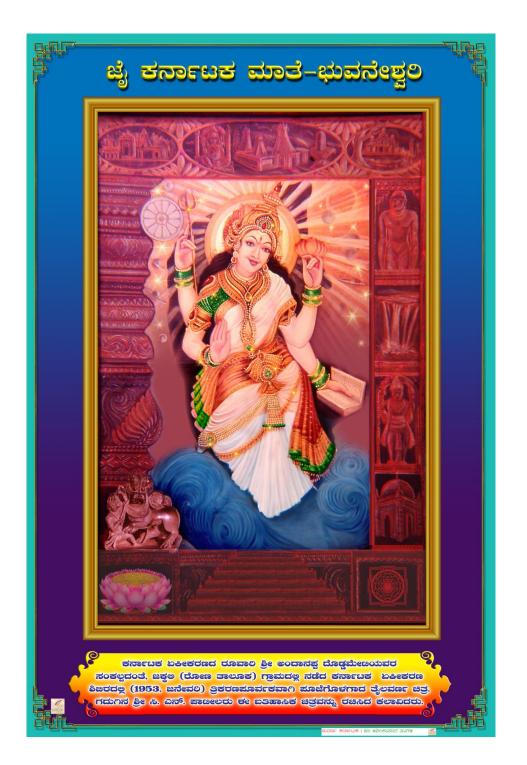


Figure 37 Thayee Bhuvaneshwari by SN Patil, 1953. Diety that Andanappa Dodametti established as goddesss of his family and Karnataka.



Figure 38 The shrine of goddesss Bhuvaneshwari inside the Virupaksha temple complex of at Hampi.



Figure 39 A November 1, 1973 on the eve of renaming the state of Mysore as Karnataka, lighting of the torch of Karnataka *jyothi* and *pooja* devotional ceremony at the shrine of Kannada goddesss bhuvaneswari at Hampi.



Figure 39 B Karnataka goddess, refered as the representation of Vasudeva kutumba, Mother Goddess: Sri Bhuvaneshwari

B. OTHER MOTHERS

Telgu Talli

Marathi Bhavani

Tamilttay

Malayalamathavu

Telgu Talli





Figure 40 A, B, C, D. Statues of Telgu Talli: Telgu mother goddess of Andra Pradesh

Armed guards were deployed to protect the statues of Telugu Talli and Potti Sriramulu in Hyderabad two days ahead of the State Formation Day on November 1. Security was tightened after an incident of burning of a statue of Potti Sriramulu in the Telugu University campus in Hyderabad in November 2010. The issue of freedom and the internal dispute that still is an unsolved headache in Andhra Pradesh is of the demand for statehood for the Telangana region, on the basis of injustice and unresolved demands over water, budget allocations and jobs. This is similar to such demands from areas of coastal Karnataka, Coorg and other ignored sectors of Karnataka.

In general all states face more or less the similar issues. The most important fact relevant here is the visualization of the language Telugu as Mother Goddess Telugu Talli by the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh. The avatar of this goddess is, however, more simplified, and reveals a huge influence of the early Indian temple sculpture of south India. Her sculptures are found all around Andhra Pradesh, in all prominent junctions and circles on the roadways. A flyover, named after her in Hyderabad, the Telugu Talli Flyover is the city's longest flyover, stretching from the old entrance of the Secretariat to Lower Tank Bund. The flyover had to face several hurdles, including the controversial move to shift an Ambedkar statue installed in its path. Her representations in posters and political banners are evident on the streets of Hyderabad.



Figure 40 E Illustrated image of Telgu Talli, popular image.

The similarity and existence of such a mother goddess in a neighbouring state also buttresses my argument that the need for identity has been more crucial in the present times, ironically, even more than during the unification movements. The emergence of goddesses and their visual potential to unify and demark territory and question the changing socio-political crisis proves the extraordinary calibre of visual representation and the iconography of the mother goddess. But here too we find the goddess to be more of a Hindu figurisation, naturally excluding the minority populations.

Read more: http://www.tollywoodandhra.in/news-in-pics/high-secuirty-at-telugu-talli-and-potti-sriramulu-inhyderabad/#ixzz1l8g7KtVR

Maharashtra, the state neighbouring Karnataka, has seen the representation of the mother goddess through the heroic iconographic figure of the patriot warrior Chatrapathi Shivaji portrayed as the beloved son of mother goddess *Bhavani*. The whole of Maratha culture and Maharashtra has the symbolic representation of Shivaji as the host of Maharashtra and Bhavani.

The flag of Maharashtra too has a great significance, influenced as it is, by the Shiv Sena and the Maharashtrian ideals. The flag, once used as the traditional temple symbol, is adopted from the *Ram Janm Bhumi* (the land of Lord Sri Rama, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, according to Hindu mythology) flag. The contrast that exists between the mother goddess of Kannada and Telugu Talli and the Maratha Bhavani has a vast difference and significance in context to social: political and cultural: regional, linguistic and castes and visual: in large context, as the inspiration and influence drawn from the respective sources are at large from their respective historic roots to strengthen their base of icons and the hierarchy of ideals and thinking.

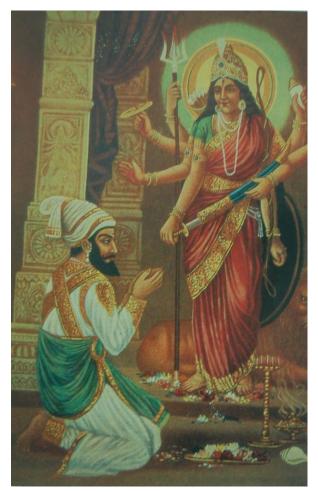


Figure 41 Shivaji receiving Bhavani's sword (c. 1950), a post independence representation of shivaji's divinely approved actions. Courtesy: Christopher piney's Photos of the Gods.

Read more: http://www.tollywoodandhra.in/news-in-pics/high-secuirty-at-telugu-talli-and-potti-sriramulu-inhyderabad/#ixzz1l8g7KtVR

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The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation Maharashtra, the state neighbouring Karnataka, has seen the representation of the mother goddess through the heroic iconographic figure of the patriot warrior Chatrapathi Shivaji portrayed as the beloved son of mother goddess *Bhavani*. The whole of Maratha culture and Maharashtra has the symbolic representation of Shivaji as the host of Maharashtra and Bhavani.

The flag of Maharashtra too has a great significance, influenced as it is, by the Shiv Sena and the Maharashtrian ideals. The flag, once used as the traditional temple symbol, is adopted from the *Ram Janm Bhumi* (the land of Lord Sri Rama, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, according to Hindu mythology) flag. The contrast that exists between the mother goddess of Kannada and Telugu Talli and the Maratha Bhavani has a vast difference and significance in context to social: political and cultural: regional, linguistic and castes and visual: in large context, as the inspiration and influence drawn from the respective sources are at large from their respective historic roots to strengthen their base of icons and the hierarchy of ideals and thinking.



Figure 42 Green flags along with the Sena-BJP Alliance's saffron flags flutter at the Sena rally in Malegaon on October 8, 2009. (Courtesy: Photo Zahoor Khan)

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Green flags resembling the Pakistani National Flag fluttered at the Shiv Sena (SS) rally in Malegaon on October 8, 2009. The election rally was being held by the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance for Dada Bhuse, the Saffron Alliance's candidate in Malegaon (Outer) Assembly constituency at College Ground in Malegaon Camp. The alliance had organised a mammoth gathering which Sena Organising President Udhav Thackeray was scheduled to address. But Udhav Thackeray did not turn up. But the green flags resembling the Pakistani flag surprised everyone at the rally. Apparently these flags were used by Muslims on occasions like Eid–e-Milad. The Shiv Sena, which had always created concerns over such flags, had ironically used them in its own rally, obviously targeting the Muslim vote bank — there being more than 50,000 Muslim voters in Malegaon.

http://www.ummid.com/news/October/09.10.2009/green_flags_in_sena_rally.htm



http://www.flickr.com/photos/selvin/6713131499/ Courtesy: Selvin Photography. **Figure 43** The Maratha flag being waved at the Mumbai Marathon 2012.

In the context of Maharashtra and Maharashtrian ideology, Christopher Piney in his *Photos of the Gods* says: "According to N.K. Behere, a historian of the Rajwade School, 'young men were encouraged to develop their muscles and learn stick, spear and sword practice both as offensive and defensive measures. The implied moral here was obvious: young Maharashtrians should learn from this past and act accordingly. Comparing Aurangzeb to Ravan, the king of Lanka (whom Ram had defeated with Hanuman's military support), Ramdas argued (or so Rajwade claimed) that an ideal religion could only prevail in Maharashtra in the absence of Islam. Ramdas wrote his own Ramayan structured around the Yuddha Kand (war chapter), which 'glorifies the war waged by Ram against Ravan for a righteous and just cause'. Again the implicit call

to action here would have been obvious to Rajwade's and Behere's readers. Ram and Hanuman were promoted by Ramdas (in the Rajwade version) as embodiments of muscular and assertive Maharashtra dharma and the existing bhakti 'bhaqwatdharma' was denigrated as politically ineffectual. Vithoba's qualities 'do not goad a nation to activity...they foster the brotherhood of man but they cannot liberate the people from bondage. They cannot destroy the foreign yoke'. And further Pinney discuss on the visuals of Shivaji "Ramdas's supposed promotion of Ram and Hanuman's militant agency was mirrored by an appeal to rediscover the goddess Kalika Bhavani who is strength personified, in fact defined. She blessed Rama, and gave him strength to kill the demons. She herself killed several demons in the past.' Shivaji responded to this appeal and his devotion to Bhavani would become a recurrent theme in later imagery. These prints always depict Shivaji kneeling in front of the goddess and receiving a sword. Karandikar records that in 1658 Shivaji purchased a double-edged sword of European workmanship', which he then named 'Bhavani' suggesting, Karandikar continues, that 'Shivaji, though confident that his mission of liberating the land had been blessed by higher, unseen powers, realised that the fulfilment of that mission depended on strength in its manifold forms. Shivaji's followers, however, understood the sword to have been gift of Bhavani to this modern incarnation of Shiv. Bhavani's sword was metonymic of a wider divine engagement with his actions. Thus, when the Muslim Afzal Khan attempted to destroy the Jejuri temple, Bhavani let loose a swarm of bees in its defence, and she persuaded him in 1665 to reach a peaceful compromise with Raja Jayasingh: 'Bhavani counselled him... Jayasingh was also a favourite with the gods and success against him could not be secured by winning the war. Tilak's reappropriation of Shivaji in the 1880s also entailed the parallel appropriation of Bhavani's sword as a symbol of the proximity of divine intentionality and human politics. When Kesari reported on the Shivaji anniversary it also printed a poem by the pseudonym Bhavani Tarvar (Bhavani – i.e. Shivaji's – sword) 'in which the writer had upheld hero-worship and reminded the readers of contemporary political injustice'. With such images explicitly political, the images were the most efficient and

powerful medium of public reachability and the transition of the visual image and iconography from Shivaji to Tilak and from Tilak to the modern activists, the representational icons are no mere puzzle, but a reaction to a circumstantial sociopolitical crisis where the visualization acts as the solution and relief to the solving of the problem but which later again takes its own path of no more being controlled but controlled by the concept of the visual itself.

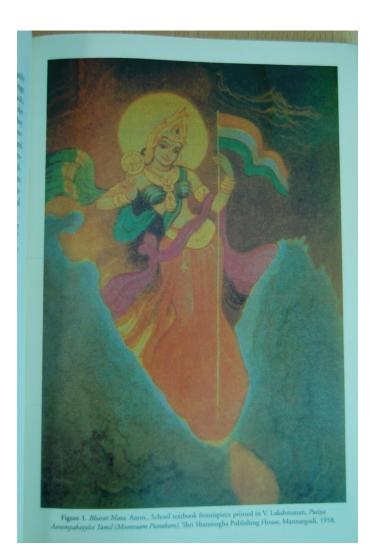


Figure 44 Bharat Mata. Anon., School textbook frontpiece printed in V. Lakshmanan, Putiya Aarampakayylvi Tamil (moontaam Puttakam), Shri Shanmugha Publishing House, Mannargudi, 1958. Courtesy: body politics: Sumathi Ramaswamy, picturing the nation.



Figure 45 Tamilttay. S.K. Ayya, Chromolithograph Published by Kamban Kazhagam, Karaikkudi, C 1941. Courtesy: Sumathi Ramaswamy: Body politics, picturing the nation.

In 1941, a few years before the great medieval Tamil poet issued a chromolithograph of Tamilttay, painted by S.K. Ayya, published by Kamban Kazhagam, of a slender young women sitting on top of the world. Her expression is gentle and inward, and her glance drifts off to her left rather than confronting the viewer directly. Dressed in a modest rippling white sari, she holds in her lap the ancient Yal or lyre of southern India. With the four arms typical of Hindu divinities, she holds a palm-leaf manuscript, a rosary and a small torch. Like a queen she wears a crown and a full suite of gold and pearl ornaments. Her right foot rests lightly on a white lotus that seems to arise from the ether. The label at the bottom of the print identifies this as Tamilttay, "Mother Tamil", described by Sumathi Ramaswamy as "the apotheosis of the language as goddess, queen, mother, and maiden". Richard Davis says: "Not only a language, as goddess she also served in the minds of many devotees as the icon for an imagined community, a nation, grounded upon Tamil language, its people, its ancient heritage and shared literary culture. Tamilttay has her own procession, too. So when the Dravidian leader E. V. Ramaswami was arrested in 1938, thousands of followers protested his detention by carrying a giant statue of Tamilttay in a state of mourning through the streets of Madras."



Figure 46 The unofficial flag of Tamil Nadu. Flag of DMK, Dravidian party from the state of Tamil Nadu.

This horizontal bicolour of black over red is the unofficial flag of the Tamil (Dravidian movement) the red symbolizing the culture and identity and the black representing the downtrodden. The colour and the flag representation can be traced back to the origin of Periyar's (also known as Ramaswami, EVR, Thanthai Periyar, or Periyar [September 17, 1879 – December 24, 1973], a noted social reformer of Dravidians who founded the Self-Respect Movement and Dravidar Kazhagam) shaping of the Dravidian movement and reformation.

But today the usage of term 'Tamil' is itself a very sensitive usage: for instance, often Tamil is used to refer to Indian Tamils, Tamil Nadu, Lankan Tamil, etc. Also, most party

flags in this state feature similar combinations of red and black, sometimes with an added white strip. The flag representation here is active in cultural and social contexts, but as far as the usage of mother and Tamil mother goddess is concerned, the availability of such usages and contexts are only evident in the literary contributions and in the poems of Tamil patriots.

But the evidence produced here with the title "Tamil Tayi, 1941" meaning Mother of Tamil, is itself a prominent example to illustrate the usability and origin of the mother concept in the Tamil context. Unlike any of the earlier discussed mother goddesses — Bharat Matha, Kannada Mathe, or Teulgu Talli — Tamil Tayi seems to be the avatar of early Pallava sculpture influences with the typical potpourri style of calendar stylization in an attempt to furnish a redefinition to the Tamil context of the goddess avatar seems to to prolifically anxiety us. The similar, probably inspired or influenced, version of western painting is also presented here as an evidence to support the cause of anxiety over the similarities and presentation of the enunciation of the goddess. Here the music instrument is sacred in appeal, mostly the *rudra veena* (sacred veena, a string instrument) with a divine Saraswathi (goddess of knowledge) lookalike representation on the highly debatable globe with India in focus.

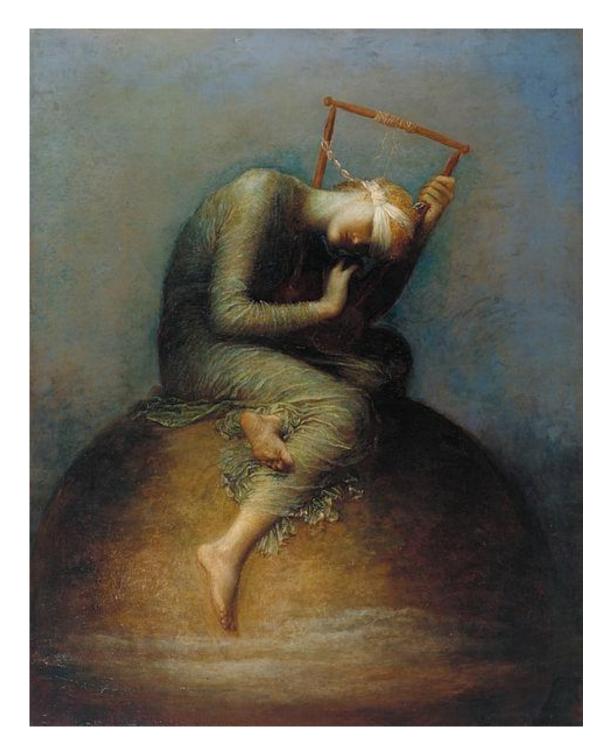


Figure 47 "Hope" by George Frederic Watts, 1886.

George Frederic Watts, a Symbolist oil painter, painted two versions of this painting, titled 'Hope', which were completed in 1886. The painting was intended to form part of a series of allegorical paintings entitled the 'House of Life'. The representation of women on earth was not a new phenomenon, for the painting presented here is the evidence to support the argument that visual representational concepts too are often at times borrowed or highly inspired to become localized in their own language of vernacular style, deconstructing the established version of construction. The thematic expressiveness, highly sensitive, with high chances of perceiving the whole context of the painting as a symbolic tragedy, is again shattered by the interpretation of the artist who uses an optimistic note of "hope".

This painting by George Frederic Watts shows a female in an allegorical figure of Hope. In this painting, she is depicted sitting on a globe, blindfolded, clutching a wooden lyre with only one string left intact. She is sitting in a hunched position, with her head leaning towards the instrument, close enough to listen to the sole remaining string. Watts on this work says, "Hope need not mean expectancy. It suggests here rather the music which can come from the remaining chord." The silent atmosphere is emphasised by Watts's soft strokes emphasizing on the serene, focused persona of the character leaving with a hope and thread of thought to think.

In contrast to the mother goddess of India, Bharata and other mother forms, the goddess either sits on the globe or stands on the globe as the pride and protector of the earth. The static central compositional framing, centralizing the character to the epicentre of the visual, proclaims the beginning and the end of the visual story. The narrative picturization often at times anchors the conversation of the artist with his visual on a pin-pointing focus of line, the staging of the set and the texture and atmosphere of the painting very effectively placed in a dichotomical juxtaposition, releasing the anticipation of the gesture to the reader's interpretation. Visuals such as these, closely in line with the mother goddess series may or may not be inspired. But the setting of the standards, in the local or in the global, in the representation using

the globe as a powerful element has been always a universal concern, for instance, the early Roman sculpture of the marble figure of Atlas carrying the cosmic globe on his shoulders apart from many such sculptures and paintings.

Here it is not just the external representation of universalizing the broad sense of generalization and belongingness that is expressed, but also the internal agenda of communicating a strong message in the most subtle manner, using a beautified, decorated and well-presented version of representations that interpret its territorialism as a leading global power and symbol. Though in his painting here the artist has not specified on which planet the character is sitting, it could also be his way of presenting the earth as the non-geographical earth, as mere soil and with no territories. The artist being an English Victorian painter and sculptor associated with the Symbolist movement was well known for his allegorical works.

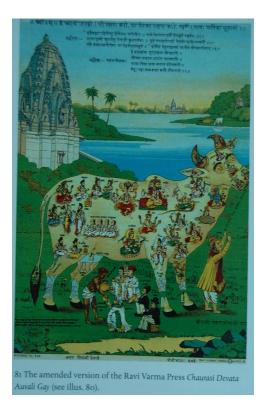


Figure 48 The amended version of the Ravi Varma press Chaurasi Devata Auvali Gay. Courtesy Photos of Gods, Christopher Pinney.

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The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation The visual here, has features close to the Gowmatha, the sacred Holy Cow, which was the iconic symbol and cultural mother goddess for certain north Indian states and other regions. The emergence of the Gowmatha too was not a sudden enlightenment over the religious values of perceiving the cow as a symbol of the goddess, but was a cautionary message to beef-eaters against slaughtering of cows, thus targeting the non-brahmanical and non-Hindu population. This usage of Gowmatha often appears even today as the reminding visual in the BJP, RSS strongholds. The quest for cultural control and political existence had always vouched visuals as its tool, at times as the weapon or sometimes as an explosive synthesis.

As regards the other mother goddesses in India, countless avatars of multi-faceted multi-lingual, regional, pre-historic, Vedic and most recent modern mother incarnations like Santoshi Maa, a cult goddess that appeared in the modern period, that grew its roots and branches into the post-modern times too are available in the list. Kali Maa, Durga Maa, Maa Savithri, Sita Maa, Maa Saraswati, Lakshmi Maa, Parvathi Maa, Indrani, Rajarajeshwari, Tripurasundari, Jagadamba, and at least thousand such incarnations and versions are celebrated in the form of mother goddess, but none representing a single state, or region or caste or language.

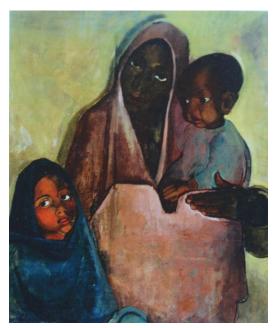


Figure 49 The depiction of Mother India by Amrita Sher Gil, in a state of concern and question. Courtesy: Sumathi Ramaswamy: The Goddess And The Nation, Amrita Sher Gil, Mother India. Oil on Canvas. 1935 (National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, Acc no. 1134)



Figure 50 Bharat Bhiksa (India Begging). Lithograph published by Calcutta Art Studio, Calcutta, Cicra 1878. Courtesy of Christopher Pinney.

In her state of widowhood, she lacks food to nourish her body and clothes to cover herself. Her hair is rough from the lack of oil and unkempt. She has lost her teeth and suffering has made her gaze intense and piercing." On one hand we find the ferocious terrorizing incarnations of Bharat Matha as Kali and in illustrations such as these we find her in a realistic, dramatic, sentimental, sympathetic character.



Figure 51 Mother India by Mehboob Productions Private Limited, 1957

The famous dialogue from the Amitabh Bachchan's blockbuster *Deewar* is still often repeated, over done to the point of becoming clichéd. Amitabh, the wayward, rebel son, tells Shashi Kapoor, the good caring and responsible younger son, "*Mere paas bangla hai, gaadi hai, paisa hai. Tere paas kya hai*?" (I have a bungalow, a car, money. What do you have?) to which Shashi Kapoor responds with an instantaneous, slow-motioned, emotional reply: "*Mere paas maa hai.*"(I have mother.) Popular Indian cinema has been loaded with the *maa* symbol, with a list of screen mothers flourishing: from Durga Khote, Leela Chitnis, Nirupa Roy and Sulochana to Nutan, Waheeda Rehman and Rakhi.

Interestingly, the typical character role of the mother in Hindi films till date has been of a "crying, suffering and concerned helpless mother" including the recent remake of *Agneepath*. And the same is reflected in the television serial craze, loaded with either the mother victimized by her daughter-in-law or the victimized daughter in the custody of the mother-in-law, successfully running for years, like the epic saga *Kyunki Saas bhi Kabhie Bahu Thhi*.

Kajari Jain cites one telling anecdote involving Nargis, the Hindi film actress most famous for her starring role in *Mother India* (1957), a classical cinematic depiction of the long-suffering, heroic female facing economic and familial disaster, which was wisely viewed, as its title intended, in allegorical terms. After Nargis retired from films, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi brought her into the Rajya Sabha in 1980. In her first official speech as a Member of Parliament, Nargis attacked the celebrated filmmaker Satyajit Ray for focusing on Indian poverty in his films. In her speech and in a subsequent interview, Nargis charged that Ray failed to provide "a correct image of India", which led foreigners to think that modern India had no cars or schools. When the interviewer asked her what defined "modern India" she replied in one word, "Dams".

Is this visual catharsis the biological or psychological transmigrational acceptance of characters in screen in visual performance adopted as it is in real? Does the reel-to-real transformation of visual potential create such a higher elevation of mental scape? And is this the same in the present context of contemporary visuals? These topics are further discussed in the further chapters.

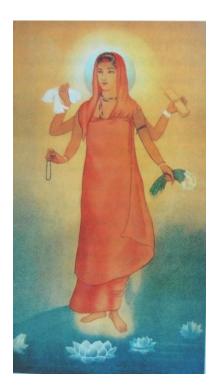


Figure 52 Bharat Matha. Chromolithograph of Abanindranath Tagore, Water colour: Bharath Matha (dated 1904-1905) (OSIAN'S Archive, Research and Documentation Centre, Mumbai.)

Abanindranath's picturing of the goddess had gained huge appreciation from art critics for presenting a new dimension to the representation and the stylization of Bharat Matha in a native goddess form influenced by Hindu ideals, with saffron attire and elements such as the beads, manuscripts, and the saffron (vermilion) on her forehead, the sign of a married woman, though she is a virginal ascetic.

"Modelled though she clearly was on the everyday Bengali woman — even possibly the young girls of the artist's aristocratic family — Bharat Matha's divine stature in this painting is most obvious from her four arms and from the delicate halo that rings her head. Goddess though she may be, nothing indicates that she is indeed a new deity of country, even if the artist apparently first named her Banga Mata (mother Bengal) and only later called her Bharat Mata. The tricolour banner and the mapped form of India PAGE 189 OF 413 that most obviously signal her pictorial appearance as novel goddess of nation and country are nowhere present. Indeed, even as a female deity her ethereal ascetic air sets her apart from the "poster" goddesses that were becoming increasingly visible in the glossy chromolithographs and colour calendars of the subcontinent's burgeoning popular art industry, as well as apart from the sensuous deities in oil painted in the illusionist academic style and even from the long-established divinities who adorned the sanctums and walls of the innumerable Hindu temples, high and low, across the country."



THE VISUAL CULTURE OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA ASSERTION OF KANNADA VISUAL IDENTITY IN CONTEXT OF GLOBALISATION

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CHAPTER V: THE MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ICONOGRAPY.

- A. Kannada mother goddesss and her films
- B. The present scenario: The multifaceted identity- popular images.
- C. The popular visual iconography
- D. The pheripheral concerns of identity

A. KANNADA MOTHER GODDESSS AND HER FILMS

"Formally, Kannada language cinema of the 1940's and 1950's is akin to hindi cinema of the same period. The differences, when they arise, are largely in the area of motifs and generic convention" In a comparative ananlysis between the Kannada film and hindi film says"it is now acknowledged that historical films partly project the concerns of the present back into the past and this is true of Indian cinema as well. Kannada cinema beginning in the late 1950's was alos actively engaged in constructing a Kannada nation by appealing to the past-especially empires like the one in Vijayanagar and to heroic kings and queens. The three films examined in this context are N.C. Rajan's Ranadheera Kanteerava 1960, R. Nagendra Rao's Vijayanagarada Veeraputhra 1961, and BR Panthulu's Kittur Chanamma 1961."

Ranadheera Kanteerava is a film based on the Wodeyars and their palace in the intrigue with the political nature and the conspiracy planned to execute the young king who is addicted in pleasure, being warned and accosted by his mother the Raja mathe the mother of kingdom, the yong king regrets the act and attempts to reform is poisoned by the ambitious minister. the uncle of the young king Kanteerava played by Rajkumar is installed in his place as a part of the conspiracy planned by the minister and his political lobby in the palace expecting the king to be a puppet in the hands of the minister. But the protagonist gains his power over the time defending the political lobby. The film opens with a eulogizing song on Kannada, is predominantely characterized on defining the Kannada idenitity through the role of Kanteerava, who has a humble friendly persona with all types of Kannada speaking characters of the films and also has two wives with the second wife from a devdasi backgrounds, representing lower caste or other caste acceptance in intercaste marriage and cultural exchange. And as the antagonist are the Tamil speaking characters of tiruchi accompanied by a Malayalam speaking character refered and potrayed as

Black magician (referring all keralians as black magicians and fortune tellers), where Kanteerava kills a wrestler in the wrestling match, after which the tamil brother of the dead wrestler follows Kantterava for the revenge to eliminate him. The wrestlers brother then join the secret alliance of the minister lobby and attempt to undo the protagonist and end up killing the friend of Kanteerava and in the cheos misunderstands his second wife and her loyality, leading to her suicide and kanteerava heroically killing dozens of the enemy lobby with a realization that his dead wife was innocent.

In discussion on the Kanteerava's case noted film critic M.K. Raghavendra says " Ranadheera kanteerava sets about trying to define an inclusive Kannada identity but is still former princely mysore in its address. Evidence of its covert exclusively is its lampooning of the Kannada spoken outside mysore as a way of eulogizing the Kannada nation alongside the recognistion that mysore's hindu rulers were usually decadent and idlers. Still, there is one feature about the historical film that needs acknowledgement. Since the kings were actual individuals with their own histories, they weaken the single representation of 'king-as-lord'- which was a way of allegorizing mysore state as an ideal monarchy. These are therefore two kinds of kings posited by Ranadheera kanteerava: the ineffectual, pleasure-loving kind, and the courageous, responsible kind. The distinction implies recognition that the loyalty of the subjects is not the only issue bu also the fairness of the ruler, which could only have happenend under democratic rule."

Another important film discussed here is Vijayanagarada Veeraputra of 1961. A romatic historical plot based on assassination against the Krishnadevaraya King (played by Udaya Kumar) by antagonist Guruvaraya (played by Nagendra Rao) who is characterized as an arrogant chieftain.

The story takes a twist when guruvaraya's own son get kidnapped by a man whose son would be killed overridden by the chariot of Guruvaraya, and this man brings him up s his own son Vikrama (Played by Sudarshan) who grows up and saves krishnadevaraya's life, who later become the chieftain in his real father's place. Its is from the very same film that I have illustrated as the Kannada pride and land showcased in the song *"Apara keethigalisi mereva bavya nadidu"* where the character vlkram in a robinhood or peter pan style attire with a long feather and cap on a horse sings this classical hit.

As per the criticism of MK Raghavendra, he says "two aspects of vijayanagarada veeraputra are immediately pertinent. On the one hand is the idea of the king being answerable to his subjects (as in Ranadheera Kanteerava), and on the other is the notion of the subject being ruled by two different sovereigns, one subservient to the other and the great monarch deserving more loyalty. If in vijayanagarada veeraputra the two objects of loyalty correspond to the greater mysore and the Indian nation repectively, it is the Indian nation that deserve more loyalty."

"if Vijayanagarada veeraputra confirms the subordination of the Kannada nation to Indian nation, kittur channamma is a straightforward product of Indian nationalism. Kittur channamma deals with the colonial period and makes an attempt to enlist a national heroine form belgaum district (Bombay Karnataka) on behalf of the Kannada nation. The film begins with a school teacher (played by B.R. Panthulu) invoking Rani Channamma of Kittur as a heroic precursor of Gandhi. The film remains fairly true to the actual story of Rani Channamma of Kittur and explains concepts of 'Doctrine of Lapse'. Channamma (B Saroja Devi) is the second wife of the Raja Mallasarja (Rajkumar) who is captured by Tipu Sultan but escapes –with Tipu duly appreciating his valour. As opposed to the Mallasaraja's first marriage, his wedding to Channamma takes place after a 'romance'-once again suggesting a discourse about the knitting of territories not linked by marriage networks.

Much of actual story of Mallasaraja and Channamma involves bickering with other Indian rulers and the film does not avoid this aspect when it upholds Indian nationalism. But what it does is to present the british as the primary enemies. In fact, mallasaraja comes to grief at the hands of the peshwas but Channamma persists in seeing them as the lesser of the evils. Part of the conflict in the film comes from channamma's step son continuing to see the Peshwas as the primary enemies. As in Ranadheera Kanteerava, there is treachery by ministers in the play of the british. Most of the evils in the film pertain to early nineteenth century, after the fall of Tipu in 1799 and the reinstatement of the wadeyas in Mysore.

" In praising the kingdom of Kittur, the film briefly pours scorn on the rulers of Mysoreas lackeys of the British. At the same time, Channamma speaks the Kannada spoken in mysore while her two ministers/advisors(who are british agents) speak the language of Belgaum (Bombay Karnataka). The film is apparently identifying a suitable icon for the Kannada nation while at the same time, through its use of different Kannada dialects, showing mysore as synonymous with Kannada-not sincerely conceding that the Kannada areas outside it are also legitimately 'Kannada'. There is a privilege of mysore over the other Kannada-speaking areas, an aspect noticed in Rayara Sose in which the servants who speak mysore Kannada are hierarchically distinguished from those who speak other kinds of Kannada"

The quotes why I wish to produce here as it is, is to emphasise on two important observation that I too wish to assert upon, one the nation and state representational visuals and the relationship that is exhibited and within it the priority highlightened. The intrinsic aspect that the native art never had voiced against the national perception, especially the Gandhian philosophy of united India is never attempted to even question and both state and nation goes hand in hand. The second observation of usgage of various version of Kannada and its identity been potrayed in an antagonistic and protagonistic manner is a question hereby argued. The representation of British as in the similar context of *Jansi ki Rani* or representation of Tipu Sultan and invaders vasted as the common enemy is atleast common in all of the films. Neverthe less the representation of Bhuvaneshwar fortunately has no conflict in representation against itself, either in abstract or in visual; she is *Kannadaambe, or Sri Rajarajeshwar, Kannadathayee or Kannada kulamathee*.

Janaki Nair in her essasy Battles for Bangalore: Reterritorialising the City says "Kannada activists were not slow in seeking an end to Hindi domination, but also a reduced Tamil presence, demanding films in their own language. The link between linguistic and cultural dominance was most visible in the realm of cinema, since the Tamil film held its own against Hollywood and Hindi films in the city. Kannada films were a distant fourth or even fifth in this hierarchy. Controversy first broke out over *Kanchi Thalaivan* (1963) which portrayed the Pallava kings' triumph over the Chlaukyas. The same groups, led by Vatal Nagaraj's Kannada Chaluvaligars, which had staged their protest against the cenotaph, threatened to force the closure of theatres where Tamil films were being shown.



Figure 53 Kannada Film: Veerasankalapa, 1964 Directed by Hunsooru Krishnamurthy. Lyrics: bharathendra Swamy

The film's Opening scene is itself based on the establishment on the greatness of mother Kannada, Sri Bhuvaneshwari with a dialogue between patriot warrior father and his son, asking him to take oath that every person born as kannadiga should take a pledge in the presence of mother Bhuvaneshwari, that he or she would live for Kannada, earn for Kannada and devote and serve his life for the karnataka's Bharath matha , as father advice his son, for which the son replies with the pledge, that he is kannadiga, and the boold that he possess is the Kannada blood, and that he would live and earn for Kannada. With an appretiating gesture of father, son again continues that Kannada goddesss is his mother and Bhatarth matha is my grand mother, and serving both of them is my ultimate aim and purpose of my life. The smashing classic manner of seeding the concept of goddesss Kannada as mother and her mother Bharath matha as an iconographic devotional goddesss of patriotism and her much superpowered

image equelant or as much as any other goddesss is visually appealed in the Kannada films of early 1964 itself, here I assert the conceptual base of the goddesss existance only as an evidence to support the fact that these visualization did exist in the early 1950-1960's itself. The idol in whose holy presence the oath is pronounced is probably in front of Bhuvaneshwari statue with the premise in a nature of worship and daily rituals. The statue of goddesss is in the similar dipection of shakthi representation with trident.

The same film also has an opening titile track with background song based on Sri Bhuvaneshwari. "Kannada Thayee sri Bhuvaneshwari, Kannadada kulashakthi sri rajeshwari" composed in a mode of anthem, rooting the links from all historical kings, great thinkers and philosophers of this land, reasserting the existance and greatness of Kannada mother goddesss in the name of sri Bhuvaneshwari. The same film also has a song "haadu baa kogile...naledadu bare navile" with lyrics taking a course of pride on Kannada language and Kannada patriotism.

The film though revolving around the historical greatness of Kannada, here the iconography and the mentioning of Flag as Kannada flag in the lyrics of "Hadu baa Kogile" is the focused act of assertion, narrated in a manner connecting to the audience, as the dialogues are referred to the Kannada activits and kannadigas as the prime audience, the target audience for this film irrespective of any language or region, the viewership is addressed to Kannada speaking audience.

Such several Kannada films has contributed in the making of Kannada mother goddesss and the flag in the visual medium, which was most effective to the common audience and further towards it popular image making excercises. The following list of songs and its visuals has sufficient supportive evidence in the making of mother goddesss:

Film : mantralaya mahatme 1966. Lyrics : G V lyyer.

"Kaliyiruva patavannu Kannada taymakkale"

Mentioning the concept of Kannada mother.

Film :Kanteredu nodu 1961. Lyrics : G V lyyer.

"Sharanu kaveri tayee... siriye"

Mentioning the concept of kaveri mother

Film: Annapoorne 1964. Lyrics : Udayashankar

"Kannadave tayinudiyu"

Metioning the concept of mother and her land

Film: Post Master 1964. Lyrics : GV lyyer

"Kannada kuladevi... Kaapadu baa tayi"

Mentioning on the concept of Kannada goddesss.

Film: Masanada Hoovu 1986. Lyrics : S R Ekkundi

"Kannada Naadina Karavali"

Mentioning on the concept of Kannada goddesss

Film: Sharapanjara 1971. Lyrics: Kanagal Prabhakara Shastri

"Kaveri... Kodagina Kaveri"

Mentioning on the concept of kaveri goddesss.

Film: chalisuva modagalu 1982. Lyrics: Udayashankar

"Jeenina holayo...Halina Maleyo"

Mentioning on the Kannada and mother

Film: Mathu tappada Maga 1978. Lyrics: S P Balsubramanyam.

"Entha Soundarya Nodu"

Mentioning on the Kannda land and mother as the daughter of Bharath Matha

Film: Krishna Rukmini 1988. Lyrics: RS Jayagopal

"Karnataka Ithihasadalli"

Mentioned on the flag of Kannada.

Film: Bombat Huduga 1993. Lyrics: V Manohar

"Kannada Mannina...kasthuri kampina"

Mentioned the mother goddesss" Bhuvaneshwar"

Film: Baghiradhi 1969. Lyrics: Anekal nanjukavi

"Omkari kalyani sringeri sririrani"

Mentioned on the Kannada goddesss as sringeri queen.

Film : sriKrishnadevaraya 1970 lyrics: vijayanarasimha

"sriKannadam gelge.. siriKannada balge"

Mentioned on the Kannada mother goddesss and her mother Bharath matha

Film: magina kanasu 1977 lyrics: K S L Swamy

" elleliyu nine.. chelliruve jane"

Mentioned on Kannada goddesss and her geography

Film: akasmika 1993 lyrics:hamsalekha

"huttidare Kannada nadal huttebeku"

Mentioned on the Kannada pride and bliss

Film: mojugara sogasugara 1995 lyrics: hamsalekha

"kannadve nammamma.. avalige kimugiamma"

Mentioned on the Kannada mother

Film: nanu nanna hendathi1985 lyrics: Shankar-ganesh

"karunada Thayee sada chinmaye"

Mentioned on the Kannada mother and her holy land

Film: bramhastra 1986 lyrics: R S Jayagopal

"Kannadammana devalaya"

Mentioned on the Kannada mother goddesss and her shrine as the land of Kannada

Film: Immadi pulakeshi 1967 lyrics: G K Iyyer

"Kannadada kulathilaka parameshwari"

Mentioned on the pride of pulakeshi rajendra

Film: ondu cinema kathe 1992 lyrics: Shyamasundar Kulkarni "Kannada honnudi deviyannu" Mentioned on t he pride and praise of Kannada

Film: hrudaya pallavi 1987 lyrics: R S Jayagopal

"hrudaya tumbi haduve"

Mentioned dedicated to Kannada mother goddesss

Film: Kannada kuvara lyrics: C S Sivashankar

"esstondu chendave Thayee"

Praising the pride on Kannada mother goddesss

Film: nanda deepa 1963 lyrics: Sorat Ashwath

"kanasondu kande Kannada mathe"

The line begins meaning "saw a dream mother Kannada"

Film: Muthaide bagya 1956 lyrics: goutham

"nammore chenda.. nammavare anda"

Praising the qualities of all regions of Kannada and her ride

Film: mana mechida madadi 1963 lyrics: Kuvempu

"jai bharatha jananiya tanujathe"

The state anthem of Karnataka

Film: kanneradu nodu 1961 lyrics: G V lyyer

"Kannadada makkalella ondagi banni"

Call for unification with a concusion mentioning mother bhuavaneshwari

Film: vijayanagarada veeraputhra 1961 lyrics: R S Jayagopal

"apara keethigalisi mereva bavya nadidu"

Emphasizing on the pride of vijayanagara and Kannada

Film: mareyada hadu 1992 lyrics: muthaiah bagavatharu

"Bhuvaneshwari nenemanasave"

Based on the enunciation of Kannada mother goddesss Thayee Bhuvaneshwari

Film: bile hendathi 1975 lyrics: vijayanarasimha

"yava thayiu padetha magaladarenu"

Based on Kannada mother goddesss

Film: Chiranjeevi 1976 lyrics: Vijayanarasimha

"kannare ne nodu Kannada seeme"

On the pride of kanrantaka

With these evidence of visualization on Kannada mother goddesss, largely as Kannada amma and as Thayee Bhuvaneshwari the lyrics of all these films visually illustrated a vast picturization on the pride and praise of Kannada, the obvious sentimental approach and emotional wording such as "mother" is most commoly encountered elementrary usage in all of these poetic lyrics and its respective visualizations. The assetion on Kannada mother from the early 1964 film *Veerasankalpa* is itself an outstanding examplilary evidence to illustrate the visual existance and life of Bhuvaneshwari in the visual picture of Kannada and her mediums.

Rajkumar ism

"Which fame, the fame that Rajkumar achieved? I don't know much about it. Rajkumar the actor, the language activist and cultural icon is different from this mortal, unlettered Muthuraj. Rajkumar is a creation of the public, they created him for their own needs, but this muthuraj does not understand all that. He will go to the grave as his father's son, a simple village guy who took to acting to feed his wife and children."-Rajkumar.

In an interview on May 2004, Rajkumar, the Kannada superstar and cultural icon, had just completed 75 years (april 24) and it was also the golden jubilee year of his film career (on may 7, 1954, his first film Bedara Kannapa was released), but there was complete silence across Karnataka. There was hardly any celebration for this personal and professional landmark of a man who was largely responsible for creating, through his films, the feel and extent of Kannada land in post-independent India. But as the news of rajkumar's death spread, the defences of the dotcom land crashed. There was no logic at the hand to explain the mob fury that burn down vehicles, stoned buildings and even killed policeme on duty. Rajkumar's fans have always offered him a frenzied adulation, but nobody thought thatthey would miss the solemnity and quiet dignity of death. Sugata Srinivasaraju –keeping faith with the mother tongue.

Rajkumar's domination in the 1950's and his iconic presence in the 1960's and post 1970's is an aspiring wished to watch star, as cultural critics says the beginning of the 'super-ethical hero' in contrast to Telgu ideological hero M.G. Ramachandranand the Telgu religious hero N.T.Rama Rao. An emblem of local values, an actor perceived as the historical patriot, as a devotee in all of the mythological films such as Bhakta Prahalada1984, Bhukailasa 1958. The concept and meaning of Rajkumar itself might require a deep hypothesizing to understand this persona.

The notion of Rajkumar and his career as an actor and as a 'parallel text' as critics says can be observed in the categorization of his three phases of his career. According to M.K.Raghavendra The first phase is the 'high mimetic' the style which has been derived from 'company theatre' or from the indigenous dramatic tradition and largely in the genres of the mythological and the histrorical (bedara kannappa, bhukailasa, ranadheera kanteerava and on the softer end of 'high mimetic' mode are devotionals like Sant Tukaram and Manthralaya Mahatme based on the dominant Bhakthi. the second phase has been called 'low mimetic' and is illustrated through films like Nandi, considered as one amoungst the best films of Rajkumar, and the third phase is apparently the uncomfortable 'lover boy' one-film beginning with Jedara Bale.

In my opinion I wish to argue upon the acceptance of Rajkumar in the following three means. One he represented the brahminical class as the elite or classical mysore Kannada speaking actor with roles of mythological characters with values from religious texts and delivered dialogues in characters as the savior of hindu religious kingdom. This clearly outlines the support and image that he has created form the brahminical and dominant hindu population, irrespective of the non brahminical caste he belonged to. The second reason is his roles such as kaviratna kalidasa which treated as a social inspiration for all those non brahminical caste to achieve education and

prosper like *kalidasa*, which directly was in reality a hope and example for non bramanical castes, as he himself was one of them. His education was less than schooling and had no further education other than theatre learning, this was one of the crucial reason for many to easily conncet to the experience and being inspired from Rajkumar. The third reason is mainly for the representation of social reformer characters her played such as basavanna, Kempegowda who are the most repected and leaders of two very important castes namely the lingiath and wokaligas. This is one of the most predominant reason why Rajkumar turned to be the most favourite star and a social leader and a cultural icon for Kannada and karnataka, and his simplicity and humbleness and his extensive leadership fot he Gokak agitation made him the chosen beloved son of Kannada, kannadiga and Karnataka, besides being a charismatic actor, an actor who always preferred to be an actor not a star!

In a significant interview with Rajkumar by Sugata Srinivasaraju, Rajkumar said "which fame, the fame that Rajkumar achieved? I don't know much about it. Rajkumar the actor, the language activist and cultural icon is different from this mortal, unlettered Muthuraj. Rajkumar is a creation of the public, they created him for their own needs, but this muthuraj does not understand all that. He will go to the grave as his father's son, a simple village guy who took to acting to feed his wife and children." In the similar context Sugata quotes, Writer and film personality M Bhaktavatsala put it across succinctly: "Rajkumar was never comfortable playing God like N T Rama Rao who was literally worshiped as Lord Krishna, nor was he a political animal like MGR, he was always a great devotee. IT was his role like Bhakta Kumbara, Bedara Kannappa, Bhakta Kanankadasa, Santa Tukaram that brought him closer to the people" Ramkumar Himslef seemed to confirm it: "I have always been a viewer, in the sense that I have never kept the focus on myself. I see god in my admirers." In the discussion on Rajkumar sugatha further says in his work *keeping faith with the mother tongue "*It was amazing then as to how a google-search for Rajkumar was dominated by the

veerappan kidnap episode, as if he never existed before the unsavoury episode. Like the times modern, the internet too ignores history. In fact, by the time the incident happened in august 2000, Rajkumar had acted in 205 Kannada films, amounting to nearly 25 per cent of films produced by the Kannada film industry in its entire history.

However, many people in the industry saw the veerappan kidnap episode as the turning point for the hero's fall from the pedestal'. "the incident exposed the mortality of a star. How could people accept their hero pleading for release from a villan, many of whom he had tackled single-handedly on the screen?" asked a producer.

But there were disagreement to this argument. The veerapan incident was probably the last straw, but the decline had started as early as the mid-70's, when different groups like Dalits, farmers, backward classes had started asserting their identities and idea of a single hero unifying the entire culture or the idea of centralized leadership had begun to wane. That is also partially the reason as to why we do not see any tall leader post-devraj Urs, in the political arena of Karnataka, some scholars argued." When asked on the status of Kannada Rajkumar replies "Kannada's present crisis is like my knee-pain, I keeps reminding you that you are reaching the end". After the gokak movement Rajkumar gained a significant public support, and to test his fan club was tempted to test his popularity at the polls, but Rajkumar preferred saintly selfbanishment from public life and at a later stage even clarified that he had nothing to do with the fan club. This was in complete contrast to what happened in the neighbouring Andra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. His rejection on the Rajkumar fan club is itself probably one of the rarest bold acts of an actor who believed in being an actor not a star, or having fan club, however his devoted fans, the unconditional fans Abhimanis where lakhs in number.

The most interesting aspect to be noticed here is that the dialogues of the patriotic characters and historic hero kings and warriors are delivering dialogues that seems to be the message for the pro Kannada pride and unification, and the frequent reminding usage of "Bhuvaneshwari" has been most effective tool for the emotional reminder for PAGE 208 OF 413

all kannadiga of their responsibility as the son of Kannada mother goddesss bhuveshwar. For example in the film SriKrishnadevaraya of 1970, in a scene where Srikrishnadevaraya character played by Rajkumar encounters the sultan of bijapur narrated as the enemy, in the battle field wherein the army soldiers of Srikrishnadevaraya attempts to flee fearing the defeat, in this situation srikrishnadevaraja approach the running soldiers on his horse and reminds them of their duty, oath and responsibility they owe to Lord visupaksha and Kannada mother Thayee bhuvaneswari in a prestigious ennunicative inspiring charisma, usually seen in most historical war based films, and the soldies runs back to the battle field cheering with enthusiasm and bravery winning over the Bijapur. Such various context are available in the film Srikrishnadevaraya itself, and so is it in all other films especially all those films where Rajkumar has played the protoganist role.

The film also asserts on the most controversial questioning on the language used by srikrishnadevaraya and the hampi empire during historic times, thus in the film is the assertion on the language several times, in the film, a scene when Srikrishnadevaraya is declared as king as when he enters to throne he is welcomed with an anouncation "swathi sri bhuvanadeeshawara, samastha rajadi raja, veerabhujabhala pratapa, *Kannada raja ramaramana, Karnataka ratnasimhasanadeeshwara, sri virupksha pada padmaradaka , sri sri sri Krishna deva sarvabouma, para, para, bahupara... sri sri sri krishnadevarayarige jay."* mentioning that he is the king of Kannada and the land of Kannada and in the same film is the dialoges emphasizing on the Kannada land and Kannada pride! The territorialism and the reassertion of the land acquired and declared under the empire is once resited in the sets and presence of Tirumala tirupathi venkateshwara temple, these dialogues are not the dialogues of the king of vijayanagara empire but the interpretation of the Kannada host Rajkumar, or srikrishnadevaraya as the host of Karnataka, and the point to be remembered is that during the srikrishnadevaraya period the state called Karnataka was baseless. But the

language and land assetion, lingusitc and terriotorial dominance and assetion is the prime moto of such films in its cultural, socio-political through visual context.

The visual below is the scene where Srikrishnadevaraya taking the oath of acquiring and reunifying the lost territory of Vijananagara Empire and broading the boarders.



Figure 54 The scene from SriKrishnadevaraya of 1970, in the background is the map of Bharath, (map of pre independent India)



Figure 55 A *Immadi Pulikeshi 1967,* Directed by N C Rajan. Below **Figure 55 B**, another visual form the same film.

In a scene where *Kannada vijaya stamba* (meaning the pillar of victorious Kannada), is on the process of establishment and the pillar falls, before it fall on to the ground *Immadi Pulikeshi* the chalukyan king alone hold the pillar on his back while with a dialoge to the surrounding *public*

"Nanna Thayee kaushika Kannada, nanna tande mukuteshwara Kannada, nanna bhashe Kannada, nanna dharma Kannada...nanna thayee koduge...jaya jaya chalukya chakreshwara...Kannada kulakke keerthi tanniyappa"

Meaning I am son of Kannada, my language is Kannada, my duty is Kannada, and I am dedicated and blessed by Kannada, join me in lifting the victorious pillar of Kannada.



Jai Karnataka mathe, sri rajarajeshwari, Kannadada kula Thayee, and so forth, the synonyms for Kannada mother goddesss used and reused, asserting the concept of mother hood in these films the need for idenitity has been the highest priority, the chalukya empire and the territory of the kingdom, marking the presence and language of Kannada in the south india, is to reaffirm the need for the unification of Kannada speaking demography.

The point that I wish to argue upon these audio video expression of visuals on Thayee bhuavaneshwari or Kannada Thayee is that the necessity of these goddesss in the public domain in the social context and cultural context is higly affirmative and significant not only on the political context but on the cause or making of identity in its owm subtle or strong expression. The resulting behavious pattern in the public is the second level of iconography making and its dilution to the public domains. The filtered visuals from the mediums such as films are the favourite choice of the viewers and later in public domain too, here in this context the film viewers select the viuslaised form of goddesss of films, as they consider it to be a proclaimed or declared forms once appeared in films such as of Rajkumar, and is considered as the final or the ultimate order if in case stars such as Rajkumar smashs adialogue on the goddesss. These visuals are in the third level interpreted with the technological influence and presentations and later released as posters or calenders as the popular phase of visualization which turns to be the most influenced or seen or registered amoungst the public, as these prints are easily procurable, economicaly priced and available in all the road sides, which are seen and purchased by all, later flashed for a considerable period of time in their repective drawing room or on the walls of shops or in the pooja room (room dedicated for spiritual worship). These are most popular in the public domain such as Barbar shop walls, telephone booth walls, travel agency walls, public premises, government buses, autorikshaw interiors etc.

role of Kannada films and Rajkumar has played a vital role in the cultural, social and political space for The Kannada and Karnataka. The icon Rajkumar as the bellowed son of Kannada mother goddesss has a different historic path. In discussion on the Bangalore city Janaki nair in her work "Battles for Bangalore: Reterritorialising the City" says "The image of the city as a refuge for the hard working son-of-the-soil (Kempegowda) was soon Deployed in one of the early Rajkumar films Mayor Muthanna. Cast out of his village because he was falsely implicated in a temple theft, Muthanna (Rajkumar) arrives in the bewildering city of Bangalore, and falls asleep at the foot of Kempegowda's statue. Not surprisingly, his first encounter in the city is with the state's emissary, the policeman on night beat who rudely evicts him from the spot. Muthanna, appeals to Kempegowda's bronze visage "O Kempegowda! You built this city for people to survive and live in, but if there is no space for an orphan like me to lie down, what kind of city is this?" Of course, Muthanna goes on to triumph in the city of Bangalore, and eventually becomes the Mayor himself: the rural migrant finds not only a job, a home and a wife in the city, but political power by rescuing the institutions of the newly independent state from venal politicians. "The film of cource reasserts the hope and faith of every common villager of Karnataka that if they too wish they can certainly change the course of faith in the competing changing cosmopolitian times of Karnataka, but the image of the iconic presentation of Kempegowda and on the making of a new icon Rajkumar is the most striking visual engagement.

In the parallel paradox, the comparative analysis though not practically applicable, some common factors such as the patriotism in theatric with real historic patriots as examples and their lives been portrayed, through which many bhagath singh, and many krishnadevaraya were reborn as Rajkumar into the local hearts. One of the example of the most influenced poems presented in films such as Sarfaroshi ki Tamanna is a poem in Urdu, written by Ram Prasad Bismil, one of the great Indian Independence leader, famously involved with Kakori Train Robbery. The poem was written as an ode to the young freedom fighters of the Indian Independence Movement. It has also been associated with the younger generation of inter-war freedom fighters such as Ashfaqullah Khan, Shaheed Bhagat Singh, and Chandrashekhar Azad. The poem was used in the 1965 Manoj Kumar movie Shaheed on the life of Bhagat Singh. It was again used (with altered lines) as the lyrics for a song in the 2002 Hindi film The Legend of Bhagat Singh. Shaheed-e-Azad Bhagat Singh (1954), Shaheed Bhagat Singh (1963), *Shaheed* (1965), *Shaheed-E-Azam* (2002), *23rd March 1931: Shaheed* (2002), *The Legend of Bhagat Singh* (2002), *Rang De Basanti* (2006) most of these films used the smilar version. The poem is also referenced in abridged form in Anurag Kashyap's Gulaal 2009. The representation of the

mother goddesss in the background of the map of India before independence has been one of the key elements of these films and so is the map of Karnataka and India in historic films of Kannada. Another striking visual is the consciously added scene of bhagath sigh reading the book of Lenin, when the jailer come up to Bagath singh for the excecution, where bagath singh says "ek krantikari doosare krantikari ko mil raha he" one revolutionist is meeting another revolutionist. This dialoge is been scripted in all of the films base don bagath singh. Similarly as discussed earlier Shankar nag in auto raja reading the book of Lenin, is similar context where the comparison and setting of standards of intellectuality for the characters are established. These symbolic elements though has not been of a great subject of films, nevertheless has been an objective symbols of Marxism.

> "My life has been dedicated to the noblest cause, that of the freedom of the country. Therefore, there is no rest or worldly desire that can lure me now...."-Shaheed Bhagat Singh

Hindi (Devnagri Script)	English Translation
सरफ़रोशी की तमन्ना अब हमारे दिल में है, देखना है जोर कितना बाजु-ए-कातिल में है ।	O country, Why does no other speaks? Whoever I see, is gathered quiet in your party
एक से करता नहीं क्यों दूसरा कुछ बातचीत, देखता हूँ मैं जिसे वो चुप तेरी महफिल में है ।	O martyr of country, of nation, I submit myself to thee For yet even the unacquainted speaks of thy courage



Figure 56 A & B Manoj Kumar movie1965 *Shaheed* based on the life of Bhagat Singh with Bharath mata in the background, hadcuffed.



Figure 57 The contemporary youth version of Bharath matha in graffiti style from Rang De Basanti 2006

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The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation PhD Thesis - Unni Krishnan K. Dept. of Art History & Aesthetics, Faculty of Fine Art, M.S. University, Baroda, India

B. THE PRESENT SCENARIO: THE MULTIFACETED IDENTITY-POPULAR IMAGES.

The Kannada nation-making movement has been in the Kannada books for the past few decades, and not to comment on or question any Kannada literature or linguistic issues; however, the nuances of the flag and the goddesses shall be of prime importance here in my argument relating to its visual approach only, and not to its concept or its existence. The state of my argument would be in the questing of firstly the loss of assertion and the strength of its identity with respect to its depiction, and secondly debating on the present state of its identity, specifying whether the identity depiction that is seen today in the public domain is true or close to the concept of Sri Bhuvaneshwari or if this is the final version of the concept of the representations. The question of whose concept and whose version would be elaborated in the further chapters with its implications.

The unquantifiable availability of Sri Bhuvaneshwari images and her continuous progressive evolution is one of the reasons for the popular cultural role of this image, the same being potentially used as a material in multi-faceted avatars of the goddess leading to its cultural role and its chaotic nature in the public domain. For instance, the Bhuvaneshwari representations are used in various local communications, especially during Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations, and in every protest or local voicing, as adjectives, prefixes, and flexibly as an assembled form, changed, and rearranged comfortably to any extent, altering the structural firm, impregnable, inviolable quality of the representation. The politics, the nature of these interpretations in excessiveness seen in every street is unquantifiable, continuous and over produced within the saturated horizons, with the assertion of visual representations in the public domain. These cultural elements become common add-ons which correlatively coexist and PAGE 217 OF 413

contradict, resulting in the visual politics and chaos, with the cry of insecurity and the role of existence, pride and prejudice visibly noticeable.

Sumathi while discussing on the temples of Bharath Matha, quotes "Bankim proclaimed in his foundational 1874-1875 hymn to his mataram that "it is thy image we raise in every temple" across the land. In the aspiration for freedom and its inspiration from the fictional movement scripted by modern India's loyal son whose creative thinking had politically and philosophically smashed the hierarchical empires,, this chapter explores the complex triangulations of the geo-body of the nation with the mother's body and men's bodies in barefoot cartographic productions. Sumathi says "In striking contrast to much popular and public art in India where women are hyper visible in incarnations raging from goddess to the vamp, it is men who are accorded prominence in patriotic pictures, thus visually endorsing a prevailing truth about nationalism as a masculinist project, fantasy, and hope."

The Kannada Matha 'making' has similarities with the making of the Bharat Matha. Here the replacement of Gandhi with Dr Rajkumar well establishes the image and icon of the Kannada film industry, whose identity is been emphasized as the son of Kannada Amma. But again, surprisingly, we don't find any feministic iconic representations despite the abundance of female stars and artistes. The iconic representation again revolves around the male purview, not necessarily anti-feministic, but again interestingly Kannada Thayee Bhuvaneshwari as a goddess is again presentedvby the male filial piety on display, also further discussed in the following pages, which I would be touching upon only for reasoning the evolution of identities



Figure 58 "Kannada Balali, Kannada belagali, Kannada usirali, Kannada balasiri, Kannada Kalisiri" 1976, Procured from Raja Verma Arts.

The Mother makers: A genuine visual activist

Through the Kannada activism and movement in Karnataka, a printer in Bangalore selfinitiated a visual patriotic production of posters that took the identity of Kannada visual culture of representation to a different phase. These visuals were not mere images but the voice of an ordinary activist, who would wish to address the masses as a representative of the momentum. Cultural phase of Kannada and its identity transformation with the modern waves of liberalization, privatization and globalization led to a huge disturbance in the rapidly growing cities like Bangalore which had to cope with changes brought about by industrialization. The shift in printing technology from offset to digital had a huge economic impact on the printing industry, with many in the business suffering a huge loss due to their inability to upgrade. Amongst all these fluctuations stood a independent printer with his shop titled 'Raja Verma Arts' situated in the midst of the densely populated and narrow lanes of the commercial market of Balepette, Bangalore.

Raja Verma Arts was established by late Sri Raja Verma (1918-1993) in 1960. His two sons Raja Ram and Shankar Narayan Raju run the shop till date, carrying on the legacy of their father's speciality of printing small quantities of images of specific Hindu gods and goddesses and patriotic Thayee Bhuvaneshwari posters for supply all across Karnataka. This family initiative is what has held up the status of Kannada identity across the public sphere since the 1970s, they being the only suppliers of all the available posters and visuals of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari in the whole of Karnataka. The altruistic involvement of this family initiative in this cause and their tremendous contribution to the making of the iconography and the Kannada identity is not known to the family itself. This shop does not own a printing press, but places orders with trustworthy printing press owners. The visuals presented in this chapter are mostly from Raja Verma Arts and understanding their initiative, psychology and true patriotism as revealed in the visuals they supply, is very important from the point of view of this research.

Raja Verma Arts initially commissioned an artist named P.K.M. Swamy of Sivakasi, near Madurai in Tamil Nadu — popularly known as the Mecca of calendar artists and calendar wholesale dealers — who has painted a few of the Thayee Bhuvaneshwari illustrations discussed in the following pages. Gradually Ravi Verma Arts moved with the technological over-ride of Desktop publishing (DTP) and laser printing, and later, lamination.

The trends and stylization during this transition period are clearly evident in the posters presented here. The assertion of the Kannada mother goddess and her flag has PAGE 220 OF 413

a spectacular theatrical tabloidish touch in these visuals, with irony and exaggerations. These visuals are indisputably the most valuable and influential yet not much discussed posters of the Kannada identity making.

During the post-Independence modern times Raja Verma Arts was not the only press calendar shop in Bangalore. There were also others such as Manjunatha Traders in Gigara Pette, started in the early 1980s; Praakash Calendars and Karnataka Offset Calendars, both in Cotton Pette, all of them situated within a radius of 5-8 kilometers of the commercial centre of Bangalore: Majestic region. But interestingly, none of them except Raja Verma Arts produced and distributed the pro-Kannada patriotic visuals in the form of posters and calendars. These posters from Ravi Verma Arts are even today distributed and circulated and reprinted all across Karnataka. As regards the sales of posters, the present generation of family members running Ravi Verma Arts rues that not more than 500 copies of any poster get sold. In an interview, the family lamented that not only are these posters rarely purchased, but they are also thrown away after use, showing disrespect to the goddess. "Like the Indian flag after the Independence Day (celebrations), the general public throw away our mother goddess in the street without any concern... this disturbs us a lot. And some customers who claim to be pro-Kannada activists purchase only one copy of a poster, haggling over the price, reasoning that its usability is after all is for a matter of two hours during Kannada Rajyotsava day celebrations," said the family.

The emotional connection of this family with their mother goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari and her proud son and land is probably the only thing that keeps them going in attempting to spread the awareness of Kannada identity in the visual context. In the absence of any political interventions or help from any pro-Kannada activist group, the family continues to struggle to keep images of the Kannada mother in circulation, but it is a losing battle, as it is unable to compete with the changing trends of print technology in vinyl. The various visual dimensions and politics faced by this family perhaps direct us to unexplored aspects of observations that lead us to a questioning of which mother version is the *true version*, and if *true* who declares it? And then there are the identity issues of representation and territorialism and masculinity and sub-iconography making. Ravi Verma Arts significantly contributed in the making of the mother in print, unknowingly becoming a medium, a voice, and a channel of what the public demanded and reasserted in a direct form and indirect forms and at times in disguise. A very necessary ambassador of the visual medium in print.



Figure 59 Painted By PKM Swamy, Shiv Kasi, Tamil Nadu. Printed by Raja Verma Arts 1995.



Figure 60 Bharath Mata: Print: JB Khanna and company, Tamil Nadu.

One of the thousand representations of Bharath Matha with her lion and map in the background as usual, with the flag of RSS or Maratha in her hands. Here the mother is in a young South Indian avatar, with the tricolor sari as her attire



Figure 61 Bharath Matha. Print: JB Khanna and Company



Figure 62 Kaveri Godess "Kaveri Mata" Print: JB Khanna and Company

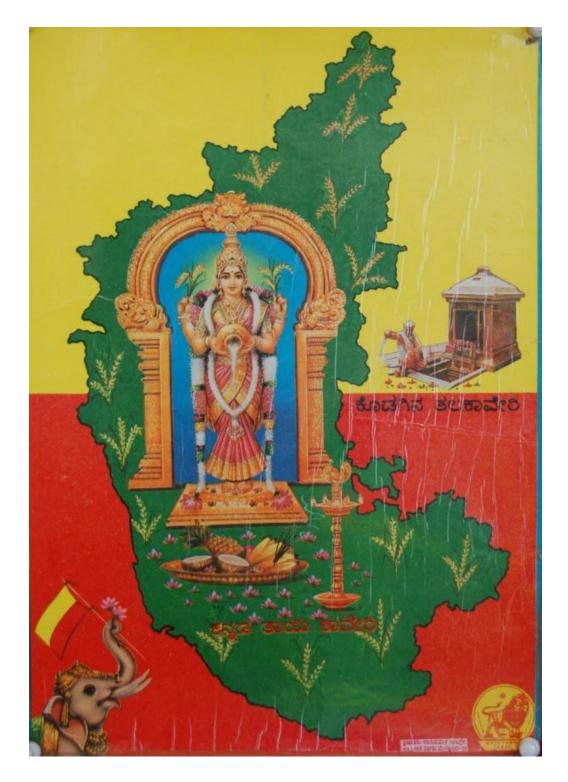


Figure 63 Raja Verma Arts, printed during the Cauvery water Crisis 1995-96

These visuals were released during the boiling point of the Cauvery river water crisis, which sparked a serious political turmoil between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, over the perennial water-sharing dispute. The visuals here portray the temple from where river Kaveri originates, Talakaveri. The goddess in the centre of the map however, unlike in other picturisations has a lush viridian green background in the form of a map of Karnataka portraying verdant fields. Besides, the goddess is portrayed as Goddess Kaveri pouring out her sacred blessing in the form of water. There are other devotional elements such as the fruits and a lamp, which are the offerings to the goddess. The elephant, usually portrayed as the mount of Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity, is presented as saluting the deity with a waving Kannada flag.

The genesis of the Kaveri water dispute lies in two controversial agreements, one signed in 1892 and another in 1924, between the then Madras Presidency and the Princely State of Mysore. Discussions brought no result but worsened the situation. The Government of India then constituted a tribunal in 1990 to look into the matter. After hearing the arguments of all the parties involved, the tribunal delivered its final verdict on February 5, 2007. In its verdict, the tribunal allocated 419 billion ft³ (12 km³) of water annually to Tamil Nadu and 270 billion ft³ (7.6 km³) to Karnataka; 30 billion ft³ (0.8 km³) of Kaveri river water to Kerala and 7 billion ft³ (0.2 km³) to Pondicherry. The dispute continues, with the four states deciding to file review petitions seeking clarifications and possible renegotiation of the order, and the matter still stays unsettled.



Figure 64 "Karnataka Kannada Rajyotsava, Siri Kannada Gelge, SiriKannada Balge" Raja Verma Arts 1998.

Here the mother is decorated more in the style of the calendar goddess and has as her background the map of Karnataka in deep blue. The suspended animation of the map is to be noted.



Figure 65 "Suvarna Karnataka Rajyotsava, Kannada Kasturi" Raja Verma Arts Nov 1, 2006 off set print.

The goddess representation here has the tantric symbol of the Srichakra and she is depicted as an avatar of modern Kananda mother. The map is bordered with the lamps and the goddess persona match the Shivkashi Shakthi representations. The goddesss is seated on a throne, depicted as the thone of the temple of Karnataka.



Figure 66 Karnataka Kannada Rajyotsava "Jayahe Karnataka Mathe, Jai Bhuvaneshwari" Raja Verma Arts Printed in the 1990s.

This is the only visual poster of the Kannada mother goddess that represents Thayi Bhuvaneshwari in the style of the Mysore traditional painting that has close similarities to the Tanjore style painting. The influence of the Mysore style is naturally evident as the hegemony of Mysore and the portrayal of Karnataka as Mysore (state) and the contributions reflected through the visual posters underlines the possessive inclination of the princely state of Mysore province. The stylization of the Mysore Bhuvaneshwari in the traditional painting method also has another significance. The goddess, though represented as Bhuvaneshwari, is fusioned with Goddess Sharada of Shringeri. In the previous chapter, evidence from Kannada Mahimna Stotra was illustrated in the argument on making of the mother goddess and culturally unifying her persona with religious sentiments and political intentions.

Here the same Sringeri Sharada situated in south Karnataka, geographically close to Mysore, is asserted as the Bhuvaneshwari. The foreground of the picture has the tantric elementary form of worship, the Srichakra with other elements of worship.

The mother goddess here also bears a flag imprinted with the Karnataka map, with a Kannada quote "SiriKannadam Gelge", meaning "victorious Kannada". The poster was printed to commemorate November 1, 2006, the year when Karnataka celebrated its 50th year of formation. This celebration was fully funded by the government, with the glorious 50 years of Karnataka being feted in all ways, ranging from clips on Doordarshan on the glorious history of Karnataka to the present post modern Karnataka. During the Rajyotsava of 2006, further plans and enhanced budget for the linguistic study and development of Kannada were declared.

The patriotic poster-making process of Raja Verma Arts was based on a superficial understanding of the Kannada movement. Thus, what they saw was what they got illustrated and released as prints. The present managers Raja Ram and Shankar PAGE 230 OF 413

Narayan Raju say: "What we saw in the news and heard in words is what we felt should be portrayed."

But who handed over this task to this humble family and vested in it the responsibility to portray the unificational ideals and patriotism through the mediums of posters to the public? The hypothetical question on the genuineness and qualitative approval here doesn't matter on the confronts of the intuitive visual expression by this simple family that presented an aura of Kannada nationalism. This research also has thus encountered the non-political contributions of a dedicated family through their limited means of expression, and realized its worship and unconditional patriotic approach towards Kannada nationalism. The inner visual conflicts over the semiotics and the representational visual elements and icons is evident, but these are not to be expected from local printers who print what they see and what people expect.



Figure 67 "Jai Kannada Thayee, Jai Bhuvaneshwari" "Suvarna Karnataka Rajyotsava, Kannada kasthuri" Suvarna Karnataka Rajyotsava, marked the 50 years of the formation of the state of Karnataka on Nov 1, 2006., Raja Verma Arts printed in Nov 1, 2006.

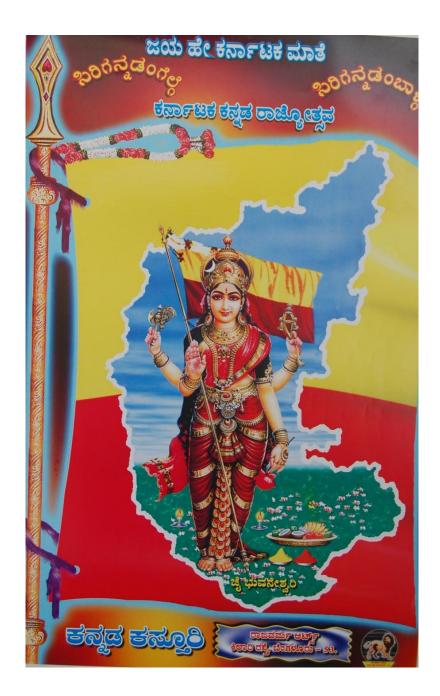


Figure 68 Jaya he Karnataka Mathe, Karnataka Kannada Rajyotsava, Raja Verma Arts, offset print 1985.

C. THE POPULAR VISUAL ICONOGRAPHY

The Kannada nation-making movement has been the most highlighted issue during the past few decades, which, however, I would only be touching upon through the respective reasoning for the evolution of the identities and not to comment on or question any Kannada literature or linguistic issues. The nuances of the flag and the goddesses shall be of priority importance here in my argument relating to their *visual approach* only, not to their concept or existence. The state of my argument would be in the questing of, firstly the loss of assertion and the strength of the identity with respect to its depiction, and secondly debating on the present state of the identity, specifying whether the identity depiction that is seen today in the public domain is true or close to the (original) concept of Sri Bhuvaneshwari, or if this is the final version of the concept of the representations. The question of *whose* concept and *whose* version would be elaborated further below, with its implications.

The unquantifiable availability of Sri Bhuvaneshwari's images and her continuous progressive evolution is one of the reasons for the popular cultural role of this icon. The image is potentially used as a material in multifaceted avatars of the goddess, leading to the cultural role and its chaotic nature in the public domain. For instance Bhuvaneshwari representations are used in various local communications, especially during the celebration of Kannada Rajyotsava, and in all protests or local voicings, as adjectives, prefixes, flexibly as an assembled form, changed, and rearranged comfortably to any extent, altering the structurally firm, impregnable, inviolable quality of the representation. The politics and the nature of these interpretations in excessiveness seen in every street are unquantifiable continuous and over produced within the saturated horizons, with the reminder on assertion of visual representations in the public domain. These cultural elements become common add-

ons which correlatively coexist and contradict, resulting in visual politics and chaos with the cry of insecurity, and with the role of existence, pride and prejudice visibly noticeable.

Bankim proclaimed in his foundational 1874-1875 hymn to his *mataram* that "it is thy image we raise in every temple" across the land. In the aspiration for freedom and its inspiration from the fictional movement scripted by modern India's loyal son, whose creative thinking had politically and philosophically smashed the hierarchical empires, this chapter explores the complex triangulations of the geo-body of the nation with the mother's body and men's bodies in barefoot cartographic productions. "

As in the case of Bharat Matha the similarities have been found even in the making of the Kannada Matha making. Here, the replacement of Gandhi is with Dr Rajkumar, the well established image and icon of the Kannada film industry, who has been portrayed as the son of Kannada Amma. But again, surprisingly, we don't find any feministic iconic representations despite the abundance of female stars and artistes. The iconic representation again revolves around the male masculanity though not necessarily anti-feministic. But again, interestingly Kannda Thayi Bhuvaneshwari as a goddess is again presented against a background of male filial piety on display, also further discussed in the following pages.

"March to Independence" the theatric tabloid depicts the enunciation of the dominant male characters in the *spaces* and *positions* as a national statement.

Though the ideologies of the specified leaders here, for instance Subhash Chandra Bose or Balgangadhar Tilak, and their differences with the contrasting ideological Gandhian thinking are visually reflected as a unified effort, at the same time an allegory. The thematic brilliance being borrowed from the concepts of the early depictions of Krishna and Arjuna of the Mahabharata, a very well-known visual representation in India is what is emotionally linked to. The most striking factor again being the masculine representation, which has also followed in through the local influence, and here in the case of Kannada Mathe, we see Kannada matinee idol Dr Raj Kumar doing the honours.

The difference obviously being on the aspect of time and the space, here the enunciation of the characters, very sensitively and strategically plays a role. Here the persona and public image of Rajkumar add thrust to the acceptance of the iconography among the most subtle and remote heterogeneous population.

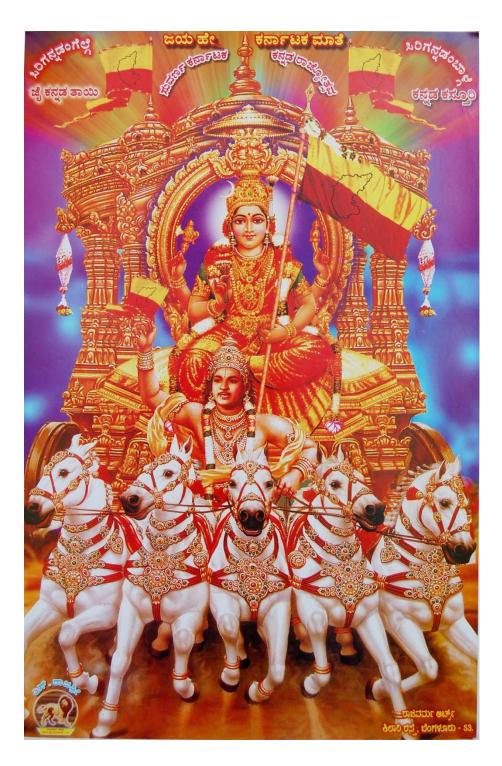


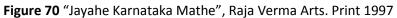
Figure 69 Brij Lal, March to Independence: *Raahe Aazaadi*. Printed by Sudarshan Studio, circa 1947. (courtesy of Urvashi Butalia, New Delhi). Image courtesy: Sumathi Ramaswamy, The goddess and the Nation

In fact, if there is any single object that rivals the mapped form of India in parallel with mother Bhuvaneshwari, it is the flag of the Kannada nation with which she is associated, thereby setting her apart from other goddesses as a deity of a distinctive 'country'. The flag is one of the signature elements that make the most prominent difference from the rest of the Hindu goddesses. In this light, the attempts of Kannada Amma's artists to supplement the outline map of Karnataka in the many ways that I have documented in this study stand out, by following the trend of setting out influential factors from the nation's leaders and their representations.

The momentum of this metamorphism of the popular image-making of the Kannada Matha is still on its unlicensed production: from the political banners to the street autorickshaw stands, the countless forms of Bhuvaneshwari and her loyal sons figure as frequent reminders to the general public. The assertion of the visual identity of a nation which won its linguistic Free State status after a long struggle, resulting in a land called Karnataka, is this Bhuvaneshwari the icon that this nation has been visualizing for long? Or is this the multi-faceted multi-avatar version of the catalytic configured version of Bhuvaneshwari that can be so easily commercially fexibilized to suit individual needs? Though "the relation between what we see and what we know is never settled", here the relation is neither settled nor unsettled, it is on a midway path of a dichotomy.

The popular culture of India, specifically in Bangalore, is hereby in a quest to know the icon, through various eyes and various hosts, masculine yet very sensitive to political or other social motifs, ultimately for a contemporary identity of representation.





Sumathi Ramaswamy in her work The Goddess And The Nation says, "like the majority of the mechanically reproduced goddesses of Indian modernity, Bharat Mata is generally modestly clothed with barely a sense that she might have swelling breasts, one of the requirements of the Hindu iconographic tradition for the divine female. Every now and then she is presented as forlorn or destitute, but more commonly she appears clad in lush coloured silks and draperies. Once in a while she appears in the grab of a classical heroine in a fitted bodice and draped garments — a pan-Indian style that became visible from the late nineteenth century in Ravi Varma's canvases of female bodies, and in the calendar art that commercialized his many innovations. However, in a vast number of images, as befitted her dominant persona as a homely matron, mother India is shown demurely clad in a sari in the national style increasingly associated with the respectable middle-class, upper-caste Hindu woman." Representations beyond the state of form and figure are visible in these images, wherein the specifications of caste, culture, class and styles have been worked up to the highest visibility in the representations. Though not similar, but on the same lines, we do find Bharat Matha's avatars more or less in close sync with the versions of mother Bhuvaneshwari.

The pictorial contextualization of mother Bhuvaneshwari with the colour palette of chrome yellow and crimson red, usually referred to as golden yellow and vermillion, is here taking a very prominent status of a public image. Consider the image showing Bharat Matha in a chariot driven by her proud son Mahatma Gandhi, with Nehru as the flag bearer and Subhash Chandra Bose as a guarding soldier, and the heavenly league of all senior patriots of the freedom struggle blessing body of democracy with the tricolour flying over parliament. This thematic the present leaders from the heavens. Here the background monochrome fort represents the set created with the image representation of the leaders trickily placed in the respective angles with the human appearance of the anthropomorphic form of Bharath Matha in the chariot-throne, clearly establishes a concrete structure of the status, role and placement of the context in the most dramatic manner close to those of the "used to" representations of gods in the Indian context. Here the scene is evidently close to the popular images of the 'Krishna Arjuna' painting of ISKCON artists, probably by Ramadasa Abhirama Dasa and his wife Dhriti Dasi.



Figure 71 Krishna and Arjuna from the Mahabharata battle field. (From the Krishna Gallery, www.krishnagallery.com, copyrights The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International.



Figure 72 "Karnataka Ratna Dr Rajkumar" Raja Verma Arts, 1992

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With these enunciations I wish to argue that the structure of the visual establishment of the Kannada Mother Bhuvaneshwari is the foremost iconography that South India has ever seen, probably the most visually experimented medium as a greater tool for unification, to unite geographic regions of Kannada land. The process also encountered a lot of catharsis, but eventually structured a visual language to present an identity to the unification movement, and still remains the ruling popular art of the Kannada streets.

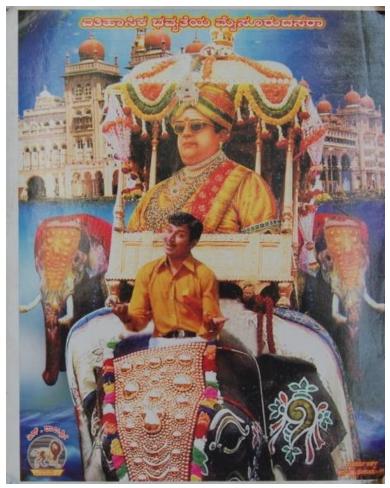


Figure 73 Jayachamaraja Wodeyar Bahadur (July 18, 1919- September 23, 1974) poster released after 1974.

The exhibit here was printed after the death of the king, marking the loss of the king to the land, and illustrates the function of applauding the Mysore Wodeyars, the kings of Mysore, whom the unification leaders had to bank upon to gain statehood for Karnataka. The image here, though, is a cluttered collage of the Mysore Palace in the background with cine icon Rajkumar as the mahout of the elephant carrying the portrait of Wodeyar. Typically such scenes are a part of procession held during the annual event on November 1, celebrated as the Kannada Rajyotsava day. The posters here spread in the public domain are a frequent message to the crowd on the stand that the nation owes a debt to these personalities in time-specific circumstances.

The gratitute to the king and his contributions and support is expressed in the poster depicting the king in a heroic placement, with Rajkumar as the host and representative of the Kannada nation. The line of poster-making in the context of Kannada unification hereby reveals a whole new perception and probably an outlook on the various untold and hereto only visualised facts. The visual language that these posters communicate is the visual interpretation of the time-space and the continuum of the geography.



Figure 74 Sri jayachamarajendra wodeyar, Raja Verma Arts 1974.

Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar Bahadur (July 18, 1919- September 23, 1974) poster released after 1974. The poster dominated by the colours of the Kannada flag with the Mysore Palace in the bottom.

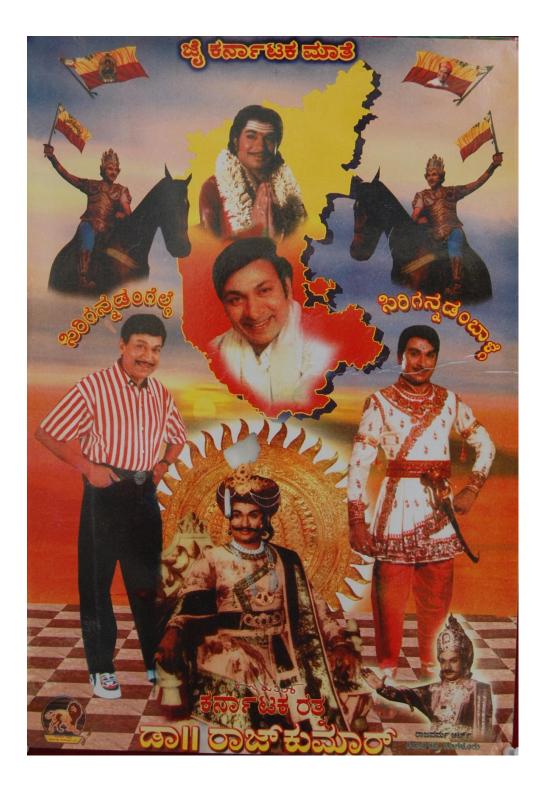


Figure 75 "Jai Karnataka Mathe, Karnataka Ratna, Dr. Rajkumar", Raja Verma Arts, Laser print 2006-7

Richard Davis, in his book *Picturising The Nation* says: "In modern times a state has an interest in persuading its subjects that together they constitutue a national community, and that the state acts as an agent of the interests of that community. As long as 1867, Walter Bagehot observed this work of national persuasion in his study of the English state. Every constitution, he writes, must first 'win the confidence of mankind' and then 'employ that homage in the work of government'. Accordingly, Bagehot distinguishes 'dignified' and 'efficient' activities of the state. Its dignified activities are 'those which excite and preserve the reverence of the population' towards the state, while its efficient ones are 'those by which it, in fact, work and rules'. He goes on to characterise the dignified dimension of the state activity with a series of terms: theatrical, sensory, mystical, occult, transcendent, visual, brilliant to the eye. Clearly, this is the realm of public pageantry, state ceremonial, and official iconography. The Indian state naturally enjoys resources to create, disseminate and enforce a particular iconic vision of itself. From humble objects of everyday transaction like visually saturated rupee notes, common repetitive items like tricolour flags and lion-capital emblems, civic statues of Gandhi and other heroes of the struggle for independence, up through lavish official celebrations, like the Republic Day parade in New Delhi, the state controls a great range of ways to exercise its 'dignified' activities through visual means."

Here I would emphasise the role of Rajkumar as stated above with reference to civic statues and heroes, not in direct lines of comparison but in a role similar to that of Gandhi as the host and leader to the making of Bharat Matha — here in Kannada, the host as Rajkumar in the making of the icon mother goddess Bhuvaneshwari. The contextual differences are wide and broad, but though the approach in the case of Gandhi was on the path to mahatma and as the beloved son of Bharat Matha, in the context of Karnataka, the Kannada goddess choses Rajkumar as her beloved son who plays special host for a long term of time. Similarly the roles and characters played by Rajkumar had to do with theatric heroes, loaded with words of patriotism and with a sense of pride and prestige associated with the land and the mother goddess. His on-screen performances were in fact never considered as performances, but rather as a live expression and an emtional appeal to identity, and an aggressive influential outbreak of sentimental provocation to demand respect for the land and the goddess.



Figure 76 "Natasarvabhouma karnataka ratna Dr. Rajkumar Laser print 2006-7



Figure 76 "Natasarvabhouma Dadasaheb Phalke padmabhooshan, Karnataka Ratna Dr. Rajkumar" Raja Verma Arts, Laser print- 2006-7



Figure 77 "Kannada Kala Kanteerava Dr Rajkumar", Raja Verma Arts offset print, 2006-07

Richard Davis, in his work *Picturing The Nation* discusses territorial-ity: "The theatre of Nehru's flag hoisting at the Red Fort provides a good point of departure. First, the choice of location was important, as Jim Masselos points out, much of the spatial activity of the crowd in Delhi and other cities on the occasion of independence marked a 'change in the idea of territoriality'. Crowds pushedinto previously prohibited areas, in effect claiming all Indian space as their own. Within this general reappropriation of formerly colonized space, the choice of the Red Fort for a celebratory raising of the flag conveyed a more pointed message." Here in the poster, Rajkumar, as the host king of Kannada against the background of the Bangalore Palace is again reasserting the territoriality of the space which is restricted to the public, but been represented as a national symbolic structure, with the Kannada flag and a map of the state in the flag colours. The visual seals the signature of Kannada identity on the territory more like Nehru hoisting the national flag at the Red Fort.

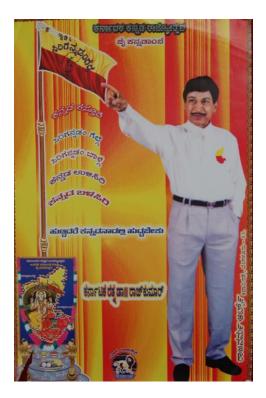


Figure 78 "Karnataka Kannada Rajyotsava", Raja Verma Arts, 1990-2005



Figure 78 B The reference of Thayee Bhuvaneshawari enlarged from the previous poster.

"Questions of nation, nationhood, national identity," says Richard Davis "and participation in the national community have served as recurrent topics of Indian public discourse over the past century and a half. These issues have persistently been addressed and debated in visual as well as verbal forms. As new technologies — the printing press, camera, lithography, film, television and the internet — provide new media by which images may be inserted, even more prolifically and intimately, into the public and domestic spheres of India, the debates will continue."

The images here represent not only the subject of nation, nationhood and national identity but also are a visual domination of the fight for representation and the transformation to a new dimension of thinking on language, demography, state, nation, culture and unification, and to protest against the merging and dissolution of

identity and against 'outsiders' dwelling in this territory, demanding complete support and independent identity and rights.

Richard Davis then says: "Aas the tableaux at the start of this introduction suggest, no single group or agency can exercise a monopoly in a situation where imagery arises from so many different locations within Indian society, reflects and articulates different ideologies and agendas, and addresses such varied audiences. Churning this milk-ocean of imagery cannot yield the ambrosia of scholarly finality. However, in the spirit of the many other unexpected things that emerged when the gods and demons churned, from wishing-granting cow to worlds-destroying poison, I would like to outline four types of representations, drawing on the four tableaux above, and touching on examples and insights in the essays to follow. My aim here is not to present a typology of clear-cut categories or iconographic unities, but to sketch a provisional orientation that leads into the essays of the volume."

Likewise, in the case of this study I present the theme here as being focused on the visual cultural aspects. The notes here do not give mere volume-based stories on the history of the hosts and stars of the goddess, but how these stars and heroes became the brand ambassadors of the icon created in the virtual space, to further reach out to the common public with less of jargon and more of impact.

These visuals were more of a public virus, or rather, the bomb that destroyed the sense of ignorance of the state of Kannada and its strength, and constructed the idea of unification through the chosen heroes of the time that followed.

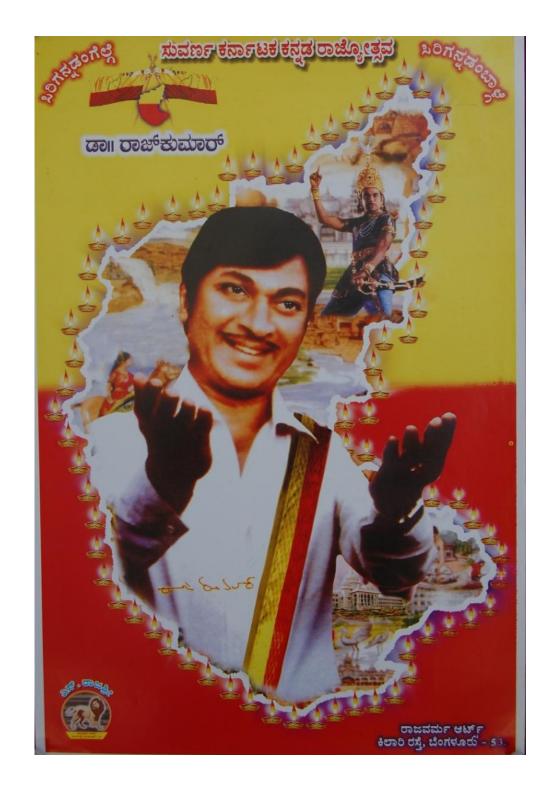


Figure 79 "Suvarna Karnataka Rajyotsava" Raja Verma Arts, 2006

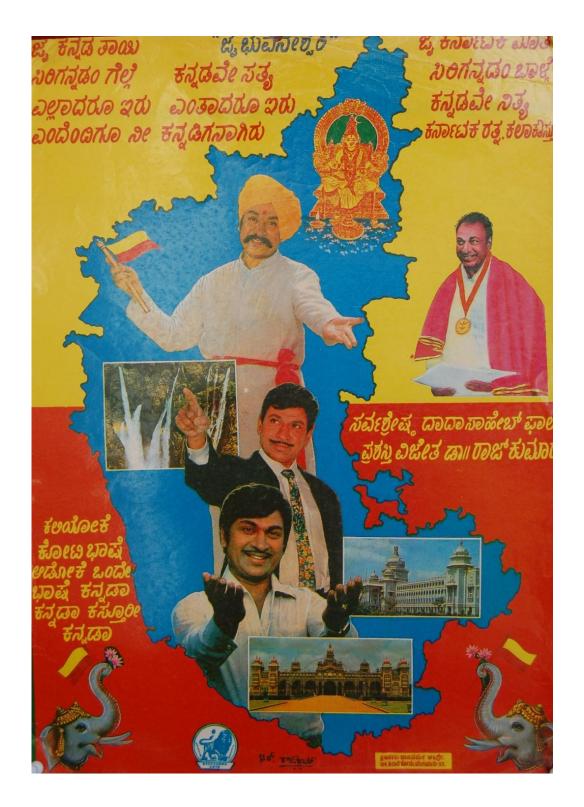


Figure 80 "Jai Bhuvaneshwari" Raja Verma Arts, 1995

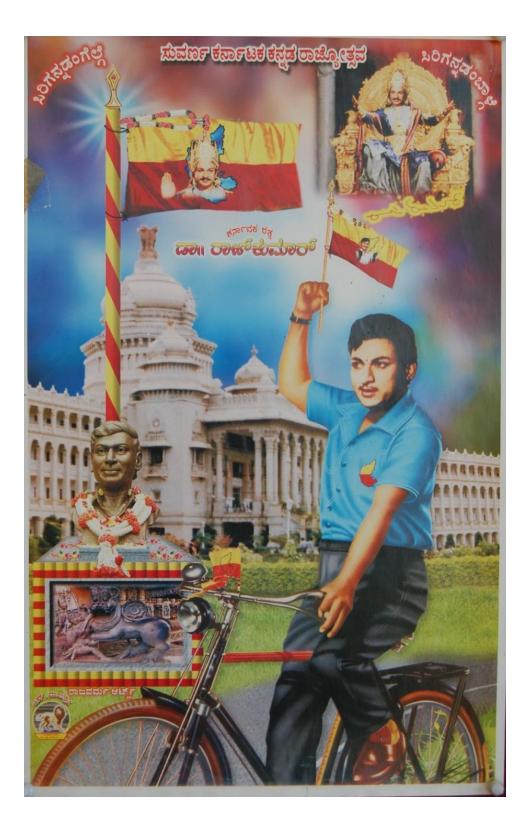


Figure 81. "Suvarna Karnataka Rajyotsava" Raja Verma Arts, 2006,

We find the territory representation as a prominent feature of Kannada nationalism and its identity in the background, with the Vidhana Soudha, the State Assembly building, as the pride factor. With the establishment of a new spatial order, a symbolic declaration of the space that had been once seen only as an Assembly was now reinforced as the national identity and of territorial monumental value. The primary national icon in all these event posters outlines the flag and the colour. In the years of the struggle for the freedom for the nation, as leaders and supporters of the Kannada unification movement along with the national freedom movement progressively came to imagine the state as an autonomous nation within the confines of what they considered an illegitimate British overlordship. When the flag of the Indian National Congress became a key visual marker of that autonomous nationhood, learning from this observation Kannada unification leaders realized the need for the flag for the Kannada nation. The flag, since then, became the subject of representation which was later unleashed on the public sphere or the public domain to be carried forth. Even with the repetitive representation, the quest for assertion seems to become more interestingly strong, with more visual engagement and variety of positive entertainment.

Before I discuss the topic of fans, a clarification on how I use the term 'fan': the Kannada word for fan, *abhimaani* (meaning admirer), is used synonymously with its English equivalent *fan* outside the context of cinema, does not have the negative connotation of the word 'fan' and is often prefixed with *veera* (literally heroic, but used ironically) to connote fanaticism, even while referring to fans of film stars. There are hundreds and thousands of fans of Rajkumar who support, or are related to, several social groups. These groups were the main advertisers of the public sphere who spread and promoted these new ideas of nationalism and ensured the they reached the grass-root levels.

Ajay Sinha, in his essay "Against Allegory: Binode Bihari Mukherejee's Medieval Saints At Shantiniketan" disputes Frederick Jameson's often cited proposal that all Third World texts, literary or visual, be read as allegories of the nation. Certainly, many of the popular visuals in India portray concerns and problems more than nationhood. In fact, the large chromolithographic calendars, posters and prints were utilized for domestic use, mostly religious, depicting a wide versions of Hindu deities, expressing the concerns of the individual or the respective group devotees more than national issues, but in contrast we also find visuals addressing national concerns too. Examples for both views can be noticed in Cristopher Pinney's *Photos Of Gods*.

Richard Davis adds: "This imagery is produced and distributed in what Sandria Freitag, drawing on works of Jurgen Habermas, the Frankfurt school, and a long lineage of others, calls the 'public sphere' or 'public arenas'. The development of a public sphere in India, she argues, rests in part upon global developments, most notably the dramatically increased scale of consumption made possible by India's participation in an international market and new global technologies of production through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Yet these she insists, are always inflected through local concerns and local practices, including specific Indian ways of viewing." Here, the Kannada local market is obviously influenced by the public sphere and the public arena, and has definitely contributed largely to the visual cultural space in the making of the Kannada flag and goddess.

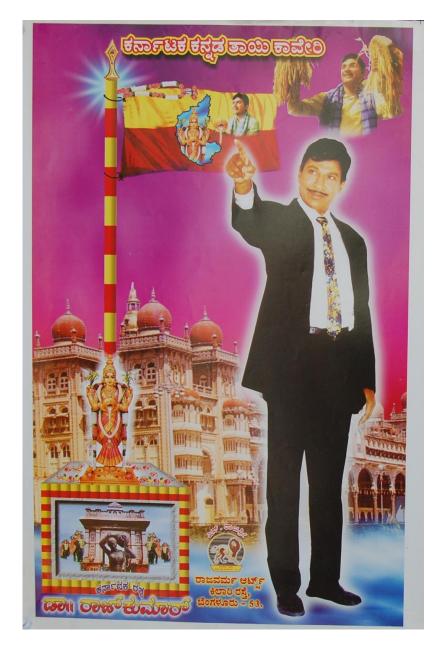


Figure 82 "Karnataka Kannada Thayee Kaveri" Raja Verma Arts, 2007-08.

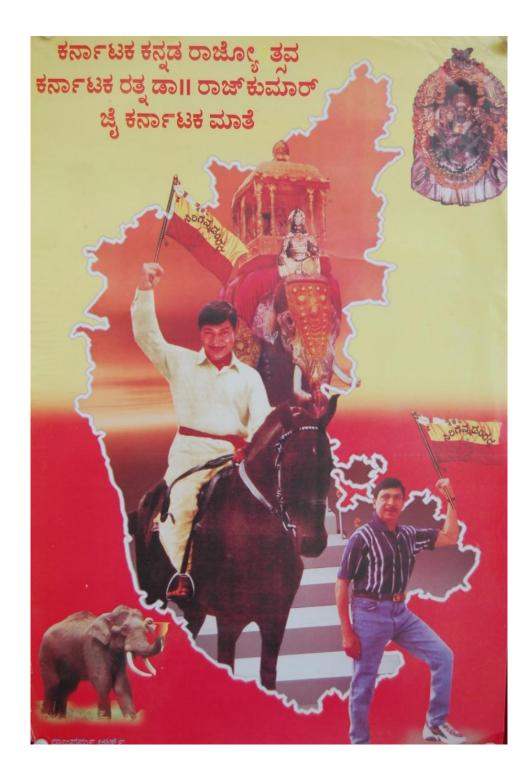


Figure 83 "Karnataka Kannada Rajyotsava, Karnataka Ratna Dr. Rajkumar, Jai Karnataka Mathe" Raja Verma Arts



Figure 84 Kannada Kala Kanteerva, November 15, 2000. (During the period when Dr Rajkumar was released)



Figure 85 Most prominent roles payed by Rajkumar from Kannada films

PhD Thesis - Unni Krishnan K. Dept. of Art History & Aesthetics, Faculty of Fine Art, M.S. University, Baroda, India



Figure 86 Interpretations on the Kidnap of Rajkumar by BKS Varma 1999-2000



Figure 87 "Ajaramara" Interpretations on Rajkumar by BKS Varma 1999-2000

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation Page **261** of 413



Figure 88 Dr Rajkumar representing as the host of Kannada and Karnataka, Raja Verma Arts 1990s.

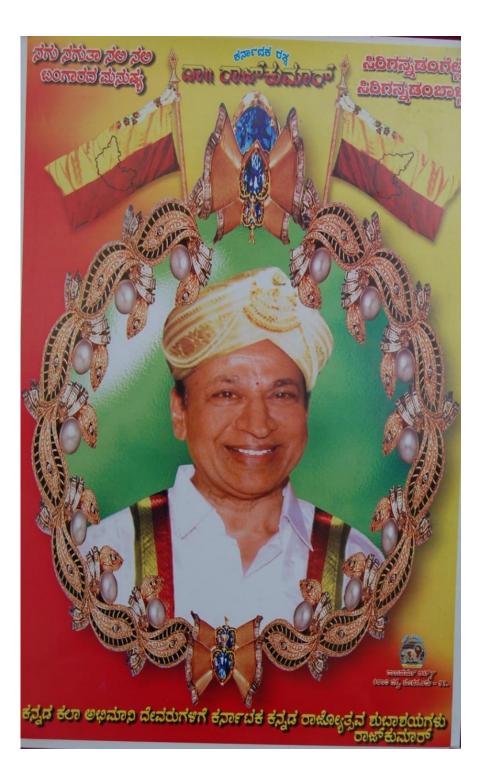


Figure 89 "Karnataka Ratna Dr. Rajkumar" Raja Verma Arts, Print: 1996

Rajkumarism has been discussed in the earlier chapter. Here I wish to point to a few observations that would strengthen my argument regarding the popular visual culture of the iconography and the making of sub-iconographies, such as Rajkumar the proud son of the Kannada mother goddess, and after his reign, the parallel introduction of the next proud sons in line, Vishnuvardhan and Ambareesh. The focus is on the making of the iconography, and not on the life and career of these actors and their films, though their films and their lives have influenced the nationalistic movement of Kannada and related activities to a large extent.

Rajkumar was the chosen volunteer for the Kannada lingual movement, and his role in making the Gokak agitation and Kannada movement a success, had a great impact over the visuals portraying him, as well as his film roles. Even otherwise, he was always a widely accepted hero, a star who only hordes of fans and admirers — not the 'hired' fans as in the case of some, but the genuine *abhimanigalu*, the true fans. Here the term 'true fans' is not mentioned to provoke controversy, but to critically distinguish the difference between paid fans and real, loyal fans. I hereby use the term "true fans" to mean *abhimanigalu*. These factors, which made Rajkumar a successful icon of the Kannada movement were also the prime reason for honing his image as the loyal patriot and son of the Kannada Mother Goddess.

The visuals here however show Dr Rajkumar in various multifaceted versions, that wouldn't even have been dreamt of in the editing studios of his films units. These visuals have three varied purposes. One, the role of igniting and reasserting the Kannada patriotic sensibilities in the public domain, and acting as an excellent catalyst to the spreading of these sensibilities, leading to the emergence of successful loyal activists — for instance, Raja Verma Arts itself. The second purpose is to establish a role model and a character for the common man to follow, a leading inspiration who

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the masses can love and at the same time be proud of. The third and the most crucial influencing factor in these visual archives is that political priorities have unknowingly intruded into them and been unintentionally transmitted through printers such as Raja Verma Arts.

In the previous illustration Dr Rajkumar has been portrayed wearing a *peta*, the traditional turban, a mark of honour in Mysorean culture. By asserting the claim over the host as a presentation of Mysore, intentionally or unintentionally, these visuals are, in a deeper sense, a tribute, appreciation and glorification of the Mysorean classification, and in the same breath, a discrimination against and desertion of other sectors, such as non-Mysoreans.

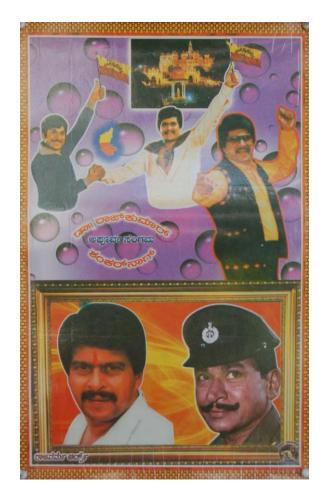


Figure 91 "Dr Rajkumar, Apoorva Sangam Shankar Nag" Raja Verma Arts, 1997.

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation



Figure 91 Raja Verma Arts: Print: 1990, "Shankar Nag" Raja Verma Arts, 1990'S

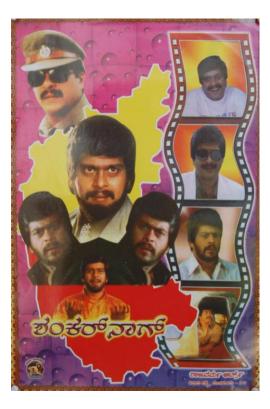


Figure 92, "Shankar Nag" Raja Verma Arts, Raja Verma Arts, 1990s

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation

Shankar Nag, the leader of working class

Shankar Nag was arguably one of the finest directors and actors of the Indian film industry, and his outstanding evergreen works such as *Malgudi Days*, based on celebrated novelist R.K.Narayan's short stories is regarded as a work of artistic brilliance. He did not limit himself to Kannada films, but worked in other language films as well. For example, his film *22 June 1897*, which won a National award, was in Marathi. His career flowed in two parallel streams: he worked in popular films, and with the money they raked in, made intelligent films with artistic sensibilities. Thus his work was a rare confluence of an elite working culture and a non-elite commercial career, one of the rarest combinations experimented with in this country.

Shankar Nag's entry into the working class consciousness is probably due to his highly accepted roles in Kannada films such as *Auto Raja 1982* in which he played an autorickshaw driver. This character was an extraordinarily spirited inspiration for auto drivers all over Karnataka. The film went down so well with them that soon, every auto sported pictures of Shankar Nag in the back, front, interior, and even on the wind shields. Auto drivers began to take pride in their profession and saw themselves as the accepted heros of society! The portraits not only proclaimed their admiration of Shankar Nag, but also induced in them the belief that they too were "like Auto Raja" the protagonist of the film.



Figure 93 A still from the 1982 film *Auto Raja*, Shankar Nag's auto in the film bears the slogan "jai Karnataka Mathe"

In the film *Auto Raja*, two very interesting aspects are emphasised. One, the protagonist, an autorikshaw driver named Auto Raja, always seen reading a newspaper or magazines. In a particular scene he asserts rather forcefully that he is a BSc I class graduate, fluent in English to the point of sporting a classic ascent, and whose favourite book happens to be *Lenin, Life And Work*. His auto, incidentally bears the punchline "Jai Karnataka Mathe" (hail Mother Karnataka), indicating his patriotism and his status as an activist of the Kannada movement.

The second aspect is the classification of the elite versus lower working classes such as autodrivers. Here the mode of argument turns the unconventional way: bottom-up, rather than a top-down hierarchial positioning of values and morals. The auto driver is pitted against a stereotyped antagonist: a liquor guzzling, partying, rich womaniser who sports western attire. This serves to highlight the contrast between the English-speaking Kannada working-class patriot and the English-speaking useless rich. These contrasts were very conciously scripted, to boost the spirits of working class Kannadigas, with the message that the humble work they do is as important as that of the business class, and that they too can aspire for higher education even as they continue to do their low-profile work. The only requirements are self-respect, moral values, and an interest in acquiring knowledge.

The story revolving around the character of Auto Raja socially influenced the working classes, especially autorickhaw drivers, giving them a sense of prominent heroism, adding to the popular visual cultural making of iconography, with stickers of Shankar Nag dominating the mobile public sphere of Bengaluru and Karnataka, notwithstanding the fact that the community hardly knew Shankar Nag as a director, but only as an actor. Autorickshaw stands all across the state proudly flaunting the portait of Shankar Nag illustrates the composition of a post-modern symbol. That this symbol is featured alongside pictures of the mother goddess of Kannada and Rajkumar, exemplifies the making of sub-iconography, and the making of the 'second son' (of Kannada), in the lineage of visual history in the making of the Kannada identity.

The working class sector in Bengaluru today has a vast majority of immigrants from other states. With resident Kannadigas busy chasing white-collar jobs and high pay scales thanks to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation of the city, construction workers, labourers, helpers, etc are mostly from Bihar and other states, who have come here in search of work. However, auto drivers have generally been locals, and their need for an icon was satisfied by the character of Auto Raja. Thus, the Shankar Nag-Auto Raja stickers and pictures became a compulsory part of every autorickshaw. Reciprocally, the states exercise their own surveillance over representations of the nation. Within the colonial state, this could require veiled imagery, as in the seemingly innocuous lithograph of a woman with a caged parrot discussed in the Christopher Pinney essay The Body And The Bomb: Technologies Of Modernity In Colonial India. Verbal commentary, Pinney observes, was required to unlock the insurrectionist message. But surveillance did not end with independence. Kajari Jain in her essay The Efficacious Image: Picture And Power In Indian Mass Culture, cites one telling anecdote involving Nargis, the Hindi film actress most famous for her titular role in Mother India of 1957, a classic cinematic depiction of the long-suffering, heroic female facing economic and familial disaster, which was widely viewed, as its title intended, in allegorical terms. After Nargis retired from films, the government of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi appointed her to the Rajya Sabha in 1980. In her first official speech as a Member of Parliament, Nargis attacked the celebrated filmmaker Satyajit Ray for focusing on Indian poverty in his films. In her speech and in a subsequent interview, Nargis charged that Ray failed to provide "a correct image of India", which led foreigners to think that modern India had no cars or schools. When the interviewer asked her what defined "modern India" Nargis replied in one word, "Dams." In Picturing The Nation: Iconographies Of Modern India, Richard Davis points out that the representation of mother in the context of post-modern India is the presentation and representation of mother who turns to an icon, Nargis was elected to the Rajya Sabha not in the light of her character role and her brilliant performance, but deferring to the illusion that exists in the Indian audience that the simple man, when he appears on screen, is no more an actor but a transmigrated form of an *avatar*! It is this tendency that leads to the creation of the iconic status in the eyes of the Indian audience, as illustrated by the case of southern film stars MGR (M.G. Ramachandran), and NTR (N.T. Rama Rao) who went on to become extremely successful politicians, even becoming Chief Ministers of their respective states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. This was also true of Nitish Bharadwaj, who played Lord Krishna in B.R. Chopra's extremely

successful teleserial *Mahabharath*, who was wooed by political parties to stand for elections, as they were certain that he would win because of the role he had played. But the scenario was different in the case of Kannada visual culture. Dr Rajkumar acquired stardom and gained the devotion of fans with the patriotic roles he played, which are considered to be the best in his repertoire. However, he strictly resisted the pressure to leap into the political arena, preferring instead, to stay on in the charming role of being the official host of Kannada patriotism and the humble servant of Kannada goddess Bhuvaneshwari, waving the flag of Kannada in posters dotting the streets. This is probably the main reason why he is celebrated as the loyal son of Kannada.

I have used the description "devoted fans" very consciously, to distinguish them from the generally understood meaning of the term "fan", which means "an ardent follower and admirer". One as discussed earlier, the local term for fan, *abhimaani* (meaning admirer), is used synonymously with its English equivalent, yet the two are subtly different. As S. V. Srinivas's *Fans And Stars* points out various complexities, I wish to argue that fans today are not fans in the real sense, with fans associations mushrooming more for commercial, competitive and other intentions related to existence and survival. Thus the word "devoted fans" is more relevant to the context of the times of such icons as Dr Rajkumar and MGR, who had genuine fans. These icons never faced the need to depend on fans associations to run 'house-full' shows of their films, and neither did they need to pay fans for such 'services'. It is observed fact that stars of those days earned their stardom through audience preferences and audience choice, which made them icons, and did not have to be 'marketed' like the stars of today.

'Devotional viewing' points to the question of presence, raised in this connection most directly by Kajri Jain. Medieval devotional theologies in India held that divinity, in one form or another becomes present in an icon or image in the course of worship. The

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god Vishnu, many Hindus would argue, actually incarnates Himself in a consecrated icon. The image gains its power and efficacy, in this view, not from its physical appearance but from the divine presence inhabiting it. This theology of presence has consequences as well for the expectations and practices of its audience. The situation is not a unilateral relation of (human) viewer to (inert) viewed, but rather one of reciprocal looking, often referred to as *darshana*, and of interactive physical engagement. Observers have described, as one example, the devotional attitude and venerative practices of many Indian television viewers towards the hugely popular serial *Ramayan* aired between 1987-89, as discussed in the introduction of the book *Picturing The Nation*, by Richard Davis. This line of discussion of Kajri Jain's *darshana* is similar to that of "devoted fans", and with the respective examples of B.R. Chopra's *Mahabharat* and Rajkumar's *avatars* in Kannada patriotic films — whether it is the dramatic role of *Mayura* (1975) or *Gandhada Gudi* (1973) — the extension from the role of character to the role of public figure has been strongly evident.

In the same context Kajri Jain argues that this visual schema extends beyond the religious sphere of the icon, into representations that bear upon the nation: "Just as temple images bear a privileged stature as divine habitations, so too public statues of Gandhi, Ambedkar and other heroes of the nation may be seen as containing an essence of those figures." She further says that the investment on national embodiments or national symbols like Bharat Matha and the tri-colour flag draws the public to a closer, intimate relationship or belonging in the public sphere, and subsequently as a result these installed images gaining a higher power to elicit veneration. Similarly, after the death of Dr Rajkumar there was a scramble to install his statues everywhere. Over 50 were installed in Bangalore alone. In tandem, his posters in vinyl peppered the public sphere, including traffic junctions — a sign of the concrete establishment of the identity and its dominance, not only of the icon but of all that he touched and spoke and fought for. The fans who put up these posters, made sure that the posters carried legends like "Dr Rajkumar Fan Associations" and "Dr Rajkumar Abhimanigalu", with even the caste, community and religion mentioned in the

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baseline, over layering the primary context of the icon. These were almost similar to the cases of Mother Teresa being featured in political banners for the propaganda of Christian converts and vote banks. It is also similar to the sudden inclusion of Tipu Sultan in gaudy political propaganda where he is shown with a casually relaxed, sarcastic smile, fighting a tiger — this visual imagination being a direct copy-paste from the 'Tiger of Mysore' caption, in the form of kitsch imitation of local representations. This localization and contextualization is crucial as it veers away from the concept of "devoted fans", and moves towards a visual political war that is often seen in the public sphere, with poster versus poster and the icon rapidly transcending into a symbol of power and pressure over the issue of existence.



Vishnuvardhan the third son of goddesss Bhuvaneshwari

Figure 94 "Jai Karnataka Mathe, Sahasa Simha Vishnuvardhan" released after the film *"Yajamana*" Raja Verma Art, 1996.



Figure 95 "Dr Vishnuvardhan" Raja Verma Arts, 2009.



Figure 96 "Karnataka Simha" Raja Verma Arts, 2009

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Figure 97 Untitled, Raja Verma Arts, 2009.



Figure 98 After the release of the film Sreemantha Raja Verma Arts, 2009.

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Figure 99 "Karnataka Simha, Dr Vishnuvardhan" Raja Verma Arts, 2009

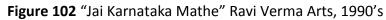


Figure 100 "Karnataka Simha, Dr Vishnuvardhan" after the release of *Aptharakshaka*, Raja Verma Arts. Print: 2009.



Figure 101 "Karnataka Simha, Dr Vishnuvardhan" Raja Verma Arts, 2009.





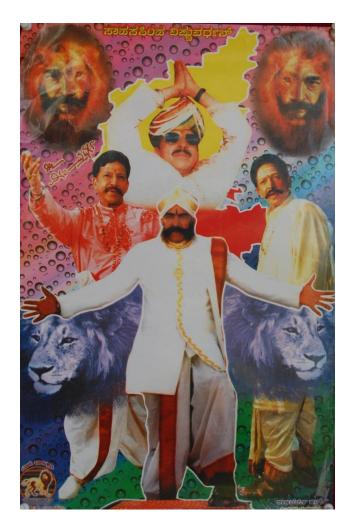


Figure 103 "Sahasa Simha Dr Vishnuvardhan" Ravi Verma Arts, 1990's



Figure 104 A visual from the song *"Kannadave Namma Amma"* of the film *"Mojugara sogasugara"* (in the backdrop of Mysore Palace, statues of Wodeyars) 1996

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation *Mojugara Sogasugara* (1996), the 150th film of Vishnuvardhan was one of the biggest hits of the actor, and and featured him in a double role. The song Kannadave Namma Amma (Kannada is our mother), was picturised in Mysore, against the backdrop of the major landmarks of the city. In typical 1990s style, the song features many dancers usually termed as extras — in the background, all in uniform attire of yellow and red, the Kannada flag colours. There are Kannada flags everywhere, with even the dancers waving them. Even the drums featuring in the song are painted in a flashy, assertive manner which cannot be missed. The song is a visual treat, in a sense, dipped as it is, in the tints of the Kannada flag. Vishnuvardhan (singing a song asking Kannadigas to be ready to sacrifice their life for the cause of Kannadigas), wears attire to match probably the most interesting combination ever worn by a Kannada hero — canary yellow blazer worn over a bright poster red shirt, teamed with white trousers and shoes, much like of the ones favoured by leading actor Jitendra in the Hindi films of the '80's and '90s. Ironically, in the double role that Vishnuvardhan plays, one is of a nonvegetarian who relishes meat. In one particular scene, he is shown he ordering several non-veg dishes (chicken and beef), especially demanding the brain portion. This was considered out-of-character, as Vishnuvardhan hailed from a Brahmin family, and was seen as representing that class. The story is of brothers separated in childhood, reuniting later in life, a very popular theme during the late '80s and early '90s, as evidenced by the Hindi film Amar, Akbar, and Antony which was a runaway hit.

In the case of *Mojugara Sogasugara*, the script did not have any overt Kannada nationalistic intentions, and the song was added apparently only to show concern for Kannada. So, the film was not a 'patriotic' one in that sense, but a family entertainer. The makers seem to have avoided a full-scale patriotic theme as patriotic films were generally not commercial successes.

Vishnuvardhan has been always referred to as the Brahminical Mysorean. The 'iconmaking process' vis-a-vis this actor has been more active after his death, especially during the BJP rule in Karnataka. At one point, huge cut-outs of Vishnuvardhan dotted the whole of Bengaluru. Interestingly, at the World Kannada Meet held at Belgaum in 2011, cutouts and huge vinyl prints of Vishnuvardhan were prominent everywhere, portraying him as the host of Kannada identity, while there were hardly any of Rajkumar. These presentations of the represented are not just the popular iconmaking of the public, but politically driven public motifs, contributing to the making of iconography in popular visual culture prominently as "immortals in vinyl" where some are sought to be made important in a more permanent space and some just in a temporary phase. Thus, political interventions add to the cultural hegemony of caste and region. Vishnuvardhan may have portrayed the common working class lay man on screen, but he was always perceived through the lens of caste. Thus, in the public domain, he was not seen as a working class leader. One reason for this could be the establishment of his image as a "Brahmin" and thus not acceptable as a leader for the working class, which comprises mostly non-Brahmins.



"Mandya da Gandu" "Rebel Star" Ambaresh.

Figure 105 A Ambareesh as "Madikerinayaka", Raja Verma Arts, 1990s.

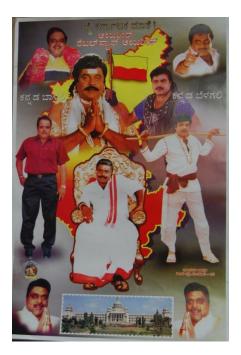


Figure 105 B "Rebel star Ambareesh", Raja Verma Arts, 1990s.



Figure 105 C Untitled poster on Ambareesh, Raja Verma Arts, 1990s.



Figure 106 A visual from *Solillada Saradhara*, where Ambareesh is presented as a patriotic ruler of Karnataka, with the Bangalore Palace as the backdrop. At right is a visual from another song of the same film, *Kaveramma...* praising Mother Kaveri.

Ambareesh the rebel star of Kannada

'Daanashuraveera Karna' (the brave and generous Karna), 'Rebel Star', 'Mandyada Gandu' (the man of Mandya). These titles conferred on Ambareesh, as well as the roles he played in certain films revolving around patriotic themes, pictorially enhanced his image as a pro-Kannada activist and actor. However, there was a change in the representation of Ambareesh as the proud fourth son of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, thanks to a conflict arising over political factors — such as his involvement with the Congress — leading to the loss of assertion of this image in the public domain. The restriction on the usage of images of a politically active individual contesting elections meant that major visual interpretations of Ambareesh in the socio-cultural scenario were not possible. This is the reason why there are very few posters of Ambareesh portraying him as the son of the mother goddess of Kannada.

In the visual presented above from the film *Solillada Saradhara*, the song starts with "*E Kannada mannanu maribeda, o abhimani*" (do not forget the soil of Kannada), emotionally connecting the viewers to the pride and glorious past of Kannada. *Sollillada Saradhara* is the story of a boatman, Krishna, who ferries people across the

river Kaveri. Kaveri is portrayed as Mother Kaveri who protects and nurtures. Incidentally, many such films of the late '80s and '90s emphasise on the value of the Kaveri, in the light of the Kaveri water conflict between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The character of Krishna in *Sollillada Saradhara* as a lay man who exhibits intense patriotism for Kannada and Karnataka aims to encourage the working classes as well as the uneducated, to be Kannada activists. The protagonist Krishna is a superhero who vanquishes to antagonist groups single handedly. He sings poetically about the historical greatness of Karnataka, even though he has studied only up to the seventh standard. In the end, he is even permitted to have two wives. The polygamy angle does not seem to hassle Kannada films, as it is the norm in early films for the protagonist to have a lover and also a wife.

If Rajkumar was shown with the Mysore Palace and the Wodeyars, in the case of Ambareesh posters, it is the Vidhana Soudha, the Karnataka State Legislative Assembly building that has been visualized as his domain in public. Ironically, though the 'Mandayada Gandu' was a well-known candidate of Mandya in Mysore constituency, there are no visual symbols of Mysore in any of his posters. But his theatrical postures with the Kannada flag assert his strong sense of Kannada activism. Today, in the Kannada film industry, he remains the last known icon in the public domain as a beloved son of Bhuvaneshwari. Ironically, his foray into politics has minimized his presence in the street space.



Figure 107 Thayee Bhuvaneshwari an interpretation from BKS Verma's version, Raja Verma Arts. 1990s



Figure 108 "Jayahe Karnataka Mathe" adopted from B K S Varma painting (Sri Lakshmi), 2011 Raja Verma Arts

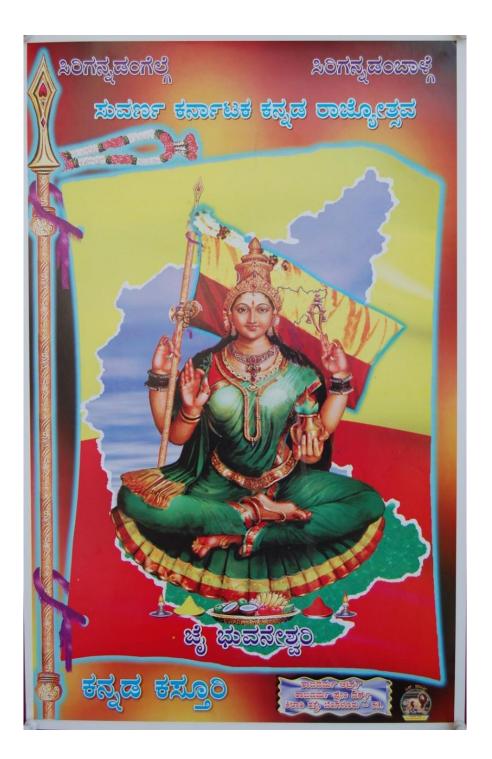


Figure 109 "Suvarna Karnataka Kannada Rajyotsava" goddess adopted from BKS Varma painting, Raja Verma Arts, 2011



Figure 110 "Jayahe Karnataka Mathe" Goddess Bhuvaneshwari painted by BKS Verma, posters from Kannada Sahitya Parishath, Bengaluru.

D. THE PHERIPHERAL CONCERNS OF IDENTITY

- 1. Statue of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari to Statue of Liberty
- 2. The officially unofficial flag
- 3. The loss of identity in 'Kannada' fonts
- 4. Territorialism
- 5. Masculinity
- 6. Caste and their icons
- 7. Political propaganda and Kannada mother goddess as the brand ambassador
- 8. Local versus global, elite versus popular
- 9. Internet and Kannada visual culture
- 10. The Art, Design and Film: the medium that constructed Mother Goddess

STATUE OF GODDESS BHUVANESHWARI TO STATUE OF Liberty

On Feb 4, 2011, on the occasion of the 77th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Bengaluru — incidentally being held in the capital of the state after a gap of 40 years — the then Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa who presided over the event made a grand promise to the state, during the inaugural function. He declared that a statue of goddess Bhuvaneshwari would be installed in Bengaluru at a cost of Rs 25 crore. The Chief Minister said: "The statue would be as tall as the Statue of Liberty of New York, or the statue of Lord Buddha at Lumbini Park, Hyderabad. We will keep aside Rs 25 crore in the next budget for the purpose," indicating that work on the statue could begin by April 2011.

How was this to be viewed? Was the fact that a statue, with an identity of Kannada was to be installed in cosmopolitan Bangalore, the Silicon Valley of India, an assertion that Bengaluru, even decades after being made the capital of Karnataka, needed installation of an identity in the form of the mother goddess as the state deity to remind it that it still represents Karnataka, or rather, Kannada? Also regard the visual comparison to the contrasting globally known statues cited by the Chief Minister. The first, the Statue of Liberty in New York, is of a robed female figure representing Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom, who bears a torch and a tabula ansata (a tablet evoking the law) upon which is inscribed the date of the American Declaration of Independence, The statue represents an icon of freedom and the United States as well. And the statue of the Buddha represents peace and the religion of Buddhism as a whole. The political promise was that the statue of Bhuvaneshwari would have been the symbol of Bengaluru. But this promise was rejected by the public, with the people vociferously asking the Chief Minister to use the huge amount of money promised for the statue, for more pressing social needs. For over a week, the debate raged in the city, with the media questioning the need for such a huge investment, and sarcastically terming it as yet another empty political promise.

Meanwhile, the land for the statue installation was next in the line of interest; Minister for Kannada and Culture Govind M. Karjol said: "The government is looking for a strategic location in the city to attract tourists. We have grand plans of creating a beautiful garden around the statue. It will require a large piece of land. If no other option works out, the statue will have to be installed at Ulsoor Lake." The discussion veered round to other likely sites: Lalbagh, Hebbal Lake, Freedom Park, the Bangalore University campus, and so on. After a few days this topic died a natural death and was no more spoken of or discussed, as the public outcry against the proposal had the government putting the project in cold storage.

Did the rejection of the installation of the statue of mother goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari mean that the Bengalurian public, the children of the mother goddess had rejected their own mother, the cultural icon, the deity of Karnataka, Kannadamma? Or is it that the cosmopolitan city is focused only on commercial growth? Or is it that Bengaluru has become wiser through the lessons of the past and rejected the idol-worshipping culture? But then, the statue was not necessarily one for worship, and could have served as a symbolic representation only! Or could it be that consideration for the minorities and the non-Hindu population had resulted in the rejection of the statue? Or could it be that the rejection was solely based on the natural suspicion of corruption and the scope for a new scam (given the colossal amount of money involved)? Nevertheless there was also a murmur of voices which pointed out that it was after all, the statue of Bhuvaneshwari that the Chief Minister had proposed to install, not a statue of himself, as some politicians had done on a large scale recently.

The argument that I wish to point at is that though the Kannada and Culture Department has been hosting Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations at a temple of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari or Mookambika in Bhuvanagiri of Siddapur taluk, Uttar Kannada district, for the past five years, and at the temple of Bhuvaneshwari, belonging to 17th century of Hampi, the need to establish a statue in the cosmopolitian space of

Bengaluru as an equalent to the statue of Lumbini Buddha of Hussein sagar lake at Hydrebad or of the Statue of Liberty is the visually demanding need to the global positioning of the local representation.

THE OFFICIALLY UNOFFICIAL FLAG: "STATE DOES NOT HAVE AN OFFICIAL FLAG!"

The state government on Jan 9, 2012 made it clear that the yellow and red flag that is omnipresent during all celebrations related to Karnataka and Kannada is not the official flag of the state, and clarified that there is no separate flag for the state. The ubiquitous flag became a subject of interest following a question over the status and meaning of the Kannada or Karnataka flag in the Assembly. To this question, Minister for Kannada and Culture Govind M. Karjol said, "The Flag Code does not allow flags for states. Our national flag is the symbol of integrity and sovereignty of our nation. If states have their separate flags, it could diminish the importance of the national flag. Besides, there are possibilities of it leading to narrow-minded regional feelings." States having their own flag might affect the regional emotions of the people. Hence, the state government had not given any official status to the so-called Kannada flag, it was clarified. Press reports also stated that "the government reply came as a surprise to people who largely believed that the yellow and the red flag represented Kannada and Karnataka". These issues were clarified after decades in the context of identity. It is a fact that these flags are installed in all the corners and at all cross roads of Karnataka, especially Bangalore. Is the question of the flag usage to be viewed from the angle of pro-Kannada nationalism or from that of the sovereignty of the nation? The flag that had been used by a small political party in post-Independence India, which had the simple concept of borrowing the features of Hindu goddesses, thus leading to the Bhuvaneshwari icon, was a functional tool for the Kannada movement. From the Gokak agitation to the Kaveri crisis, from the literary stalwarts to the local Kannada activists the flag had been used in the most unimaginable contexts. I have seen the Kannada flag being used on the backs of two-wheelers, on the front and back windshields of cars and heavy goods vehicles, especially during the Rajkumar kidnapping episode, as commuters identified as not being pro-Kannada activists, ie, all those who did not flaunt any Kannada visual elements were attacked. The visual elements used rampantly ranged from the Kannada flag, to pictures of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, and from Dr Rajkumar's stickers to Sahankar Nag's portraits in the background of the Kannada flag.

Thus here the question I wish to raise pertains to the value of the existing symbol, irrespective of the assertion and contradiction that the flag may or may not hold any value or be a symbol of Karnataka or Kannada. The existing functional flag is a well registered concept. If this is wiped out by law, then what about its past contributions and the significant part it played in creating the Kannada identity? Secondly, the question of why it was used in the past is obvious, so, how would one replace it with a new concept that can represent the present Karnataka?

To date, more than ten thousand of these Kannada flags are fluttering on poles installed on a base tiled with images of goddess Bhuvaneshwari or Rajkumar, or Kuvempu or Kempegowda, depending on the regional demography. They are also visible in all possible and even unpredictable nooks and crannies of the public arena, such as on the corner edges of autorickshaw windshields and on the windshields of cars and public buses.

The Kannada flag is also a protective shield that non-Kannadigas use to make a statement that they are proud to be a part of Kannada activism.

This oversaturated visual plethora cannot be undone or deleted, but has impressed itself on the psyche of the public in Karnataka, especially Bangalore. Indeed, Bangalore may not have as many signages as the number of flags hoisted!

The officially unofficial Flag





Figure 111 The official website of Government of Karnataka as on Feb 18, 2012.

The official website of the Government of Karnataka features what we know as the Kannada flag on the left of the map of the state, and the national tricolour on the right

of the map. The map is internally is illustrated with the image of the Vidhana Soudha, the State Assembly building. Below is a close-up shot of the Vidhana Soudha bathed in golden light at night, with the Kannada flag embossed with the state symbol fluttering in front. These representations clearly highlight the use of the Kannada flag, which, however, has been officially rejected on the grounds of national integrity and the law. Incidentally, the only state that has the privilege of having a separate flag is Jammu and Kashmir.

The state flag of Jammu and Kashmir consists of a deep red field, representing labour, charged with a plough to represent agriculture. Three stripes are found on the hoist side and represent the three geographic regions of the state, Jammu, the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh.

This research study investigated the overarching understanding on the making of the local identity, that is, the Kannada Mother Goddess and her flag as the representational iconography of Kannada hegemony, as the functional deity of the state, for the purpose of unification and her development with her parallel competitive sisters, the other 'mothers' of neighbouring states, and as the daughter of the common mother Bharat Matha. This visual history I have presented in this research leaves no doubt that that the visual iconography and its significance have extensively contributed in the state formation and unification. The argument of this research defines the popular visual culture of contemporary India, redefining the local ethos over the national ethos, and the larger localisation of nationality, in the context of globalization.

The argument I have presented and discussed in the previous chapters contributes and asserts the following key points: Firstly, the 'development' of the Mother Goddess of Kannada with her flag, and her establishment and functional responsibility in fulfilling

the role of unification and state formation. Secondly, the role and life of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari and her flag as the protective mother in times of crisis in the state, such as the Gokak agitation, the Kaveri water imbroglio, and Dr. Rajkumar's abduction, and in consistently reminding the people of the need for their loyalty to their Kannadiga roots, and for pro-Kannada activism. Thirdly the questioning of the role of the mother goddess and the flag in the post-modern contemporary time and space, through visual statements in the public domain. Fourthly, the mother goddess affording her 'beloved sons' the opportunity to play host to Kannada culture, contributing to the popular phase. Fifthly, the iconographies being termed and cast as representational public leaders in the public domain, thereby leading to further localisation against globalisation in the contemporary context.

Let me conclude to begin by asking a question which is crucial not only for this dissertation but also for studies of other forms of such iconography and popular visual cultural studies: if iconography such as the mother goddess (and her flag) is very important, and if she is considered as the state or national deity, representing its identity, then why is it not perceived as an elite concept, though it has sprouted from elite visions? If let to visualise then why is the assertion so abstract, (abstract enough in forcing to visualise and abstract enough to term it as idol,) complicating the complexities of the concept of the symbol? The symbol that once unified the thought has now been pointed out as the reason for the contemporary crisis of identity! And finally, what is the identity of any local body (here in this case Kannada and Karnataka) of India today in the contemporary context?

During this process of investigation for my research, I encountered a few very interesting and at the same time critical, issues entangled in this subject, but which are not much discussed nor answered, at least in this context of enlightenment.

These subtle areas need a deeper exposition to justify the intensity of the subject in terms of its problem in the socio-cultural context. One such issue is territorialism, which has been mentioned in the earlier chapters in the respective areas of PAGE 298 OF 413

discussions. The issue of territorialism being a very sensitive one has been of high significance for natural reasons in this context of state, nation and local geographical body of representation. The maps and the regional disputes that have been discussed are the references to the argument on the territorialism discussed.

The second issue is of masculinity and gender bias. The observed and presented visuals only highlight the male dominance. Ironically, while the mother goddess is feminine, she is represented only with her proud sons, thereby excluding the female, thus displaying gender-based discrimination and biased perception, intentionally or unintentionally.

The third is the popular phase of visual worship, where iconographies are born and icons produced, producing further sub-icons, but only in the accepted manner of proud sons. The subject is spread across in mainly two segments one as the Rajkumarism where Rajkumar has been presented as the proud son of the Kannada mother goddess and another is the world of autorickshaws, where a unique audience and participants are involved in making a new culture which I wish to call "autoculture" and their 'king' or 'Auto Raja', Shankar Nag.

The fourth issue is that of caste leaders such as Ambedkar, Buddha, Kuvempu, Kempegowda, Basaveshwara, and new emerging street icons such as Tipu Sultan and Mother Teresa, and their iconography. This genre is decided and dictated by caste-based propaganda with which the communities can address their grievances and justify their existence through the chosen leaders as their icons.

Finally there is the issue of political propaganda, where gods and mother goddesses become brand ambassadors in an era of vinyl and over printing and ease of producing huge cutouts and banners overnight, defining and changing the cityscapes with agendas of political and social significance.

The research ends, or rather begins, with the close contradicing interdependent and mutually influencing comparison between local and global popular visual culture.

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THE LOSS OF IDENTITY IN KANNADA FONTS Kannada font:

The Kannada font was made by Atthavara Anathacharya. The font was not named then as there were no other fonts. Calligraphy and differences in typography are still a problem, since there is no school in India which specialises in Indian typography. Indian typography was created on presses with German technology. Brindavan Wesley Press in Mysore is an example. Till the advent of computerization, the fonts were more or less well structured, since the space and method were standard in size with the press. But after computerization and the attendant freedom to experiment, the fonts and their usage became inconsistent. For instance, the curves of one alphabet differ from that of another, making them appear as if they do not belong to one family. For another instance a font size of 40 and 60 as a heading when decreased differs in the form of the supportive fonts (often with dots and other many minor issue). "We are used to these kinds of disturbances," says N.A.M Ismail, a Kannada activist, writer and journalist. Thus the status of Kannada fonts is in a very critical state, with no grammar of typography. These issues have not been considered either by the government or by the font users. "In fact, this was not considered an issue at all," says NAM Ismail.

Storage standard:

The International Unicode Standard has set codes for all languages, including Kannada. With the ASCII, American Standard for Informational Interchange, Kannada faced problems because of the limitation of 256 glyphs. Since Unicode has unlimited glyphs, today Kannada fonts have overcome the issues of storage standard to an extent, but the issues of typographical aesthetics are yet to be resolved. Issues such as Bold and Italics, proportion and size are a few of the major challenges that Kannada fonts face. Kannada, like other Indian languages has no upper case and lower case. However, there are ways of getting around the problem, with choices such as enlarging the first letter of the first word, with the rest of the letters of the word in smaller size. However, when some Kannada fonts are decreased in size, there are issues such as with the glyphs (*othu, thalekattu*) and stressed secondary alphabets, ascenders and descenders.

The font prescribed by BM Sri, avoiding the ascenders and descenders was not practically applicable for modern and post-modern Kannada because the process used earlier was way too different from this font system, in terms of symbols and font face as the typewriter could not adopt these type faces. But the computer today can accommodate any font face. Regrettably, it was not technology that was based on language usage, but language that had to be adjusted to the technology.

Free downloadable packages such as Nudi and Bharaha have their own issues. Compared to the letter press fonts of the olden days, the new age fonts are far more complex. The technological evolution from letter press to rotary press was very slow. But offset changed the pre-press system, from film plate to image setters to computerto-plate print. These technological innovations ruined the local font aesthetics in India whereas in the west innovations developed without the loss of typography sense and branched with the pace of time and needs. One of the major negatives of technological advancement and its influence in India was that technology was considered to be the only thing necessary for usage, thereby totally ignoring creative inputs and scientific thinking, blindly moving forward under the impression that skill is sufficient and intelligence is not needed! Unfortunately the situation even today remains same in certain fields. One of the best examples is that other than in heavy budgeted advertisements, one doesn't often get to observe any usage of standard font or typography applied in public sphere, as it is all taken for granted, because the public has not been educated nor made to realize that the socio-cultural space also needs to have a disciplined medium of communication or culture.

Kannada font now needs a commercial design sense to combat the limiting factors such as paper quality and colour of fonts. (Light, normal, book, demi, bold are the five European standards of font colour. In English print, the headline is dark and sub-line news paragraphs are in grey, whereas in Kannada the difference is barely seen. Body text areas are called grey pages.)

Manohar Acharya, Poornachandra Tejaswi and K.N. Shantha Kumar are some of the intellectuals who have expressed concern over these issues. Ismail further says that a solution has not been found so far mainly because of the fact that this has never been seen as a problem! There is another factor lacking in the design sense in the printing area: No standard publication such as a newspaper or magazine uses more than two or three fonts. But some Kannada publications use as many as six to eight fonts of different families in a single published material.

Kannada contemporary cultural identity is "film posters titled as 'machu' 'long', etc, (weapons made of metal, such as axe, sickle and machete) or national ad campaigns translated into a local version, but when it comes to visual culture, only Yakshagana comes to my mind," says NAM Ismail, adding: "All commercially successful contemporary visual identities are mediocre."

TERRITORIALISM

The Bharat Matha map versus the map of Independent India

The arguments and the discussion in the previous chapters have provided visual evidence that makes clear the difference between the map of independent India and the map of Bharat Matha. The conflict that exists between these two different forms of representations has a major crux of argument. The map of Independent India is the map presented after the Independence of India (here the map of the present conflicting representation over some area of Jammu and kashmir's exclusion is not referred) and the map of Bharat Matha is the old map of Bristish colonial India, inclusive of (present day) Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. While it is acceptable to represent Bharat Matha as mentioned, in all the cases where the visuals are before Independence, presenting the same map even after Independence can only lead to two interpretations: One, reminding the viewer of the earlier India and the split India, thereby cautioning against further division. Two, emotionally referring to the geo-body of the Bharat Matha as a living deity, helping the viewer perceive how she was. This territorialism might probably lead to a serious disturbance in terms of territorial disputes in the future, though justifiable with reference to the past.

Representation of Karnataka in map of India as globe

The Kannada-Karnataka hegemony of portraying the highlighted map of Karnataka in the globe is another noticeable factor in the visuals presented. This also implies the clear exclusion of other states, with a central focus on Karnataka. The sense of brotherhood with neighbouring states is absolutely absent, despite the fact that PAGE 303 OF 413

Kannadigas reside in neighbouring states also. A frame of composition where Kannada Matha is portrayed as the universal mother in the foreground of the earth is another striking image that seems to encompass the whole of mankind rather than a restricted geography. These elements are visualised in a casual approach, like the usage of the term 'Bhuvaneshwari' meaning 'Goddess of the Earth'.

Reassertion of ownership over Kannada land

In most of the Kannada films of Rajkumar, dialogues referring to the ownership of land as the land of Kannadigas find emphasis. In the film *Srikrishnadevaraya*, the king is referred to and proclaimed as the lord of Kannada land. Though there have been controversies over the spoken language in the Vijayanagara empire, the assertion here reveals the purpose of such usage — which is to re-establish the territorial space and linguistic monopoly. Regions such as Hampi being close to Andhra Pradesh is one reason why these territorial assertions are common. This was also probably why the Hampi University was established in Hampi.

Representation of all shakthi peethas as Bhuvaneshwari

The strategy of coalescing dispersed Kannada speaking demography by invoking prominent goddess temple deities, is another example to illustrate the territorial construction and unification. While this effort has been fruitful in the social, cultural and political context, its failure to include the minority non-Hindu population and non-idol worshippers and atheists is clearly evident. The mental territory of Kannada and Kannada-speaking people has thus cut off the non-Hindu Kannada-speaking minority.

Flag as the territorial cautioning? Is Bengaluru a Kannada territory or not?

Janaki Nair says "A new and more belligerent face of Kannada activism soon became evident in the occupation of public spaces both in a temporary and more permanent sense. If newer Tamil dominated slum areas have been the target of rioters, older and PAGE 304 OF 413 more established Tamil localities have been the site of symbolic occupations. Poles sporting the Kannada flag mounted on tiled platforms that figure Kannada Bhuvaneswari, have proliferated across the city in the years since 1982, at street corners and in circles, as road dividers and as signs of the mobilising efforts of small neighbourhood youth groups and Kannada sanghas. The President of the Rajkumar Abhimanigala Sangha Sa. Ra. Govindu claims that more than 40 per cent of flag posts that dot the city were inaugurated by him. Flags in front of major public sector units proclaim the pride of Kannada sons-of-the-soil, leaving no doubt as to the markedly (male) gendered politics of language. The Kannada Rajyothsava day on November 1 has become an annual occasion for young Kannadiga males to occupy street corners, as a gesture of celebration of Karnataka unification but also in defiance of other class and linguistic ouevres.

"Yet if red and yellow flags are particularly numerous in areas which are dominated by Tamilians such as Ulsoor or Murphy Town, they do not symbolise linguistic dominance: rather they serve to visually compensate for what is plainly an auditory absence. Nor does the Kannada movement speak in one voice. Groups such as the Karnataka Vimochana Ranga (KVR), a left wing organisation, have rallied cultural workers and intellectuals to challenge the state's development strategies: far from restricting itself to issues of language, KVR has organised against the Japanese township at Bidadi, against GATT and most recently against the proposed Bangalore-Mysore corridor. Yet though KVR narrativises Karnataka history differently and questions the dominant paradigms of economic development, it is those who are seeking a stake within this paradigm that have become the dominant voice of the movement, those for whom claims for land, labour or water, are based on the exclusive identities of language. Rajkumar's call for a Bangalore bundh (symbolic shutting down of the city) in 1984 to compel the state to reintroduce Kannada examinations for the Class III and IV employees proved deeply unpopular, and effectively thwarted his launch into But it also established the more strident face of Kannada electoral politics. nationalism in the city. The poet Chennavira Kanavi's words became the call to battle: PAGE **305** OF 413

"*Hesaraayithu Karnataka, Usiragali Kannada*" ("The name is now Karnataka; let Kannada be our life"). It was a battle that marshalled census figures and data to emphasise Kannada's dominantstatus at the same time as it mobilised troops who would lay claim to city spaces."

Mayor Muthanna's filmic fortunes were not usually matched by other new migrants to the Bangalore of the 1960s. The sense of being a "local refugee" haunted the Kannadiga migrant, in a city, or more properly the Cantonment area, that was awash with English and, more distressing, Tamil popular culture. M. Chidanandamurthy, a Professor of Kannada literature who grew up in a small town of Shimoga, speaks in his autobiography of being humiliated at a theatre in the Cantonment area when he asked for a ticket in Kannada. The city of Bangalore and more properly the Cantonment, was alien not simply because it was a zone where Kannada was rarely heard,but one where Tamil enjoyed a dominance, although largely among the working classes. "In every public sector unit," says Ra Nam Chandrasekhar, a worker at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and activist of the Kannada Shakti Kendra, "we only saw groups of workers reading Tamil newspapers, not Kannada ones."

Underlying the anxiety about the visibility, or more correctly audibility, of Kannada, was a concern for jobs in the prestigious public sector, whose workers were the labour aristocracy, earning good wages, enjoying relatively undemanding work routines, with all the perquisites of housing and transport and subsidised canteens, much of which was enabled by the actions of strong and centralised, usually left wing, unions. Not surprisingly, the unions, as well as the ebullient workers' cultural troupes and organisations that sprang up at these units, soon became the battle ground of new Kannada entrants. Kannada *sanghas*, in turn, received a shot in the arm from those managements anxious to curb the growing influence of left wing unions in the public sector."

MASCULINITY

Where is Akkamahadevi? Kitturu Rani Chennamma? Where is Bellary Siddamma? Where are all the reel and real mothers?

Inspired and enlightened by the Kannada state unification movement and Kannada activism by karnataka's most intellectual thinkers, this discussion reminding the factors and evidences discussed in the previous chapters on the role of men in becoming the beloved sons of the mother goddesss of Kannada, asserts the rationally critical views on the complex triangulation of the geographic body of Karnataka with the mother's body and men's bodies in the multifaceted avatars and roles of the popular centric, public domain, 'entertained' characters. Popular posters and visuals are a study in contrast where women are hypervisible as incarnations ranging from princess to deity, with men being accorded prominence in patriotic pictures, thereby visually endorsing and acknowledging the stark reality about nationalism being accorded a masculinist perception, imagination and visualization. This perception being practised has intentionally or unintentionally intruded into the cultural public psyches and impressions, ruling out the chances of any female being considered the beloved daughter of the mother goddess.

As discussed in an earlier chapter, to paraphrase John Berger, women appear, but men act. With the exception of the monolithic figure of the Mother Goddess of Kannada, there is no other sign of the feminine. The presence of the great patriotic women leaders of Karnataka is hardly visible. Women, irrespective of their contributions whether to the national freedom movement or the Kannada state unification movement, have always been underestimated and gone unregistered in the popular poster arts in the public domain, and as it is the men who are always portrayed as those who place life and limb at the service of the map and mother, the visibility of women has always gone unrepresented. The men, who have become cultural icons, have always landed the crowning glory of martyrdom. Whether it is the cause for the freedom of Mother India or Mother Kannada, it is the beloved sons who have the honour of being at the service of the nation, to which they have presumably devoted themselves selflessly.

In discussion on masculinity pointing out few feminist category of analysis. As Michael Kimmel observes in nothing the coming to age of masculinity studies in the west as a scholarly field: "To engage masculinities through the prism of feminist theory or to write feminist theory using masculinities as an analytic dimension requires two temperamental postures. One must engage masculinity critically as ideology, as institutionally embedded within a field of power, as a set of practices by a group of men. And yet given the contradictory location experienced by most men, men not privileged by class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, physical abilities, one must also consider a certain forgiveness for actual embodied men as they attempt to construct lives of some coherence and integrity in a world of clashing and contradictory filaments of power and privilege."

Sumathi Ramaswamy responds to Kimmel's call for "forgiveness for actual embodied men" by underscoring that nationalist ideology — "masculinist though it is in conception and practice — burdens them with hardship and anxieties, along with bestowing privilege, power, and visibility. Men's martyrdom for map and mother, subsequently offered to other male citizens as worthy of emulation, is exemplary of this net of risk and death in which some get entangled." Images of male martyrdom, as indeed visual displays of male patriotism more generally, thus complicate the influential distinction that Laura Mulvey originally established between men as bearers of "the look" and women as its object, and thus compel us to attend to the male body as recipient of male acts of seeing and learning, of what we might call the "patriotic gaze" objectifying the female body and its usage by men.

Again, discussing feminist Eve Sedgwick's Between Men: English Literature And Male Homo-Social Desire, Sumathi says: "Patriarchal heterosexuality can best be discussed in terms of one or another form of the traffic in women: it is the use of women as exchangeable, perhaps symbolic, property for the primary purpose of cementing the bonds of men with men." In building on Sedgwick's project the art historian Abigail Solomon-Godeau observes in her marvellous work on images of masculinity in French neo-classicism that "in art and in life, homo-sociality does not necessarily depend on the outright elimination of feminity, but rather, on the more powerful bonds that unite men to one another and which collectively operate to secure the subordinate position of women". In other words the woman, when she appears, serves as "the conduit through which collusions and collisions between... men are conducted, thereby enabling bonds of homo-sociality to evolve between men".

Though the visuals of Kannada activism have not been consciously negating the participation of feminine iconography, the question of male dominance is unanswered. The reason could probably be the lack of female leadership and the male dominant popular structure similar to that of the national freedom movement. But the reason why no heroines are as dominant as male icons is another question which might need an enquiry in a different direction.

And the fact that today Kannada mainstream commercial films cast mostly non-Kannadiga heroines from other states despite the availability of numerous Kannada actresses, is another strand of the argument.

Where are the images of Akka Mahadevi, the renowned inspirational woman known for her literary contribution to Kannada? Where is the fearless freedom fighter Kitturu Rani Chennamma, the queen who fought the British even before 1857, and whose role in the freedom fight is as important as that of Rani Lakshmi Bai? Where is the name and where are the images Kannada activist and freedom fighter Bellary Siddamma who was beaten up by the police until she was bloodied all over, while speaking at the Aranya Satyagraha Movement led by S. Nijalingappa, but who still continued her speech, and was later imprisoned for 18 months? Where are all those mother characters of Kannada and Hindi films wherein mother roles are so prominently depicted? Where are the real mothers of the state and nation?

Kitturu Rani Chennamma (1778–1829) was the queen of the princely state of Kittur in Karnataka. In 1824, 33 years before the 1857 war of independence, she led an armed rebellion against the British in response to the Doctrine of Lapse. The resistance ended in her martyrdom and she is remembered today as one of the earliest Indian rulers to have fought for independence. Along with Abbakka Rani, Keladi Chennamma and Onake Obavva she is much venerated in Karnataka as an icon of bravery and women's pride.

Akka Mahadevi was a prominent figure of the Veerashaiva Bhakti movement of the 12th century Karnataka known for her Vachanas in Kannada, a form of didactic poetry, considered her greatest contribution to Kannada Bhakti literature. She is perceived as a great inspirational woman for Kannada literature and the history of Karnataka. She is said to have accepted the god Shiva ('Chenna Mallikarjuna') as her husband, traditionally understood as the 'madhura bhava' or 'madhurya' form of devotion (similar to how centuries later Meera, a 16th century saint, considered herself married to Krishna).

CASTES AND THEIR ICONS:

The population of Karnataka comprises various religions. Among the Hindu themselves, there are many prominent castes, which have jostled for hierarchical power over the state since ages. The most important and majority castes are today wield influence over ballot boxes during elections and their leaders monopolize the respective spaces of political, cultural and social, and even religious systems.

Chief Ministers frequenting religious centres and their management headquarters is no longer a rarity, whether it be for a prayer gathering of a minority community or a religious ritual of a majority community. Religion and the caste system help support the ministry.

In Karnataka, the Vokkaligas (pronounced 'Okkaliga') are a strong majority caste. They claim to be the earliest inhabitants of the area which is now called Karnataka, and their chieftain Kempegowda is a legendary figure. People of the Vokkaliga community use various honorifics, the most popular of which is Gauda anglicized as Gowda. Titles such as Reddy, Hegde and Shetty are also popular, generally used according to the subgroup, language or dialect spoken and the geographical area they belong to. The words Vokkaliga and Gowda are almost synonymous in usage, and in colloquial language, Gowda has come to mean a Vokkaliga. However the term itself is also used by people of various other castes as an honorary title. Generally Vokkaliga is a unified term for various agricultural, and previously endogamous social groups with a martial past, found mainly in the Old Mysore Region of southern Karnataka. The Vokkaligas are primarily agriculturists. They form a politically and numerically dominant caste group and were the most populous group until the States Reorganisation Act of 1956 which enlarged the erstwhile State of Mysore by inclusion of the predominantly Canarese districts of the State of Bombay, State of Hyderabad and Coorg, following which the Lingayats became the most populous social group. Together, the two communities dominate Karnataka state politics. The Vokkaliga caste representation is easy to be found with their society, or residential PAGE **311** OF 413

area or their presence with the sculpture of Kempegowda or his name or visuals in the popular appeal. This demarks the territory of the caste which questions and threatens the dominant castes, thus leading to the rise of representations in street culture and in the public domain, with territorial visual symbols.

The next important caste is the Lingayats whose leader and icon is Basaveshwara also called Basavanna. Mahatma Gandhi spoke about caste with reference to Basavanna at the Belgaum session of the Indian National Congress in 1924: "It has not been possible for me to practise the percepts of Basaveswara which he taught 800 years ago and which he also practised... Eradication of untouchability and dignity of labour were among his core precepts. One does not find even shades of casteism in him. Had he lived during our times, he would have been a saint worthy of worship." But the irony is that even hundreds of years after Basavanna's message on abolishing the caste system, (castes such as lingayaths projects Basavanna as their idol and cultural leader.) the iconography of Basavanna is more prominent in visual popular culture than his teachings. This bears close similarity to the usage and representation of Gandhiji in all visual domains but not applying any of his ideals or principles in real life. Here I wish to argue upon the principle of symbol or design. The form following the function is no more applicable in these cultural visual politics, in fact is what is to be observed is that form follows the *projector's* function.

The next important caste of influence is the Brahmin caste. A study of history shows that Brahmins have always been a critical community in times of crises. Though the Brahmin community itself encountered several internal crises, the community has always been seen as occupying the highest administrative positions, partly because Brahmins were considered as the highest in the caste hierarchy. This dominance created a sense of insecurity among other castes.

Incidentally, Brahmin identity is often linked with BJP governance and RSS ideology, (though there are other sub castes who rejects the same). Brahmin activism has been dominant in some areas of Bangalore since the declaration of the early Mysore State PAGE 312 OF 413

itself, with some areas such as Malleshwaram, Rajajinagar and Basavanagudi being known as Brahmin territory. These pockets are now the hubs of BJP activism. Interestingly, the representation of Vishnuvardhan is now seen more prominently in these areas, marking a new phase of iconography. Huge cutouts of Vishnuvardhan in heroic appearances are displayed over temple compounds, and posters and stickers pasted in all public spaces, exhibiting and asserting the popular icon representing the Brahmin — not just the Brahmin but the Mysorean Brahmin.

The other major sections are the minority and backward class castes that have many icons, as linking with icons is intellectually easy and appealing for them. While Gandhiji is a prominent icon, it is interesting to note that the Karnataka backward and working class sector prefers Dr B.R. Ambedkar over the Mahatma, and it is pictures of Ambedkar which adorn their work places. For instance, a painting of Ambedkar is pasted in every cobbler's kiosk, a painting which, interestingly, is more popular than his original photograph itself. The visual is generally bright yellow with a green background, showing the icon wearing jet black trousers, and holding a bright red book as the symbol of the Constitution. These visuals are painted in the Sivakasi style, but have a plastic appearance. Bright contrasting colours and a bright flashy blue are the favourite poster colours of these visuals. The second most popular icon among the backward classes is the Buddha, especially the sitting Buddha with half-closed eyes, raising a hand in blessing. The Buddha is known as the universal peace symbol, but here he is represents the only religion which can accommodate anyone, that which even Gandhiji preferred during his later years. But interestingly, these icons have been followed by another potential symbol, this time a political one of contemporary times: Bahujan Samaj Party founder Kanshi Ram and his acolyte, the controversial Mayawati, the 'behenji' or at times as 'ma' of the party which is seen as the only one which protects Dalit communities. Justifying her government spending Rs 685 crore on the controversial Dalit Memmorial Park, Mayawati said "In Delhi, the central government has constructed various memorials on the western bank of the Yamuna to honour people like Nehru and Gandhi, but not a single one has been built for Dalit icons like PAGE **313** OF 413

Bhim Rao Ambedkar and founder of BSP Kanshi Ram." The rising identity of Dalits, and their unification sought to be portrayed in a visual sculptural history with such a massive project is probably a beginning. Under the nose of the Congress-led government at the Centre, this was probably sought to be projected as a parallel government-in-making, with the territorial establishment of the Dalit Memorial Park, also known as the Rashtriya Dalit Prerna Sthal, as a landmark and as an alternative for the Parliament building. The 33-acre park in Noida houses memorials of Ambedkar and Kanshi Ram besides statues of Mayawati herself and of 52 elephants — the elephant being the BSP symbol — each costing Rs 70 lakh. Justifying the Rashtriya Dalit Prerna Sthal and Green Garden Project, Mayawati had said, "We always felt the need to have a memorial dedicated to the icons of the Dalit community and this is one such for the benefit of Dalits living around the national capital region, including western Uttar Pradesh. The sentiments of people from the Dalit community were badly hurt due to the central government's attitude of ignoring the work of Ambedkar and Kanshi Ram." This is a probability of a potential future iconography in the making. The other interesting observation here is that the title "ammma or 'behenji' meaning mother is not just for the BSP, but for congress, referring to Sonia Gandhi (in south Indian political language) and referring to Jailalitha of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). This ironically is a term used as a safe refuge in visual perception, as the term amma, or Behenji being so strong is arguable a non arguable term of vast emotional y responsible and higly respected term.

The other prominent sections in Karnataka are the minority Christian and Muslim communities. They too have begun to seek more visibility in the public domain and claim territory in the public space, as is evidenced by the mushrooming of shrines such as mosques and chapels in every nook and corner of their residential areas. The most sensitive area of Bengaluru, KR Market, also known as City Market is a communally perfect example of this propensity to claim territory with mosques being situated close to a huge old temple. Similar scenes are also available in Shivajinagar area, with mosques, temples and churches all situated within a radius of 50 metres. The PAGE 314 OF 413

challenge is to understand the proclamation of intentions. Yet, what seems to be a time bomb which can go off at the slightest sign of friction can also be an example of communal harmony, very unlike the tense regions of Mumbai. The Muslim community is often represented by a mosque or a visual of the crescent moon or of the Holy Kaaba at Mecca. But a recent icon that is emerging is the image of Tipu Sultan! The fan clubs of Tipu at Srirangapatna and a few other areas are highlighting Tipu as their cultural hero. Though Tipu has not become a full-fledged icon or noted symbol so far, there is potential for this in the future.

The sword of Tipu Sultan was taken away after the British assault on Srirangapatnam on May 4, 1799, which saw the end of the 'Tiger of Mysore'. The legendary sword was back in the news quite recently when it turned out that liquor baron Vijay Mallya was its mysterious buyer at an auction in 2003, having paid Rs 1.3 crore from his personal funds for it. Mallya said he bought the majestic sword at the auction from the descendants of Major General Baird, who was presented the sword by the then British army commander Lt General Harris more than 200 years ago.

However the timing of Mallya's disclosure, six months after he apparently bought it, raised eyebrows, coming as it did, a few days before elections in Karnataka. "This is not political. It is personal. This is not an election meeting. I brought it from London 15 days back," said Mallya.

Describing the sword as a "unique piece of history", he said he had bought it to restore the "rightful legacy" to Karnataka as he "is a proud Kannadiga". The proclaimation over the sword of Tipu Sultan and its connection to the pride and glory of Kannada is another material proclamation of Kannada hegemony. The visual appearance of Tipu Sultan as the icon of Muslims is another debatable issue, though historians and supporters claim that that Tipu Sultan has not been given due respect. For instance, no credit is given to him for the formation of the Lal Bagh garden. Tipu was also responsible for breaking the zamindari system to benefit farmers. The visual representation of Christians, mainly converted Christians is the usage of Mother Teresa as their cultural symbol. Though this is not as highly visible as other symbols, it is, nevertheless to be viewed as another potential iconography, in the context of the mother goddess representation. These practices, like the Kalki cult, may or may not last long. Irrespective of the peripherals, the core epicentre is still the Mother goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, who still holds the pivotal place in the central composition, probably thus uniting the rest of the icons, or connecting them to the higher cause of the Kannada identity!



Figure 112 Tipu Sultan image in mobile display 2012, in contrast with a visual look alike of Maharana Pratap, C, 1944 (Courtesy : Christopher Pinney, *Photos of the Gods*)



Figure 111 Another visual representation of religious iconography in 'moving' pictures.2012

POLITICAL PROPAGANDA AND KANNADA MOTHER GODDESS AS THE BRAND AMBASSADOR

Political leaders with Icons and Mother Goddesses.

During the national freedom movement Jawaharlal Nehru was overwhelmingly portrayed as the hero and, interestingly, was visually presented with Subhas Chandra Bose, whose ideology he was against. Along with Bose, Nehru was also presented in an array of scenarios with Bhagat Singh, Tilak and several other non-Gandhian ideologists, who sacrificed their lives for freedom.

These pictorial representations raise an interesting question: why do these visuals seem to be more diplomatically theatric and generous? Is it an image-building exercise for the leader concerned, to gain the support of all political thinkers? For instance, Tilak, Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev, and Bose, all martyrs, are seen blessing Nehru from the sky. Is this intended to affirm the leadership of Nehru, glossing over the fact that these luminaries belonged to ideologies totally opposite to the Gandhian and Nehruvian hegemony?

Similarly, in the context of the local visual culture of Kannada, the intervention of iconographies penetrates through all levels and proportions. The space in which these visuals interact in the public domain has a varied purpose and interest. The representation of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari's endorsements in the public arena, the pictorial space that brews up the most influential activism, the prime spaces and locations where the possibilities of visual territorial symbols and their establishment are critically proclaimed are evidence of this. The political propaganda here plays a vital visual politics, nothing less than a gamble of visual psychology, with icons of the mother goddess and her proud sons placed abruptly in the dead centre of the frame or in the corners, with highlighted portraits of politicians in a praying gesture, printed in

flex and prominently displayed. Lakhs of such pictures are printed in flex and displayed across the horizon at all prime locations, leaving viewers with no option but to notice them, and thus participate in the image making. The most interesting factor lies in the composition of these political visual flex. A local party president is shown as being endorsed by the icons, and the photographs of at least 40 to 50 of the bottom rung functionaries such as the area president and his minions are placed all across the flex. The second largest portrait is of the sponsor and party representative, while the largest portrait is of the party leader of the constituency, and of course of the god or goddess who is featured in the front, and in whose name the whole political drama runs. These banners and displays are not the part of any state-level election propaganda, but mushroom during all major festivals, Kannada Rajyotsava day or on Independence Day. They are used in all permutations and combinations, all in the name of God. With God as the USP (unique selling proposition), and ESP (emotional selling proposition) at play, selling and branding in India need no star endorsement when we get to freely visualize and use as many as a million gods and goddesses in flex of any size and shape placed anywhere, unlicensed, with no need for intellectual approval or application of logical thinking.

Shyamsunder Tekwani in his essay Visual Culture in Indian Politics: The Gaudy Billboard As Political Communication says: "In a multi-party democracy such as India where over a thousand political parties, existing at the state level and at the national level, contest every election, priming is a vital tool in political campaigns. Another critical factor in this context is the largescale illiteracy that prevails among a majority of Indian voters for whom emotional connections are more likely to carry weight than policy information. In this political climate, posters of politicians as gods and goddesses on billboards make the perfect political pitch, and in the Indian context may be the most perfect medium of mass communication... M.G. Ramachandran (MGR), one of India's best known movie stars-turned-politicians, who was previously Chief Minister of the southern state of Tamil Nadu, played a carefully cultivated Robin Hood-like protector of the poor in dozens of films and built his entire political brand around his PAGE 318 OF 413 image as a protector of the poor and the weak, and saviour of damsels in distress. The late N.T. Rama Rao (NTR), former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, another south Indian state, was closely associated, in the minds of the electorate in his state, with the role of Krishna, a Hindu God, whom NTR played often and to full houses through his film career." These visual portrayals of politicians as the Bhaktha (devotees) of a god or goddess, or as the supporter of that deity, or even as the protector of the deity and often seen as its equal in posters are not rare. Such iconography and comparisons of political personalities to gods, is one the easiest and most effective ways to produce the most strange psychological impact that Indian audiences are susceptible to. It is not just the concept of "dharsha" (divine visual presence), and its notion that is responsible for such an image making culture in India. Fan culture and god culture have also added to this cult. The enunciation of a character as a devotee or even as a deity is based on an acceptance born out of absolute blind innocence that occurs often in the public domain, especially in the illiterate audience, which hardly questions the reasoning or the source of these cut-outs. The gap that exists between the illiterate majority and the educated minority probably serves the system well. Simple belief systems among the rural public, such as the spontaneous gesture of praying at the sight of any visuals of a god and goddess, by the rural public is one such gesture of innocence which does not understand that the visuals they are seeing are not of gods or patriots but mere politicians. In fact, while not many today may know what Bhagat Singh or Bose looked like, most people definitely know what the politicians of today look like, thanks to their images being exhibited in lakhs in the public domain.

Shyamsunder Tekwani further says: "The current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha Jayaram, M.G. Ramachandran's (better to not use the initials probably) costar, on and off screen, played on her relationship with MGR as well her own popularity as an actress to build her political career. At any given time in Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu, hundreds of life-size cutouts of Jayalalitha, in her various cinematic and political avatars, real and symbolic, dwarf the city. Jayalalitha's political career has been marked by the growth of a personality cult which is manifested PAGE 319 OF 413 through her representation in a variety of incarnations on posters and cutouts ranging from political powerhouse to goddesses. During the 1994 Christmas season, huge cutouts of Jayalalitha as the Virgin Mary were erected all over the city. In 1998, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of her political party, the AIADMK, an impressive, luridly imaginative cutout of Jayalalitha as Goddess Kali was paraded along city streets perched on a float. Portrayed as the eight-armed, blue-skinned goddess Kali, Jayalalitha stood on the prostrate form of her arch political rival, Karunanidhi, pinning him down with a trident and wearing a garland of skulls (all of which depicted Karunanidhi's head and wore his trademark dark sunglassses)."

Visual wars of visualization, such as in the case of Jayalalitha and Mayawati, in contrast to that between Sonia Gandhi and Mamata Banerjee or a Sushma Swaraj versus Ambika Soni, are growing more intense and being narrated with the tools of "motherly images". The argument that rises here is, are the images perceived as images, or beyond the real? And if beyond the real, what process of standardization can impose a control or quality check in these processes? And with the visual communication being overwhelmingly accessible, usable and highly promotable, it is natural for it to be overused and to be termed as "kitch" that has received a strange popular cultural success and absolute acceptance with an unknown language and grammar of visual appeal.



Figure 114 Flex print: temple inauguration invitation, with Rajkumar as the endorser and host (2012).



Figure 115 A poster on public announcement by private groups, with Mother goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari as the central figure (2012).



Figure 116 A poster of a Kannada activist group, with Mother Bhuvaneshwari as the central figure, pasted on the base of a flag post. This post is situated in front of the Vidhana Soudha. (2012)



Figure 117 Boards at an autostand in Basavanagudi. The board on the left highlights a huge portrait of Vishnuvardhan. The top panel of the board on the right, features Rajkumar in the left corner and Shankar Nag in the right corner, flanking the legend 'Druvathare Dr Rajkumar Auto Drivers' Union' (Dhruva being the auspicious North Star). The panel below features several icons, starting with Rajkumar on the left, and then Wodeyar, Sir M. Visvesvaraya, Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, Kempegowda, and finally Kuvempu. The picture in the bottom right corner or the 'signature corner' is of the unknown local leader who is responsible for this "social contribution". (2012)



Figure 118 This visual from Basavanagudi area, shows a portrait of Vishnuvardhan in flex, displayed outside a temple, in a size and space usually reserved for images of gods during festivals and processions. The presence of such images in the holy ambience of a temple, that too, decorated with garlands, highlights the demand for new icons. (2012)



Figure 119 A panaromic view of a street completely covered with flex on the eve of a temple inauguration, with portraits of local politicians and religious leaders. (2012)



Figure 120 Leader of the Opposition L.K. Advani showering petals on a portrait of Kannada Mother Goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari in Mysore during his Bharat *Rath Yatra* in 2011.



Figure 121 Kannada politians offering pooja to the Kannada Mother Goddess during Rajyotsava day celebrations. The flag is also in prominence here.



Figure 122 Innumerable heads immortalised in vinyl: A local party exhibits its flex banner prominently featuring its icon Dr B. R. Ambedkar. Other icons featured in the top row include the Buddha, Basaveshwara, rationalist E.V. Ramasamy Naicker (also known as Periyar), Tipu Sultan and Narayanaguru. The banner features pictures of 82 local leaders, the size of their pictures obviously an



indication of their relative importance. (2011)

Figure 123 Vishnuvardhan in front of a village house of Mugur in the outskirts of Mysore.2011



Figure 124 Bharat Matha on flex surrounded by her 'sponsors', the local politicians, at Yelahanka Old Town Circle. (2012)



Figure 125 A Kannada flag pole, with flex featuring Vishnuvardhan and Sir M. Visvesvaraya at the Koramangala Circle near Forum Mall. (2012)



Figure 126 Stickers of Shankar Nag and gods on the windshield of an auto. (2012)



Figure 127 A sticker of Ambarish with the legend 'Mandyada Gandu' on the windshield of a good carrier. (2012)



Figure 128 Anna Hazare portrayed with national leaders and local politicians on a hoarding in Koramangala. (2012)



Figure 129 Shankar Nag stickers on the cabs and auto rickshaws 2012



Figure 130 Local posters in the city with kempegowda, Mother Bhuvaneshwari and local leaders. (2012)



Figure 131 A press report covering the issue of the Karnataka Rakshana Vedike chief's picture featuring on the Kannada flag. (*Bangalore Mirror*, Jan 16, 2009.

http://www.bangaloremirror.com/article/10/20090116200901160105581001fc1b01f/KRV-chief-takes-Goddess%E2%80%99s-place-on-Kannada-flag.html



Figure 132 Rajkumar immortalised in vinyl in the public domain. (2012)



Figure 133 Stickers of cultural icons on autos. (2012) the Auto-culture



the Auto-culture



Figure 134 Mother on Wall: Pictures of the Kannada Mother Goddess and Kitturu Rani Chennamma painted by the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike on walls of a government building near Binny Mills, Magadi Road, Bangalore. (2011)

LOCAL VERSUS GLOBAL, ELITE VERSUS POPULAR

While Bangalore aims to be a cosmopolitan city and aspires to be called the Silicon Valley of India, Bengaluru struggles to retain its identity as the Kannada state capital.

On the one hand, there is the global economic growth of Bengaluru in competition with the neighbouring Hyderabad and Chennai to be the leading IT-BT capital, trying to overcome the challenges of infrastructure, connectivity, human resource and adaptability to be crowned as an attractive global destination and an investors' paradise. On the other hand, its domestic local struggle for its identity, language and control presents a parallel puzzle.

Local Kannada activist and Kannadigas protesting against the highly paid Englishspeaking IT-BT employees and demanding job reservations as a right for Kannadigas, and the reaction to this of a Kannadiga IT czar asserting that knowledge of English is a must, was one of the incidents that brought into focus several questions on the status of identity and representation. The acquisition of large tracts of agricultural land by private contractors for building projects is one of biggest scams on which the dust has not settled since the influence of globalization in Bangalore over the past 12 years or so. The fact that land for the international quality roadways and IT-BT tech parks was acquired at the cost of the lives of several local farmers has become a routine matter for cosmopolitan Bangalore. Environmentalists fighting a losing battle against the encroachment of lakes and the acquisition of the forest belt, farmers fleeing to neighbouring villages for a livelihood, the middle-class aspiring for the most privileged jobs of the twenty-first century, and dreaming of working in air-conditioned cubicles in fancy buildings with glass facades, landscaped gardens and gym lounges to serve the other world, has become Bangalore's reality today.

The change of name of the city from Bangalore to Bengaluru is in itself a piece of evidence to illustrate the local versus global issues, the old name being modified to the way it is pronounced locally, in order to perceive the city nostalgically as the village it once was, rather than the British Bangalore it had become over the years. This is an attempt to strengthen the local identity in an aspiration to counter the impact of globalization and urbanization and aggressively demand rights and privileges for locals. The flying of Kannada flags on IT-BT buildings, five star hotels, shopping complexes, malls, multiplexes, branded showrooms, pubs, etc is a placatory signal to indicate their support for the local identity and its stakeholders, and a clever way of averting any attack on or reaction against them for their westernised concepts.

There are three layers to the local versus global context. This context is visibly evident firstly in the language, secondly in symbols, and thirdly in expressions and demonstrations.

The first context is of language and communication. Many buildings and showrooms bearing signboards or their names in English are the first targets of violence during troubled times, and they are thus compelled to carry their names in Kannada too. 'Writing in Kannada' also is an ironic farce at times: English words coloured red and yellow are considered sufficient sometimes, as they are seen as supporting and respecting Kannada! Sometimes the name is written in small Kannada text in a corner of the name board or panel just to assure Kannada activists that the local language is respected as much as English. Here English is viewed as 'global' and Kannada as 'local', thus giving rise to the conflict of local versus global.

The second context is of symbols. The Kannada flag and pictures of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari are used essentially as an armour of defence. The installation of flags in front of prime malls and multiplexes is a very common sight in Bengaluru. In the foreground is the flag on an elevated platform decorated with tiles bearing the pictures of the Kannada Goddess or any other goddess, who represents Thayee Bhuvaneshwari; in the background is the outlet of global chains such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut and Nike. This visual cold war of symbols that visually co-exist while simultaneously being in conflict and contradiction is the irony of the time and space that very few cosmopolitan cities of the world share with Bangalore.

The third context is of expressions and demonstrations of the local public. Emotions are heightened during Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations, especially in the areas where there are malls, multiplexes and coffee shops, and of course, where IT-BT offices are located. All these, which are viewed as "global" symbols are soft targets. Rajyotsava processions, when they pass these symbols, slow down, and there is a heightened, spirited display of music, dance and rituals, accompanied more often than not, by strident demands for donations for the celebrations.

This constant jousting is a result of two opposite worlds that coexist in the same world of Bengaluru.

INTERNET AND KANNADA VISUAL CULTURE

OMG LOL: **P** (Oh My God. Laugh Out Loud. Smiley: SMS and social networking language)

Kannada activism on the Internet:

Social networking sites, blogs and websites are a few of the techie zones where Kannada and the prominent identity of the colours of the flag have been lavished to the maximum extent to play a part in the global trends and communication. Interestingly, factors such as the identity of the owner of the site/group or blog are not verified, and neither do those joining in need to undergo any verification process. Excessive emphasis on the network, marketing the concern for saving the language, culture and identity, seems to be more of a publicity gamble. Visuals used range from pictures of film stars to videos of regional festivals. Music is also a prominent engagement. Visuals, with words and posts typed in Kannada and messages in English, is another interesting aspect of these platforms of exhibition. However, there are many blogs of serious linguists, activists and social scientists which are updated on a weekly basis, and which draw an overwhelmingly high response. With websites becoming a part and parcel of reachability and marketing exercises, every NGO and Kannada activist group, including film stars' fans associations are on a constant hunt for members on Facebook and Twitter, with a fan registered in the account with a single click of the "like" button. With bilingualism being the trend now, languages are used in all permutations to attract audiences. For example, "Mast maja madi" (a mix of Hindi and Kannada) is the baseline of a radio station, tuned into by auto and taxi drivers, college youth and similar communities. Terminologies becoming oxymorons is no more a rare occurence. Most of the songs and titles of Kannada films are bilingual.

"Talks and discussion, and no productive action," rue senior linguists often. However, serious topics are also discussed and debated with serious attention in cyberspace. The hi-tech cyberspace is thus territorialised by myriad communities and linguistic activists, as the Kannada flag and the profiles of the beloved sons of the Kannada mother are flashed all across the Web space. "*Ganchali bidi, Kannada mathadi*" meaning, 'quit arrogant attitude, speak Kannada' is one of the groups on Facebook for Kannadigas, with more than 2,644 members. Presented below are samples of the visual appeal of these social networking Kannada groups:



Figure 135 Kannada in social networking websites

The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation

ART, DESIGN AND FILM: THE MEDIA THAT CONSTRUCTED THE MOTHER GODDESS

As discussed earlier, the context of art began with poetry and literature. There are five phases in the visual representations of the Kannada Mother Goddess through art: 1) the sculpture, 2) the painted form 3) the line drawing illustration, 4) the representation of the goddess in films, and 5) posters with multifaceted popular images of the goddess.

The first involves the goddess as the temple deity, in the style and form prescribed by the Shilpakala Shastra. The deity of the Virupaksha temple of Hampi, the deity of Bhuvanagiri hill, the goddess of the Mysore Chamundeshwari temple are all in this category.

For the second phase, ie, the painted form, reference is drawn from the Mysore style painting from Sritatvanidhi, referring back to the Mysore Bhuvaneshwari in a painted medium. Another painting that plays a significant role is the oil painting done by C. N. Patel from Gadag in north Karnataka.

The third phase of representation comprised the 16 illustrated line drawings of Bhuvaneshwari in Andanappa Dodametti's *Kannada Mahimna Stotra*. These illustrations again are inspired and influenced by the Shilpa Shastra style of Hampi, Badami, Aihole and Pattadakal temple sculptures.

The fourth phase was the representation of the Kannada Mother Goddess in films, such as the deity worshipped in the opening scene of the film *Veerasankalpa* (1964). The represented forms and styles in films are varied, and show the influence of various styles.

The fifth phase of representation is of the goddess in posters printed and distributed by Raja Verma Arts. These posters that spread across the public domain in the bustling streets of Bangalore gave rise to the renaissance of the Mother in the 1990s.

The style of the poster designs that circulated in the public sphere were influenced and inspired by three major sources. First, the prominent calendar style art works of Raja Ravi Varma and the calendar artists of Sivakasi. Secondly from the earlier source of the Bengal school of art and thirdly from the JJ School of art. Though *company painting*, and traditional Mysore and Tanjore painting styles were also available in parallel as an inspiration, their influence was not very evident in these mother goddess avatars.

As a design concern these posters were probably the first poster series that were consistently dedicated in public service to serve the nation. Initially, the poster as a simple medium of expression didn't have much typography or text, but just a simple title and patriotic punch lines. But later, the posters were more visually driven, with the central composed goddess as the ruling deity with her beloved sons later entering the picture. If the principles of an effective design are to *Keep it Simple, Stupid* and *Form Must Follow Function,* then these posters meet the requirements. Bright flashing poster reds with contrasting lemon yellow were the colour palettes used. Their reachability to the target audience and their influence among the public underline the commercial success of these poster designs.

Were the images in the public domain of the Mother Goddess 'kitsch'?

Let us consider the view of Clement Greenberg's, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch", first published in the journal *Partisan Review*. In this Marxist-influenced essay, Greenberg claimed that true avant-garde art is a product of the Enlightenment's revolution of critical thinking, and as such resists and recoils from the degradation of culture in both mainstream capitalist and communist society, while acknowledging the paradox that, at the same time, the artist, dependent on the market or the state, remains inexorably attached "by an umbilical cord of gold". Kitsch, on the other hand, was the product of industrialization and the urbanization of the working class, a filler made for the consumption of the working class: a populace hungry for culture, but without the resources and education to enjoy cutting edge avant-garde culture. Greenberg writes,

"Kitsch, using for raw material the debased and academicized simulacra of genuine culture, welcomes and cultivates this insensibility. It is the source of its profits. Kitsch is mechanical and operates by formulas. Kitsch is vicarious experience and faked sensations. Kitsch changes according to style, but remains always the same. Kitsch is the epitome of all that is spurious in the life of our times. Kitsch pretends to demand nothing of its customers except their money — not even their time."

I wish to thus hereby argue that the works, such as the Mother Goddess and her visuals cannot be termed as kitsch, but belong to a different category. Here, the visuals of the Mother Goddess were not commercial hits, nor were the prints widely sold. They were only transferred, like the images of any other goddess in a common man's home. The images did not operate by any formulas; in fact there was no intellectual thinking in the case of the posters at least, and what was at play was purely a patriotic, emotional, intuitive activism. The images may or may not have a specific style, but their essence was more or less the same. This I wish to perceive as a cultural development, a social expression with a genuine cause, not a commercial interest but more of a social need, expressed in a medium more popularly accepted in the public sphere, thus to be termed as 'innocent expression' of popular culture, like the Ganesh Chaturti celebrations, folk cults, etc. One of the primary reasons for the innocence, I wish to argue, is based on the unplanned, varied contribution from all sectors of the public. For instance, the poster contributions from Raja Verma Arts are an activist PAGE 338 OF 413

initiative; picturing of the goddess in Kannada films were not similar to other forms film goddess, the goddess of *M ahimna Stotra* and the Bhuvaneshwari painting of Andanappa Doddameti were neither of them a product of any state conference. Thus the expression of goddess cannot be termed as a craft or commercial production but an intuitive activist reaction to a social need. The manner in which the form is delivered is subject to the influence of contemporary styles of visualization. As discussed earlier, several influences — of the Bengal school, the JJ School, a blend of Raja Ravi Varma and calendar art style of Sivakasi and in rare cases, the Mysore style — are all seen in the posters of the Mother Goddess.

Ravi Varma, in 1894 installed a lithographic press near Bombay and began producing and distributing prints of his popular painting in all major cities. Ravi Varma's work still seems to be the primary source of inspiration for many artists such as B.K.S. Varma. In an interview he said: "Raja Ravi Varma is still the inspiration and aspiring legend for me," referring to his version of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari.

S. R. Tekwani, in his work *Visual Campaigning Culture In Indian Politics* says: "Raja Ravi Varma, regarded widely as the pioneer of lithographic prints in India, was another great influence in the development of popular Indian visual art forms. Ravi Varma's paintings of gods and goddesses, known to have been influenced by the drawings of Hindu gods and goddesses by Maj. Edward Moore, spawned generations of poster painters and artists alike who reproduced his paintings of gods and goddesses, gradually adding other more recent, if less artistic, conventions from Indian popular culture, mainly cinema, into the form of visual representation one sees today on every street in India."

Representation of the Kannada landscape — evoking the landscape as the grand Karnataka — in films as a territorial possession and describing the nature and wealth of the state through magnificent landscapes in songs were other modes of claiming the land of Karnataka for Kannadigas or fostering Kannada pride and patriotism.



Figure 136 'Patriotic' Kannada boards in Sahakarnagar, Bengaluru. The board at left features the 'sons of Kannada', Rajkumar, Shankar Nag and Vishnuvardhan. At right is another board featuring Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, with Subhas Chandra Bose in the top right hand corner. (2010)



Figure 137 Images of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari on flower-bedecked floats being taken out in procession during Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations in Karnataka. (2011)



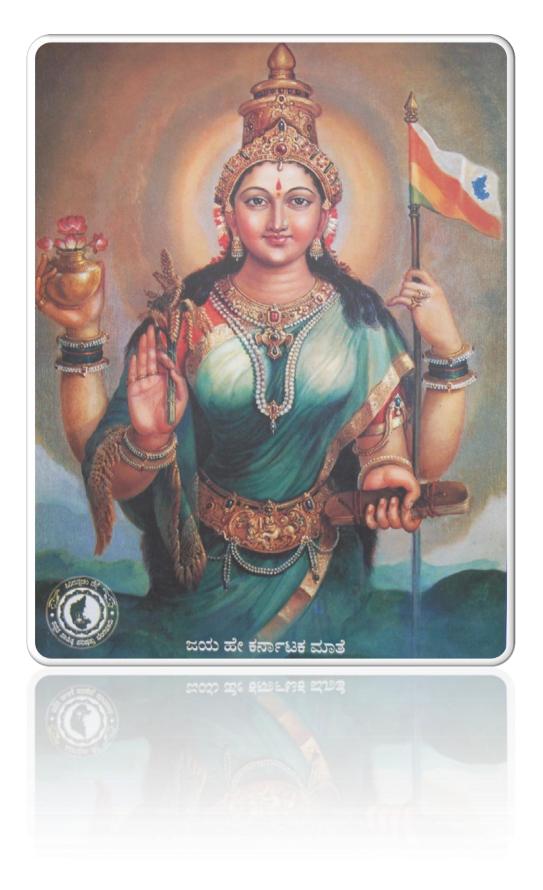
Figure 138 Leader of the Opposition L.K. Advani showering petals on a portrait of Kannada Mother Goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari in Mysore during his Bharat *Rath Yatra* in 2011.



Figure 139 An image of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari being taken out in a procession in a chariot in Basavangudi, a prominent area of Bengaluru. (2011)



Figure 140 Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, Shilpakala Academy, Govt. of Karnataka. (2011)



The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation

EPILOGUE

Though it is not possible to conclude a research investigation into such a sensitive, intellectual and critically valued subject, this conclusion would only mean a beginning of a new journey of my research in becoming a witness to the future of this subject. The discussion and argument on visual cultural identity here only attempt to analyse, understand and study the totality of its subjective nature and its peripherals, thus asserting the birth, life and the conscious existence of the local identity in the contextual time and space of global contemporary cosmopolitism. The historical struggle and the path of this symbolic making has not been an easy path to construct. It has, like any other struggle for an identity and freedom, made huge sacrifices, and its true activists have shed their blood and surrendered their wealth in the humble service of the Mother Goddess. In the herculean effort of ethnographers and anthropologist's ideation, conceptualization and practicallising such intellectually strategized idea, with unsurpassing emotionally connectable bonding, planned with a epistemologically linked historical evidence and hierarchically undeniable acceptance of a great kingdom, the iconography of the Kannada Mother Goddess is undoubtedly well established as the predominant deity of Kannada and the beloved daughter of Bharat Matha. This iconography is probably one of the most powerful visual tools of contemporary times, dwelling in those spaces of mind and land that no other visual symbols dared to enter. If Bharat Matha has potentially been the visual mother, the visual weapon in achieving freedom for India, by overthrowing the most powerful empire that history has witnessed, then it is the divinity and power of the local Kannada Mother Goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari who has brought identity and freedom to the sub-national statehood, and her glory and pride which have become a most efficient tool for the survival of the people, language and State in terms of identity and representation.

History teaches that suppression and rejection lead to the rise of a new idea as a reaction, that later revolutionalises the world. "Libertiy, equality and fraternity" "no Taxation without representation" " Aparthied" "Freedom & Independence" and many such revolutions has always been encountered with a medium of representation that had an Independent idenitity and fought for the freedom. May that be the leaders or their followers, the form of representation by concept, content and presentation were clear. From Mahatma Gandhi to Theodore Roosevelt, from Nelson Mandela to Martin Luther King, or Ernesto "Che" Guevara, or nations such as the post-world-war Japan to the globally competing Singapore, the struggle to be free has been the fundamental reason for every change, relating to the present situation of Indian states, inter-state & intrastate issues such as demand for Coorg to be independent from Karnataka, Assam and North east state issues, Belgaum crisis etc or the national territorial issues such as that of India-Pakistan or Tamil-Srilanka Issues, are on the quest for survival in the name of territorial freedom or claim of Identity. This quest for identity has been a larger struggle for the country, state and people, but the success and the acceptance of identity has been for those who have unified the nation with a potential idea that it should unify for a better cause in making an identity - a strong, clear and structural identity that can hold the future but with positive, progressive, non destructuble purpose.

Matha, or Thayee, the synonyms of the word Mother, often used as suffix with *Bharath* or *Kannada*, has its roots from the ancient literature context. The word matha comes from the Sankrit word *mathru*, which, in turn, is made up of two parts, "*ma*" and "*thru*". "*Ma*" meaning *beyond*, and "*Thru*" meaning *Thrigunas (thrigunas are: Satva, rajas and tamas,* the classification of *gunas,* with *guna* meaning string or a single thread or strand of a cord or twine. In more abstract uses, it may mean a sub-division, species, kind, quality, or an operational principle or tendency). Thus the word *matha* (*mathru*) means beyond any merits and demerits of classifications, or qualities

or caste or religions. This meaning is stated in Yaska Maharshi's text on the etymological study of Sankrit: *Niruktham*. While understanding the meaning itself does not answer questions on the function of the word or the concept and its visual, realizing the inner meaning that exists within the deeper layer of the terminologies, especially in Sanskrit, is very important to aid understanding and avoid misinterpretations. Another example of such usage is the term *Bharatha*, with *bha* meaning *atma gyan*, *atma prakash*, *atma anandam* etc, and *ratha* meaning *that which guides*, thus Bharatha meaning the land guided by spiritual wisdom. (and so is many such terms like Dharani, Bhakthi, Darshana and so on..)

Terms such as the Latin 'Matre dei' have the same meaning as Mathru Devi — Divine Mother. *Darshan,* from *dhruk and drishyam*, meaning the person who sees and the scene; *Drig drishyam* means the seer and the scene, are derived from Adi guru Shankaracharya's *Drig Drushya Viveka Prakaranam*. Looking into other religious terms in similar contexts,

Mary Immaculate means "Virgin Mary" the Sacred Mother of God: Jesus.

Similarly, in the term Adi Parashakti, 'adi' means from time immemorial, 'para' means beyond intellectual comprehension, 'Shakthi' means infinite magnetic energy that is the embodiment of consciousness.

Another highly misinterpreted visual icon is the Shiva linga or lingam. Shiva means auspicious (or that which entertains everybody or all). Lingam comes from lim + gam. 'Lim' means dissolve into unperceiveable by the sense organs. ('Indraya agocharam')

'Gam' means to expand. (Up to a limit expand and contract and dissolve into unmanifested energy.) The universe expands to a great extent and contracts and dissolves into unmanifested infinite energy which is consciousness. This is the symbolic representation. All living beings enjoy the marvel of creation upon the manifested expanded universe with the Lingam and enjoy being in the dissolved state in unmanifested energy, that is pure consciousness.

'Na' means unmanifested 'ni' means energy thus 'Ni' means unmanifested energy. That which is unmanifested energy means 'yoni'. Linga yoni. 'Yo' means that which is. These two vital terms of tantra, represent the whole phenomenon of the universe. Thus the Symbolic awareness in the form of Shiva Linga. This is explained in Vedanta as '*drig drushya*' and in modern science as matter and energy.

Matter and energy. Matter is a temporary visible form of energy, thus *oneness* concept known as advaitha — the non-dual form. All manifestation sprouts from consciousness, like dreams from the mind, says Advaitha philosophy. The extrinsic mobile entity expresses the inherent qualities and the intrinsic immobile entity of the same energy remains as the witnessing consciousness, unaffected by the scenes, therefore being free to enjoy the marvels of creation, the ultimate aim of life.

This concept is evidently explained with the inner meaning in all religious texts. For example, in Tantra: Shiva-Shakthi (linga-yoni), in Vedanta: *drig drushyam* and in Science: matter and energy. In the Quran: *nafsmuthumyinu*, with *nafs* meaning state (state of permanent peace, balanced state of consciousness), and *muthumyiu* meaning peace. In the Bible: joy of salvation, which means a state of being free from time, space, I and mine. In Hinduism: *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*: a state of mind free from time, space, I and mine. In Buddhism: Surangamasamadhi (Zen). The same concept is explained as 'Chan' in China and as 'Tao' in Taoism, similar to the 'Tao' of Shinto and Confucianism. In Jainism: 'Shvetambara and Digambara'. The being is characterized by the embodiment of bliss, knowledge and freedom.

The term 'religion' is known as 'religre' in Latin, meaning 'go back to the state of absolute freedom'. These concepts have been explained in scientific terms by many

scientists such as Max Planck (the father of quantum physics), who said, "energy is consciousness".

These derivations and meanings are presented here as my perception, not to contradict any theory or drift away from the central core of the subject research, but to illustrate how the complex thinking of humans interprets, misinterprets and complicates the concept from its original purpose and function. As J. Krishnamurthy said: "If you can look at something beyond comparison, contradiction, evaluation and judgement, then only you are seeing the truth." These practical philosophical perceptions are not applied here for any philosophical conclusion but to only rethink the process of thinking. The fact that these concepts are deep-rooted in the spiritual structures (here I wish to use the term 'spiritual' very cautiously) that have penetrated the formation of thought forms from the spoken traditional history to the embedded phenomena of the DNA in the generations of this nation as psychological impacts, are non-negatable. Thus the theory of the West cannot be applied directly in the Indian context, as the context, geography, psychology and history here are extremely different from the West.

The birth and origin of the mother goddess and her presence and purpose in the early 19th century was to unify the population divided on the basis of caste, region and religion. This purpose was fulfilled and the unification of Kannada and Karnataka was achieved along with a notion of pride and power to a large extent. But in the present contemporary context, the need for a goddess has become more of a political compulsion, a tool for individual development and regional politics.

The goddess who was incarnated for the formation of a state is now a resource and a tool for political image-making. The pride and prayer that filled the hearts of early Kannada activists is hardly there today. Bhagat Singh, Subhas Chandra Bose or even

Mahatma Gandhi are reduced to mere symbols today; in fact, today in the vernacular context, 'Gandhi' symbolizes 100- and 500-rupee currency notes and not the concepts of 'ahimsa' and 'truth'! The only space where the goddess dwells is now in the political flex prints and sign boards and on auto and taxi windshields. Her images get a ritual airing once a year during the Rajyotsava day processions.

The research thus in this investigation outlines the potential power of the visual at three important levels: social, cultural and political. Besides, it has resulted in three major contributions: one, the development of a State (Kannada Desa), two, awakening a sense of pride and patriotism, and three, it has most importantly contributed to the creation of an identity as a State in the local, national and global context. The visual here was lavished attention in three forms: one as a painted and illustrated goddess, two as the sculpture of a divine deity in temples and three, in the popular visual culture as posters and films in the public domain. The characteristics of these visual representations display the influence of three major stylizations: one from the early temple architectural style, two from the Bengal school and Mysore tradition painting style and three from the popular calendar style of Ravi Varma paintings and the Bengal school style, and the resultant Sivakasi calendar style.

In the peripherals of the epicentric concept of the mother goddess and the functional flag of Kannada, the peripherals of this iconography have given birth to many other sub-iconographic images, such as those of her beloved sons, Dr Rajkumar, Shankar Nag, Vishnuvardhan and Ambareesh. The true fans ('Abhimani') and the co-existing cine stardom and fan culture adding to the image making, has thus tempted upcoming young stars to cultivate a fan club culture. On the other hand, from the non-film world, Kuvempu, Kempegowda, Basaveshwara and the Mysore Wodeyars are another set of loyal sons of the mother goddess, whose images are equally asserted in the displays in

the public domain. The popular cultural enrichment, with such icons serving the mother goddess as franchisees in the street as well as in the minds of the public is another tool for the reaction to the urbanization of Bengaluru. In this process of the post-modern Kannada history-making in the cultural, political and social scenario, these two sets of icons play a very sensitive, representational and symbolic role, signalling the pride, power and presence of Kannada identity.

The other peripheral issues such as the masculinity in the icon-making, with a line of male dominant patriots with no female representations except for the mother herself — the beloved mother with no daughter — provoke debate. In a world where female infants do not have the freedom to take birth as freely as male infants, the role of women as social cultural leaders is blank, in spite of legends like the valorous Kitturu Rani Chennamma and the saint poetess Akkamahadevi who devoted their lives to a cause.

Another major issue to be noticed in this subject is the conflicting nature of Kannadiga versus Kannadiga, where the neglected regions of Karnataka such as the coastal Karnataka Karavali, Coorg, Belgaum and Kolar are still locked in a tussle with the state government demanding equality and development. This has also been mentioned in various contexts in the earlier chapters, especially how Mysore Kannada has been represented as the host of Karnataka and Mysore portrayed as the protagonist, with North Karnataka Kannada as the antagonist.

While these linguistic differences and inner conflicts are yet to be settled, noted linguistic scholars voicing doubts about the genuine contribution of Kannada literature to Kannada is another debatable issue. Thus, the issues of inner conflicts as in any other state or nation are reflected in details and nuances, but the argument that is debated in this investigation analyses the identity that has been asserted in the making of a State, for the local with the global development for and against the situation.

Another problem discussed pertains to the local versus global debate, with Kannada versus English (incidentally it first started as Kannada versus Sanskrit, then moved on to Kannada versus Hindi); Bangalore versus Bengaluru; localisation versus urbanisation; Kannadiga versus immigrant, Kannada versus IT-BT jobs; Bengaluru versus cosmopolitanism and finally, recent Kannada usage versus standard written Kannada. These conflicts are probably the most sensitive because of the fact that time and space are in high demand for change and thus its challenge for all in adapting with its circumstance, yet this also leads to the realization that the participation of the people in the democracy of Karnataka or Bengaluru is significant and reactive. Here we come to another question that evolves from the previous answer: what attempt has been made to resolve these problems? The essence of all issues vis-a-vis Kannada and Karnataka are regarding identity. All aspects revolve around identity: language, infrastructure, education, culture, tradition, heritage and social structure. Today almost all parts of the State are facing these crises of conflict, yet in the midst of all this, the State is on an apposite venture for change and development. Battling tumbling ministries and numerous scams, the state is on a forward march: the only question being, a march in which direction?

In India, we live on thinking that is based on a paradox, an allegorical irony and a speculated illusion rather than reality. For the rooting of any theory for an understanding — whether it be relatively minor or major — an enquiry or a methodological research, one often tends to lean on established theories or structures that may or may not be conflicting or controversial. The point that I wish to raise in the conclusion of this research as a beginning is, what path do we take? The path that western thinkers have advocated, down which many have attempted to travel in search of a standpoint, or that of the ancient native thinkers whose theories were summarily rejected after terming them as unscientific and impractical? Or if the PAGE 351 OF 413

theories of pre- or post-modern native thinkers are to be chosen, one has to take into account that they too have carefully chosen the lines of Western inclination as a refuge. The problem that I wish to point out is the dilemma of a person who wishes to articulate, on being trapped between Western and native thinking. On the one hand his identity is deeply rooted in the structures of local thinking constructed over the concepts of ancient traditions which cannot be consciously denied, whether they be scientific or not. On the other hand he has to appeal to set global standards for his survival, as these standards are set by the world economy leaders who dictate the hierarchy of intelligence and power. At this juncture often we tend to be trapped between the Western and the native, and attempt to seek the third path which is experimental and highly risky, and for which no theory exists to support as a starting point. The confused state of mind or the path unconsciously taken is the point of view of the individual, especially belonging to a local culture such as Bangalore, or, for that matter, of any Indian. This questioning is my argument that I here wish to pause this research with. An urban individual who is born in Bengaluru today will only dream of being in the economically growing and financially secure IT-BT industry sector as a part of globalization, regardless of whether he has studied in a Kannada medium school or an English medium one! This question applies to a thinker as well as to a layman today; though he is clear about what he has to do, he is surely not clear about why and which way he should do it. This confusion is what is seen as an anxiety of the urbanization in Bengaluru, as a result its reaction and reflection through visuals, or rather it is the visuals and iconographies expressing the anxieties in making the statement of identity for the securing of their present and the future through this less read medium called 'visuals'.

ANNEXURE:

- a. Media archives: print.
- b. Unpublished Artcle of Sri K. N. Hari Kumar, his perception on this research interview.
- c. Kannada Literature Review

Media Archives: Print.

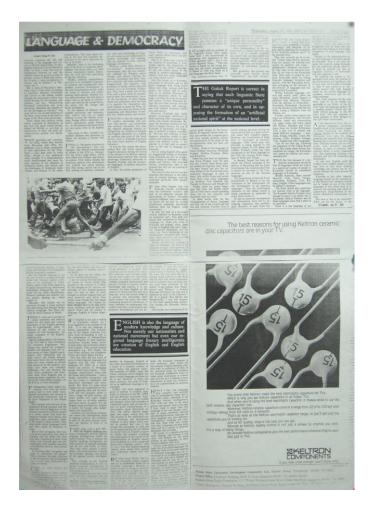






The visual culture of contemporary India Assertion of Kannada visual identity in context of globalisation





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IT'S MY HONOR TO PRESENT ONE OF K N HARI KUMAR SIR'S UNPUBLISHED ARTICLE, AS HIS RESPONSE FOR MY INTERVIEW OVER THIS RESEARCH SUBJECT:

Linguistic Identity in Karnataka

Draft for discussion by K N Hari Kumar.

The question of our social identity, the answer to the question "who are we?", has become problematic in our state. In one of the scholarly work of Dr. Poonacha has examined one particular instance of separatism within linguistic states of which there are more and growing numbers in our state and our country today. In fact, such movements are perhaps the single most important issue troubling the states of our nation at the present time. These movements strike at the very heart of the regional, some would say sub-national identity of the linguistic states, hence the title and subject of my talk. In the case of Kodagu, it can be argued that the people of the region have a different language and a distinctive culture, history and heritage of which they are very proud. Hence, their movement can be seen is a case of a subnationalism within a sub-nationalism. But the movement for a separate North Karnataka state, in the very region and Kannada speaking community in which the Karnataka Ekikaran movement had some of its strongest champions and mass support, undermines completely language as the basis of sub-national identity, in this case of Kannadigas, within the Indian nation, which was the very basis of the reorganisation of states along linguistic lines. Many rescent books on investigation into the diverse social forces and interests behind and opposing the demands for separate statehood within states and will make a major contribution to the understanding and addressing of the issues involved, which can no longer be taken lightly or evaded and their resolution postponed.

But separatism within is not the only problem bedevilling the question of the linguistic identity of our state. The issue of delayed screening of non-Kannada films in the theatres of the state has lately created considerable tensions between communities within the state and outside. There was considerable anxiety, even fear among the minorities in the state. There was also the general anxiety that, if this issue resulted in disturbances, then that might adversely affect the investment climate and consequently job creation and economic growth in the state. Another continuing set of issues, which have been growing in numbers and intensity yearly and show no sign PAGE 356 OF 413

of moving towards resolution, are the river waters sharing disputes with neighbouring states, of which the Kaveri dispute is perhaps the most longstanding and most contentious. Then, there are the border disputes with neighbouring states, Belgaum being the most live and contentious and showing no sign of resolution. There is also the issue, not much articulated in public nowadays, but very much part of the state's linguistic identity and agenda, of "Greater Karnataka," or the bringing in into the state's fold of those areas outside the state which are seen to have at some time been, and hence should now legitimately be part of it. Ooty, Madras, other neighbouring districts have been claimed on different occasions. The two immediately preceding issues are linked to the issue of outside state Kannadigas and their status and treatment in other states. It is considered as part of the agenda of the linguistic state to protect the interests of Kannadigas outside Karnataka. One question which has affected many states but not yet our state to a significant extent is the quest for separate national identity and state, independent from the Indian union, except possibly briefly during the Gokak agitation of 1982 and following the Central Government's announcement of its decision to notify the order to release Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu and the ensuing riots in 1991. Still another issue is that of the position and status of Kannada in the state in relation to English and other Indian languages. The state and region are seen as belonging only to those who speak Kannada which should have primacy over other languages. Those who do not speak or learn the state's language, Kannada, are seen as outsiders, and hence not entitled to full citizenship rights. This creates a divide between the communities and can often have dire consequences. Still another question is the status and role of English. Lately, there was a meeting between state government representatives and Kannada writers on the issue of teaching English in Kannada schools. Also, there has been the long pending issue of allowing more English medium schools. The question being increasingly posed, whether failure to learn English well will adversely affect the job and growth opportunities of our children, even within our state, not to speak of outside. Further, English, in the age of globalisation and the IT revolution, is considered by those in the seats of power in New Delhi and in our state as not only the key to rapid economic growth and the abolition of poverty, but also as having the potential to transform India into an economically advanced nation and a global political and military power, fitting to its great ancient cultural heritage. There are no doubt various socio-economic factors and interests behind these issues, but the definition of linguistic identity and sub-nationality is the axis on which they revolve.

It is my belief that taking a diversion here to examine the origin and development of the modern idea of the nation in the countries of Western Europe might through some light on these issues and suggest some answers to our problems. I will try to present this development in broad outline and hopefully relatively noncontroversial terms, what is a very contentious area of social science today. It was in late 18th Century Europe, especially in the aftermath of the French Revolution, that the modern idea of nationalism and the nation state emerged and became in succeeding centuries a major force in society, politics and international relations. With the overthrow of the monarchy and its replacement with the democratic ideals and institutions, the basis of the state could no longer be identification with and loyalty to the king and his royal dynasty. But rather, it became the nation which came to be identified with the people of a particular region, whose common identity emerged from a specific history, experience, language and culture. In other words, the idea of nationalism became the unifying factor binding together the people and the state and providing them with a purpose and an agenda. This idea was the basis of the two great movements towards national unification in the 19th Century – that of Germany and Italy.

But, in spite of many positive aspects, nationalism and the nation-state also brought with them a number of problems. Essentially, these can be seen as a result of the national identity being, largely, created around one particular language, religion and culture, and its identification with the region and the state. This was deemed necessary for national unity and social integration. First, internally, there emerged the question of the minorities – linguistic, religious, "racial", national, most significantly, that of the Jews. Linked to this, there emerged the question of extra-territorial loyalties, one example of which was of those minorities who owed allegiance to religions organised outside or beyond national borders. The struggle against the Catholics in late 19th Century Germany in the form of Bismarck's Kulturkampf is one example of this. Another problem was that of border areas, where large populations speaking the languages of both the neighbouring states lived, and the consequent claims and disputes and wars to unify these regions and populations with either of the two nations. The case of the provinces of German and French speaking province of Alsace-Lorraine is one example. This was also linked to the larger question of irredentism which was the attempt, by peaceful and military means, to alter the national borders with a view of re-unifying those populations and regions which were supposed to have been part of the nation in some distant past and, hence, for these or other reasons rightfully belonged to it. Additionally, in the quest for national glory

based on national self-interest, status and prestige, there emerged attempts at national domination over neighbouring countries and dreams of world conquest through imperialist expansion and wars. All this was couched in the rhetoric of race and racial superiority. And, most importantly, in the first half of the twentieth century, this definition of national identity, and social and economic interests and sentiments behind them, resulted in two World Wars which led to mass killings and terrible destruction on the scale that could scarcely have been imagined earlier. And, this was also a period of the mass killings and genocide of national minorities, most of all the Jews, as well as of large sections of the populations of nations which were to be conquered and subjugated. It may be that this definition of national identity was used by social forces and dominant classes to further their own interests, but what is being argued here is that it was useful instrument to turn large populations against one another inside and outside the nation states.

It was, indeed, this terrible slaughter and destruction during the World Wars that was responsible for the discrediting of the modern idea of national identity and the nation state in the region of the world, Western Europe, where it had its origin two centuries earlier. One consequence of this was the attempt in the years immediately after the Second World War to go beyond nationalism and build institutions for regional co-operation that could not only resolve national disputes, but also provide a supra national identity, state institutions and a common agenda for economic trade and growth as well as greater social welfare for the peoples of different nations. I refer to the beginnings of what has now become the European Union, where the attempt was to redefine nationalism and the nation-state and forge a new European identity based on a fresh interpretation of history and culture on a continental rather than national level. This redefinition also included the attempt to create a multicultural, multi-lingual identity within each of the participating nation states as well. Politically, such cooperation meant the surrender, partially initially, maybe wholly later, of the idea of national sovereignty which had been the basis of international politics for preceding two centuries or more. In the decades following, this redefinition of nationality and its institutional basis was sought to be replicated in other parts of the globe as the basis for international peace and cooperation. In our own neighbourhood, this is the background to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC, which is an attempt to bind the countries of South Asia closer with ties of economic, social and political cooperation which, it is hoped, will usher in an age of co-operation, peace and prosperity.

It is not difficult to see echoes and parallels of the earlier age of nationalism in Europe in the problems, rhetoric, conflicts and agendas in present-day Karnataka as also in the other states of the Indian Union, even if the results have not till now at least been so drastic and extreme. Are there any lessons for us from the European experience with nationalism and their efforts to redefine and reconstruct it? I was wondering. But before that, it might be fruitful to look at our own experience with the development and growth of nationalism in India itself. This may help us to find ways to sort out many of the problems and difficulties that we are faced with regarding our linguistic and regional identities in our state and other states in our nation.

As is well known, the Indian nation was sought to be created in a colonial context with the agenda of social and economic development and democratic political participation, and, finally, became the liberation of the nation from British imperial rule. And since Indian society was constituted by a great deal of diversity – social, linguistic, religious, cultural, political – it was hardly surprising that the national identity had to be articulated and created around the slogan of "Unity in Diversity." Only such a slogan could unite the different social groups and identities within the nation to fight imperial rule and gain nation independence. Unsurprising, this multilingual, multi-cultural identity, which arose from a situation and from reasons quite different from the contemporary European one, lead found expression in the Indian Constitution and the Indian polity thereafter. The Constitution of India in the Eighth Schedule currently lists 18 languages as those of the Indian Union and there are demands for the inclusion of many more. It even provides for more than one language at the states level in Articles 345 and 347. Hence, it can clearly be asserted that language was not the basis of the identity of the Indian nation, even if some Hindi chauvinists have tried to interpret it in that manner. And this can be seen as avoiding some of the errors and excesses of linguistic nationalism in Europe. No one language or religion or culture or social group alone was identified with the Indian state and region. Multiplicity created the basis for a democratic pluralism in the polity. Indeed, if anything, it was English that became by use, if not by explicit intention, the language of Indian nationalism, both during the national struggle for Independence and afterwards. It alone provided the means of communication across the different linguistic groups of our vast nation.

However, when it came to the formation of linguistic identities within the nation on the regional level, the Indian National Congress had, no doubt on the analogy of the European example, adopted the linguistic model as far back as the early decades of the twentieth century. As the Congress began to be organised as a mass movement under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, this reorganisation became necessary for mass mobilisation. In the process, each potential or actual state's identity was defined in unilingual terms. That is, only one language and the people speaking it were identified with one region or state. There was no scope for diversity in this respect, even when it was recognised that there was substantial diversity in each region even in linguistic terms.

It is not necessary for my purposes here to go into the different social forces and interests which campaigned for and against the organisation of regional and states' identity on linguistic principles. What is relevant to note, however, it that the possible adverse consequences of such a model became clear when the time came for the implementation in the years immediately after independence. There emerged the pressures and counter-pressures from different social groups, which resulted in tensions and conflicts about the reorganisation itself, some of which continued at different levels and are with us till this day. As the implementation process started, the national Congress leadership were alarmed at the prospect of the setbacks to national unity and economic development. But it was too late. Not only had there been longstanding demands for separate linguistic states in many regions, but for decades the Congress itself had reorganised itself along linguistic lines. Popular sentiment could no longer be held back. However, during the process of implementation also, there were more troubles, tensions and conflicts both within the states and outside which have continued since.

So, what is to be done? Again a look at the world around us may give us some idea of the difficulties faced by sub-nationalities within nation states and suggest some possible answers. Most recently, there has been the experience of the states of the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. And especially in the latter case, the prolonged, brutal and bloody conflicts based on language, religion, sub-nationalism leading to national separatism is too terrible even to contemplate. In our own neighbourhood, there are the examples of language-based regional identities and sub-nationalism, tearing communities and countries apart. Bangladesh within Pakistan,

Tamil rebellion in Sri Lanka, linguistic-regional tensions within Pakistan today are some of the more obvious examples.

In India, we have had our share of linguistic conflicts, but they have been contained within the overall national, democratic framework with the spirit of compromise. But in Tamil Nadu during the last decades of imperial rule and up to 1962, in Punjab, in the states of the North Eastern region and, most of all, in Kashmir, things have become serious and violent. In other regions there have been rumblings. In recent years, there has been the emergence from different sources of a national separatist movement in Tamil Nadu again. Hence, there is no reason for complacency. The question therefore, is how we can redefine our social identities and agenda in such a way as to provide the basis of a society, polity and nation with the minimum of social tensions and conflicts? And, in a way that could contribute to economic development and prosperity for which political stability is one essential pre-condition?

One answer, I would like to suggest what I had suggested in some articles I had written more than two decades ago during the Gokak agitation. We need to redefine our identity, and that of our state and our region, in multi-lingual, multi-cultural terms. We need, in other words, to apply to our state the same social identity, of "Unity in Diversity," that our national leaders had made the foundation of the Indian nation. That is to say that all the languages of the Indian nation are to be languages of Karnataka, as also the languages of the other states. This will mean that Karnataka and other states will, like the Indian nation itself, belong to the people of all the languages residing within it. And not only to those who speak one particular language or profess one particular religion. This will enable persons belonging to the different linguistic communities in the state be considered as full citizens of the state. On the basis of such an identity, a new approach of co-operation between the different states, like in the European Union or SAARC, for the common social and economic benefit of all the states, can be initiated.

There is another plan with regard to the states that is being implemented in recent years. That is, to divide the linguistic states into smaller and smaller components, like Jharkhand, Uttaranchal, Chattisgarh, Telangana, Vidarbha, Kodagu, North Karnataka, etc. This is the agenda who believe in a strong Centre and a strong Indian identity. They see the linguistic identities as being distractive and divisive of the Indian identity and, hence, in need of decomposition. They see larger states also as stronger, potential threats to the strength of the Centre. Though, they may have a point, their agenda is an authoritarian one. They want to identify one language and one religion only with the Central Government and the Indian nation. There is no contradiction between democratic decentralisation and local, regional loyalties and a strong nation. In fact, the one strengthens rather than weakens the other. And, hence, this extreme and sectarian, even communal form of Indian nationalism can be more dangerous than the problems that it is purporting to solve.

In the articles referred to above, I had suggested that this Unity in Diversity principle and a multi-lingual approach can be found in our own history and traditional culture itself. And the example I had given was that of Carnatic music, where a musician whose mother tongue is, say, Telugu may sign Kannada songs to a Tamil audience in Tamil Nadu. Indeed, a great Telugu composer was patronised by a Tamil king in whose court he composed songs in more than one regional language. Such an attitude has been under threat from extremists and fanatics in different states who have sought to mobilise linguistic regional identity for narrow ends. After reading the second continuation of the articles, entitled "Toward a democratic culture in Karnataka," the nationalist leader and eminent journalist from North Karnataka, Mr. R. R. Diwakar wrote to me, from his sick bed, that in the course of the debate on the issue during the national movement there had arisen two terms to define the issue – Kannadiga and Karnatakastha. The former is he whose mother-tongue is Kannada and the latter term was to be applied to all who are from and of Karnataka whatever language they may speak. What I want to propose today is a revival of that spirit and definitions in the interest of co-operation and economic development in our state and other states of our nation.

One last point. All this does not mean that our own languages should be abandoned as we can see in our society, in spite of the lip service being paid by our political leaders and, even, our writers. And this is accompanied by tokenism, just for the official agenda's sake. And with it come charges of hypocrisy. While there is no need to give up English which we have made the language of our nation, our own languages cannot and should not be abandoned. The depth of the abandonment in political circles was brought home to me, when three years ago, I launched an email service in Kannada under the name of e-tapaal. I went to meet an old friend who had been 25 years ago a vociferous champion of Kannada and Kannadigas interests and rights, then occupying a powerful position in the state cabinet. He casually told me, "Adey ondu kala, now the priorities are different." He was referring to the current national agenda to use our facility in English to turn our nation into an advanced nation economically and global political and military power. In this agenda Kannada and other Indian languages do not have much of a role. English, while a useful tool of communication for national and international communication, can in my opinion hardly make any nation a great economic or political power. But this is to abandon the poor and the disadvantaged in our society and give up the issue of social justice, as we can see happening in the last couple of decades. Whether a nation which has lost its self-respect can become a great nation, as one eminent Kannada novelist and writer had doubted, is a question that has to be debated elsewhere."

K. N. Hari Kumar

Written on 19 May 05.

Interviews:

I am oblidged to Dr K.V. Narayana, for his response:

What according to you is the icon Kannada Thayee bhuvaneshwari? and her sub icons?

Kannada Thayee is a virtual reality. It is a construct. How do treat our mothers in reality? It cannot different with Kannada thayee. Constructing such icon was a hystorical necessity. But it can perpetuate eternally. With the changes taking place in such drastic nature Kannada thayee becomes a redundant antique piece which we carry on our shoulder without having any significance apart from creating a fissure among people. (we and they)

4. Do we need a flag? the flag as a statement, as a representation, the colour as a code?

No. Flags do not matter. In fact mystification a flag always attract defying.

5. What do you think of these visual politics? its influence, impact, reactions and interpretation?

Democracy as it is practiced thrugh state in India promotes representations. People are asked to or taught or brainwashed to adhere to and worship some visual icons. A sort of mass hysteria is built around the same. It always has counter effects like de sanctifying the icon. It is done blatantly in public. People either disrespect the icon or they try to subvert the sanctity attributed to the icons. We see flag used as head wear; idols smeared with cow dung and what not?

I am oblidged to Dr M H Krishnaiah Sir, for his response:

What is your perception on Kannada mother goddess, in present context?

Kannada Bhuvaneshwari or Rajarajeshwari, is a symbolic representation, as icon representing the feelings, emotions, thoughts and ideas about the motherland. It is an extention or personification of mother goddess. An abstract idea presented in a concrete manner.

Kannada flag, do we need it, with a legal ban on it from the high court? You cannot carry the icon or image of Bhuvaneshwari every where and at all times. Flag represents the identity of the people of Karnataka, culture and also their way of life. In a way one can call it as utsavamurthy of Kannada Bhuvaneshwari.

Caste and the sub-Iconography?

Rescent thikibg of the people of various caste and communities has nothing to do with the concept of gods and godsess, whereas they are highjacking the saints, philosophers and other great personalities for their personal agenda, and to achieve selfish goals.

What according to you is the contemporary Kannada visual identity?

According to me the contemporary Kannada visual identity is probably the rescent installation with all its western influences in the way of presentation but retaining the soul & feeling of the people of Karnataka, the "desi identity".

Dr MH Krishniah concludes with one of his experience with Karanth, in 1990's. When K Shivarama karantha (one of the senior Kannada writer, activist, Jnapeet awardee) was asked by a journalist "why is that we the Kannada nation doesn't have a personality to be represented? For example maharastra or Maratha has Shivaji, Tamil had MGR, Telgu had MT Rama Rao and so on?

For this question Karanth replied "Yes we don't have one leader! Indeed we do not have one leader, but many! We had so many personalities in the past as hero; even today we have many personalities, that we are confused to choose one of them as the icon!"

Others:

Many of the response were very interesting, debating and controversial, but metioning all of them here would not be possible in this context, but had contributed in strengthening my arguments.



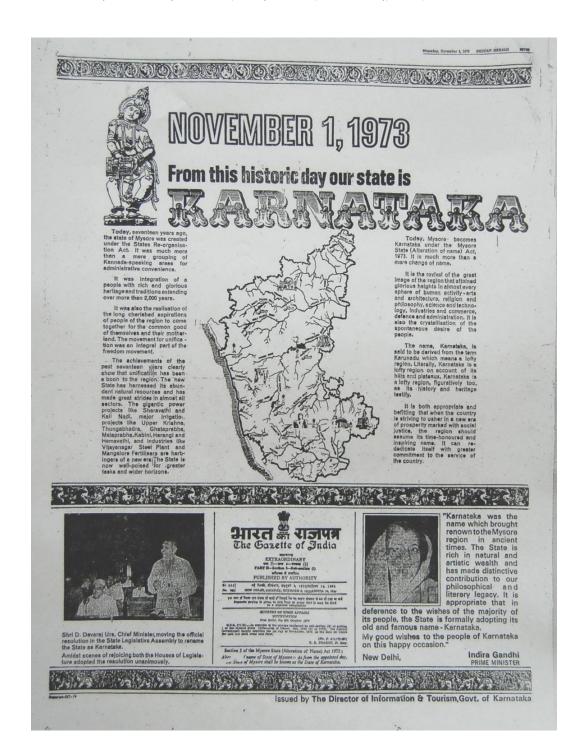








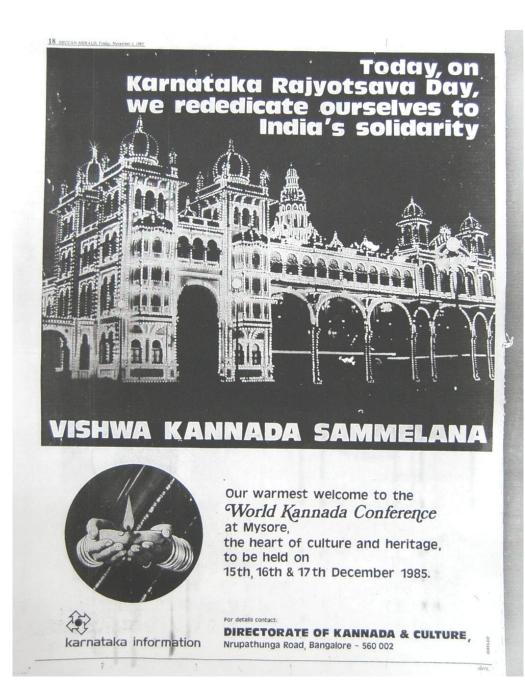






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Twenty years have passed since Karnataka as a State was born. Each year is a mile stone on our road to Progress. Karnataka has very rich historical traditions and a splendid cultural heritage ; achievement g knification fortered a resurgence of this heritage, and bright about emotional integration. It also paved the way for Socio-economic developments Karnataka had a glorious past; it can have an evoic ? more glorious future if all of us work together for the steady advancement of the state. On This joyous occarsion I extend my cordial greetings to the people of Karnataka and wish than all happiness and prosperity. D. Devani











State to withdraw decision on hoisting Kannada flag

http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/karnataka/article3308200.ece

Bangalore, April 13, 2012

The State government on Thursday informed the Karnataka High Court that it has decided to withdraw its [government's] decision announced in the State Budget that hoisting Kannada flag in all government offices, schools and colleges on November 1 every year will be made compulsory.

"The government accepts that no other flag other than the national flag can be hoisted and saluted by the State during official functions and the decision announced in the Budget with the approval of Cabinet would be withdrawn," the government counsel submitted to a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Vikramajit Sen and Justice B.V. Nagarathna.

These submissions were made during the hearing on a Public Interest Litigation complaining that the Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, a pro-Kannada organisation, and its president T.A. Narayanagowda are "misusing" the "Kannada flag" for their private gains.

http://www.dnasyndication.com/dna/article/DNBAN55472

KANNADA LITERATURE REVIEW.

Kannadamma. By CR Govindaraju

This is probably one of the few books written on the Mother Goddess Thayee Bhuvaneshwari in a research discipline, focusing on the literary contributions in Kannada, specifically poetry. The research is restricted to the evidence of poetic literature from the pre-Independence movement to the post-unification period of time. It attempts to discover the literary context through which the concept of Bhuvaneshwari originated. The close comparison of Kannada poets to Bengali poets, and tracing the inspiration to Bengali literature are the other highlights.

Bengali thinker-poets called the Earth 'Vishnu Pathni', Bhumidevi and so on, and these descriptions were translated, adopted and refined to the concept of a Bharat Matha, and from there, subsequently, to the Kannada Mother Goddess. There are close comparisons between Rangalal Bandyopadhyay's *Karma Devi, Padmini Upakhyan* and *Kanchi Kaveri*, and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Anandamath* and its rousing *Vande Mataram*, and A.N. Krishna Rao's *Kannadammana Gudiyalli*, meaning, "in the temple of the Kannada Mother Goddess".

Discussing Marathi, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil poems based on nationalistic symbols, Govindaraju compares the parallel literature of neighbouring states to emphasise on the state movement for unification and patriotism. He quotes the emotional and dramatic bonds between the mother Bharat Matha with her daughter Kannada Mathe in a real-life relationship status. Here the role of the daughter is classified into two: in the first phase where she is shown as a peaceful goddess, and in the second, as a brave, valorous form.

With evidence quoted from *Kannada Thayee, Kannadigara Mathe,* from Govind Pai's works and *Nadarani Bhasha Devi* by Hagokatti, and referring to many other names and titles such as Madevi, Muthaide, Kannadambe, Petennathaye of Benagal Rao's elements used in his work, Govindaraju has presented the images of the goddess from poetic literature as the elements of his research analysis.

He later classified the poems into two genres: the peaceful genre and the violent, brave genre. Peaceful Kannadamma has been represented by poet Shantha Kavi, who introduced the concept of Bhuvaneshwari. Shantha Kavi (1856-1891) who is also known as Sakkare Balacharya, has been cited for his major contribution through his book *Sri Vidyaranya Vijaya* (1918), which was published twice, and was the first book to highlight the concept of Bhuvaneshwari. With hymns and prayers (*keerthane, stuti*) the book outlines topics such as unification, Hampi, Kannadamma and Bhuvaneshwari.

"Kannadamma" later discusses some major poetic works:

B.M. Sri's Kannada Thayee and Kannada Bhavuta Krithi (1936).

With terms such as "Rajyada ishwari-oo rajeshwari hiriya muthaide",

the goddess is classified under the genre of the peaceful phase, "Shantha Swaroopini."

The second genre of classification, wherein the goddess is presented in violent, brave avatars, can be found in D.R. Bendre's works.

Dathatreya Ramachandra Bendre, Ambikataneyadatta from Dharwad, also known as Da. Ra. Bendre, was influenced by Dharwad folk expressions.

He used terms such as "Chendi Chamundi", "Raudraswaroopini" and "Durge", expressing a sense of sacrifice and bravery, while Kuvempu presented the "Kranthikali" or violent goddess. Lines on Hampi, such as "*Kannadambeya mudiyu sididu odedudu ille*" written in 1944, evoke the Kannada heritage. Lines such as "*Sayuthide nimma nudi oo Kannadada kanda*" which tug at the emotions are cited by Govindaraju as evidence, in the creation of the concept of the Kannada mother

In his fourth chapter he mentions the major aspects of the visual medium and Hampi Bhuvaneshwari as depicted in Andanappa Doddametti's *Kannada Mahimna Stotra* of 1956 and its line drawing illustrations by Kondacharya. Mentioning the oil painting of C.N. Patel, a well known Gadag artist, painted for the November 1, 1973 statehood event and worshipped in the Jakkali home of Anadannapa, on the eve of renaming of the state of Mysore as Karnataka, he refers to the *Prajamatha* newspaper, in which this painting had been printed, and directs the research to the recent painting of B.K.S. Verma's Bhuvaneshwari, printed and published by the Kannada Sahitya Parishath.

Review: Kannada Chaluvaligalu: C.R. Govindaraju

On Kannada flag and activism

Though many had raised the issue of the flag in Karnataka even during the preunification period, Kannada did not have any flag to represent it even after unification. This issue was considered as a need till the regional conflicts raised in states of post indepepndednt India. Kannada then had two sets of activists, and getting them together was a task in itself. Finally, in 1966, the leaders of the two groups — M. R. Murthy and Vatal Nagaraj — agreed to discuss the issue of the flag in Bengaluru, at the Mysore Vanijya Bhavana. This meeting was titled as 'Akhila Karnataka Kannadigara Bhruhat Samavesha'. Murthy took the presidentship andVatal Nagaraj inaugurated the meeting. Among the participants were Rangachar, A. Sanjeevappa, Sakru Sampangi and Beni Ishwarappa. The question raised was: "How should the Kannada flag be?" Suggestions were taken from all participants.

The final design decided on was as follows: the *haladi* or turmeric coloured flag would have two corners in the style similar to that of temple flags, with a map of Karnataka in the centre, with a sprouting ear of corn. The grain represented growing activism. This was the first flag of modern Kannada, which was agreed to by all.

The flag issue hotted up again during the Tamil-Kannada skirmishes such as the MICO case during the chief ministership of B.D. Jatti, where M.R. Murthy had to get the accused Kannadigas released from the Madivala police station, during the tenure of Police Commissioner Chandi. During these tense times, Tamil groups hoisted their red and black flags everywhere. Meanwhile, territorial issues over Belgaum and Kasargod had also begun to hot up. In yet another provocation, Maratha activist S.B. Chavan had targeted Kannadigas in Mumbai city. This was also the time when the Marathi Shiv Sena group was born. Kannada activist groups strongly felt the need for a visible Kannada flag to represent Kannada pride and aspirations.

At the Sampooran Karnataka Sarvapaksha Sammelana held on July 29, 1966, Kannada youth associations raised concerns over the issues faced by Kannadigas residing outside Karnataka. Many activists such as Shantaveri Gopala Gowda, Konadoorulingappa, K.G. Maheshwarappa, Jeergekatte Bassappa, S. Suryanarayana Rao, H.S. Yogesh, Y. Nagaraja, B. Vishnukakkilaya, C. Puttaswamy, A. Sanjeevappa, V. S. PAGE 380 OF 413 Murthy, K.H. Rammanna Gowda, S. Chennayya, S. Rangaswamy, D.R. S. Siddhalingiah, Chandrashekara Reddy, Dr. V.K. Javali, R. Anantharaman, V. Shivmurthy Shastri, S. Shivappa, Prof. D. Shivashankar, T. Subramanyam, V.T. Sreenivasan, C.M. Armugam, Dravidamani, N.L. Upadyaya, B.V. Kakillaya, Alavandi Shivamurthy Swamy, H.B. Sheshadri, A. H. Shivanada Swamy, G. Havanoora, Praburajaligade, Shankarmoogy, K.N.S. Rao, S.V. Venkatarama, D. Kempanna, C.M. Mallayah, P.B. Sadashivaih, S. Javaraiah, Dr A.M. Ratnam, Dr Ananda, Dr Janaki Rama, K.P.M. Reddy, D.S. Nagaraj, G.S. Satyanarayana, and many others participated. At this event a book titled *Sampoorna Karnataka*, which included concerns raised by Annuguruji and Javadevi Tayeligade was released. This meeting ignited the question of identity and related issues.

The Karnataka Rajyotsava of November 1966, during the period of the Mahajan Commission, was celebrated with the new Kannada flag. The celebration at Kempambudi lake ground, now known as Subhash Nagar, in the area of Gandhinagar, again created chaos, with various flags with many symbols being used, which led to more confusion.

Soon afterwards, two local parties were formed in the State, due to three major reasons: one, the 1967 elections, two, growing DMK activism, and three, the Mahajan report. The Kannada Paksha party was formed by M. R. Murthy and the Kannada Cheluvali Paksha by Vatal Nagaraj. This further resulted in the birth of yet another flag, with R.M. Murthy rejecting the old flag. At a meeting held in Arlepette in Bengaluru, now called Cotton Pete, by the Karnataka Mitramandali, B. N. Eshwarappa and others opposing DMK flag mooted a rectangular red and yellow Kannada flag, with no map on it. This was agreed to by R.M. Murthy. This flag was suggested as the functional flag for Karnataka.

During 1966-68, R. M. Murthy declared this flag, which his party had adopted, as the activist flag, while Vatal Nagaraj continued to use the old flag as his party flag. The existence of two flags created further confusion over the question of which one was to be used as a state flag and which as the party flag. In the meanwhile R.M. Murthy died on December 27, 1967 in an accident along with two sons in his native place Talagatpura near Kagalipura.

Meanwhile, in Tamil Nadu, Dr. C. Rajagopalachari, better known as Rajaji, made disparaging statements against Kannada. In an article in his newspaper *Swarajya* on January 13, 1968, he wrote: "Kannada as spoken is almost Tamil written in Telugu script, as reshaped by early Christian missionaries." This further deepened Kannadigas' hatred of Tamils, and set off reactions in all forums against Rajaji.

In April 1968, a pamphlet highlighting the issue of the Kannada flag was circulated among all Kannada activist groups which were under the leadership of R.M. Murthy, such as Karnatakada Samyukta Ranga, Kannada Paksha and Karnataka Mitramandali. The pamphlet calling for the use of one flag, was titled "Selfish narrow and personal hatred has led to division in Kannada, may it be unified" ("Swartha sankoochitha mathu vyakthigala dweshadinda chidravagiruva Kannada chalavali mathe ondagali"). The pamphlet directly questioned the four main contributors of Kannada flags — A. N. Krishna Rao (Anakru), M. R. Murthy, Sanjjevappa and Vatal Nagaraj.

Later interpretations were made of the colour symbolism, with red symbolizing revolution, and yellow, peace; and again, red symbolizing kumkuma and yellow symbolizing the *haladi* representation of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari. Gradually the flag of M.R. Murthy's Kannada Paksha, the rectangular flag with the red strip on the top and the yellow strip at the bottom was used more and more, and is still being extensively used all across Karnataka to represent Kannada identity.

Govind Raju, a professor at Hampi University, one of the very few researchers, who pursued academic research on the Kannada Mother Goddess and flag as a part of study on Kannada Unification. His methodology in based on the literary works of Kannada during the pre-Independence movement, post-Independence developments and also the unification movement. He traces the source of inspiration for these poems to Bengal poets and highlights how in the similar context poets of other neighbouring state responded in the quest for the making of a local state goddess. His other works have also documented the evolution of the Kannada flag in the backdrop of the post-unification movement.

REVIEW: Karnataka Mahimna Stotra

Author: Andanappa Doddameti

This book was written for a single purpose of unifying the Kannada speaking regions in one state form through the local deities. The visual medium shows many forms of Bhuvaneshwari. There are 16 line drawings, 16 slokas and 16 visuals; number 16 is important because Karnataka has 16 Shakti Peethas.

The line drawings are drawn by B kondacharya. A N Krishna Rao has written the forward to this book and says "This work is darshana and kavya as well, poet has achieved this in the true spirit of Kannada and karnataka". "Kranthi ya agnikundadalli, biddu, putagondu, siddhanagi, shanthiya maduramandanilavannu anubhavisuthidane, idu ee kavya barayuva chetakagi keerthi kamane yinda rachitha vada kruthi alla, bhavagalu tavagiyee, kavivaaniyannu ashreyisi divya roopavannu hoothu ninthivee endu helluthare"

Hampe bhuveshwari

Mysore Chamundeshwari

Dharvada renukamba

Munirabad huligevva

Kolluru mookambike

Shirasi marikambe

Badami banashankari

Srungeri sharada

Siddaparvathada ammba bavani

Gokarnada badra karnike

Likewise totalling 16.

Parashakthi, Bhuvaneshwari, Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswathi, Mookambe, Ratnagarbhe, Sreedurge, Indrani, Varahi, Adithi, Kaumari, Kundalini, Tripurasundari, Savithri, are other forms of visualization. Uyilugol Narayana Rao of Gadag in 1936 (sangin 1938 Dec 25-28) wrote a poem during the *Vijanagarada Shatamanotsava*, an event dedicated on the Vijayanangara Empire's 600 years memorable celebration. The Poem was titled 'vijayanagarada veeravaani' in which terms such as 'mother Bhuvaneshwari' *"thvoritha kaigodirendu bhuvaneshwariya varavaani"* meaning *expressing the urge to accomplish the work rebuilding an empire such as Vijayanagara*, (explaining history of Vijayanagara) were written. Vijayanagara empire (1334-1934)

Dayamadi, dayamadi Kannada manneyare, dayamaadi nimmadiya hudiille beeluvare" "virupaksha bhuvaneshwariya tavroorinalli"

Aluru Venkatarao : hampi: 1. 11. 1956, Karnatakatvada vikasa, book.4-5-1905: the turning point of Aluru.

During the Anaegondi visit, in 4-5-1905.

In front of Bhuvaneshwari statue, Aluru takes a vow "Karnataka deviya muurthyannu nanna hrudyadalli odamoodiskondidde aa darshanadinda, aada mukya parinama alliyavarege nanage karnatakada bage teekshna vaada abhimana huttirallilaa" with this incident changing his vision and life.

Inspired by *Vanga Banga* movement in 1905 of Bengal partition, Aluru was concerned on why Karnataka is not woken up? And says "Like Columbus discovered America, like wise I will have to discover Karnataka, and find out a map of Karnataka ,I enlightened the spark of Karnataka lamp within me and "atma jyoti" "nanda deepa" eternal lamp in my heart, I worship an idol as Kannada ammma Bhuvaneshwari" Karnataktva da vikasa pg no: 46. Says "Vidyaranya meditated for 12 years and was blessed by Bhuvaneshwari with Vijayanagara" karnatakatada sarvaangana unnathi". "Three words are what my world is all about: Karnataka, bharatha kanda and Vishwa".

REVIEW:

Chidanandamurthy and his perception of Bhuvaneshwari

Published on March 26, 2011 in Vijay Karnataka. (Written on March 2, 2011)

Chidanandamurthy: topic: Kannada Bhuvaneshwari, dream, blessings, concern, etc.

On the recent controversies of Chief Minister Yeddyurappa's announcement on the establishment of the statue of Bhuvaneshwari, for which Rs 25 crore was to be budgeted, a few objected. This statue would have predominantly representing Kannada and Kannadigas in the capital of Karnataka and would have determined the assertion of confidence in the Kannadigas of Bangalore. That in spite of this, the rejection of the statue establishment in Bengaluru the capital of Karnataka has again proved the loss of Kannada assertion in Bengaluru is what I wish to express to the public through various newspapers.

Kannada Bhuvaneshwari is like Bharat Matha, one concept, one emotional truth. This concept is rising in Kannadigas based on past anxieties and excitements. Hampi is Kannadigas' pride and sacred ritual centre. UNESCO has recognized this as the world heritage centre. And the Hampi kings were referred to as the Karnataka *kuladeesha* (Kannada community leader). Badami Chalukya rulers, Hoysala rulers and Rashtrakuta rulers and rulers of many such dynasties rulers were referred to and proclaimed as Kannada community leaders, *Kannada Kuladeesha*. Hampi Vijayanagara rulers always took pride in being referred to as Karnatakaru. (In1090 AC, during the period of the 6th Vikramaditya, Nanyadeva Vamshastaru (Nanyadeva community members) had ruled Nepal and were always referred to as the people of Karnataka.) Evidence of kings referred to as Karnatakaru lies in folk stories, songs, the local history, and belief systems.

In the dense forest of Hampi of ancient times, Hakka and Bukka, the warriors of Anegondi used to go hunting with horses and dogs. Not frightened by the sight of these horses and dogs, the rabbits in spite of being timid creatures, used to attack them. Astonished by this, Hakka and Bukka declared Hampi as Veera Bhoomi (land of warriors) and decided to establish their kingdom there. According to the folk story (*Janapada Kathe*) Chidanandamurthy says, since they were poor, Hakka and Bukka worshipped on the hills of Hemakoota and Ratnakoota, and as a blessing Thayee Bhuvaneshwari showered a rain of gold and gems on them, with which they established their kingdom.

According to the local history — *sthala purana* — Chendi, a form of goddess Chamundi had burnt Hampi with rains of fire, destroying everything. Following this, Hampi Bhuvaneshwari confined herself in a pot and left Hampi through the river Tungabhadra. According to the local history the sculpture of Bhuvaneshwari is just a form, and her presence is no longer in Hampi. (This information is taken from Kannada Vishwavidyala's Dr Cheluvaraju, says Chidanandamurthy.)

This version of Bhuvaneshwari contributed from local history and folk stories is thus based on historical truth. Just as the Pope is considered as the leader in the Vatican, so is Virupaksha considered the leader of Hampi; thus Hampi was not under the control of any king, and thus was the public fearless (according to the stories).

During 12-13 century, due to the invasions by dynasties of other religions, the Aryans were on the verge of destruction, but by the inspiration of Vidyaranyaru, Hakka and Bukka established a Hindu kingdom. The local public extended support to the two kings as they realised that they would protect Virupaksha and the temple. So it was in 1336 AD that they established the kingdom. The surrounding sultanates (Bahamani sultanate, Bijapur sultanate, Hyderabad sultanate, Berar sultanates, Bidar sultanate), proclaiming Jihad (religious war) together invaded Vijayanagar in 1565 ADencouraged by the lack of unity among the soldiers and the lack of effective administration. This has been perceived as the curse of goddess Chendi. These stories establish the concept of Bhuvaneshwari among the public.

These mythological stories in Bellary and Koppala became very famous thanks to a person named Venkatesha Thirukokulakarani Galaganatha who published a novel (*kadambari*) named *Madhavakarunavilasa* in 1923. Chidanandamurthy, who read this book in 1950-51 was highly motivated and excited by it. In this book Galaganatha says that the kingdom of Vijayanagara was built by Hakka and Bukka who belonged to a shepherd community, thanks to the inspiration given by Madhava (Virupaksha). Following the meditation of Madhava, Bhuvaneshwari blessed the region with a rain of gold. *Madhavakarnavilasa* was written using local folk mythology as the source. Thus it is not historically accepted evidence says Chidanandamurthy, but at the same time, it cannot be negated or rejected, as it is based on history too.

Since this story touches the emotions of the local public through their folk and local history, it is not wise to search for the absolute truth.

Hampi is attractive and artistic and its kings were *daana udaarigalu* (donors), *prajanuragigalu* (caretakers of the people of the kingdom), *sarvadharma premigalu* (lovers of all religions) and were great value-based thinkers. The kingdom had a

female poet named Gangadevi who wrote *Maduravijaya*, and the kings had built Shaiva temples, Vaishnava temples, Jaina temples and mosques. Now this heritage is the cynosure of all eyes. All this reminds one that Bhuvaneshwari represents Kannada and Karnataka, and that Bhuvaneshwari deals peacefully with those who are peaceful and reacts violently to those who are negative.

Citing this history of Bhuvaneshwari, Chidanandamurthy establishes the need for an identity of Bhuvaneshwari as an icon of Kannada and Karnataka. He further visualizes and proposes the establishment of a statue of Bhuvaneshwari somewhere in or near Bangalore. He wants a vast space dedicated to the statue, which must be cast in bronze and installed at a height. The statue must be surrounded by a pond at least eight feet deep, with a fountain constantly washing the feet of the goddess. The base of the statue must be inscribed with Kuvempu's state anthem in Kannada in front and the outline of the map of Karnataka at the back.

The pond must be surrounded by small statues reflecting Karnataka's Vaastu Shilpa. Replicas of all prominent sculptural marvels of Karnataka must also be installed: Hampi's Ugranarasimha and stone chariot and sculptures of Aihole, Pattadakal and Badami, Beluru, Halebidu, Somnathpura and Sravanabelagola, Gulbarga's Kaji Kalandara Darga, Gol Gumbaz, Mysore's St Philomena Church, Banavasiya Madhukeshwara, etc. These installations must be interspersed with Masti and Veera Kallu (maha sati stone and veera kallu stones commemorating brave warriors). The names of all the rulers of Karnataka and their family hierarchy must be displayed. The statues of Keladi Channamma, Belavadi Mallammma and Kitturu Chennamma must be installed. Beautiful murals also must be displayed.

The place must radiate peace, and there must be good transport facilities to help people visit it. Visitors must be taken on a guided tour of at least one hour, to help them appreciate all of the above. If necessary a metal inscription in English, giving the complete history of Karnataka, and highlighting special events and their dates must be installed.

Chidanandamurthy then identifies a spot near the Bangalore University campus adjacent to the Mysore highway and rail route, in proximity to both the Jana Bharathi campus and Kannada Bharathi campus for this Kannada theme park. With the help of the expertise of all artists, engineers and administrators, may this dream of Kannadigas come true.

Chidanandamurthy

Chidanandamurthy, the Kannada writer, researcher and historian and a well-known Kannada activist, has always expressed his staunch patriotism to Kannada and Karnataka. His articles and works are presented in this research as evidence in the process of the enunciation of the Kannada Mother Goddess. His expressions vis-a-vis the identity of Kannada and his perception on Thayee Bhuvaneshwari have been very vital evidence for me to debate and discuss in the process of the evolution of iconography.

His expressions over the Kannada unification and post unification, have been presented as an evidence and a subject of argument, asserting the idenitity of Kannada and mother Bhuvanehswari.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews with some of the following persons were cited or paraphrased in the thesis. All interviews were carried by the author in English and Kannada.

Dr. H S Gopal Rao: May 2011 Senior Kannada writer, Rtd Professor

Dr. Suryanath Kammath: Feb 2012. Senior Kannada Activist, Historian

Sri R N Chandrashekar: Feb, May, 2011 and April 2012. Kannada Activist and Writer

Sri Condacharya: March 2012 Senior Artist

Sri BKS Varma: April 2011 Senior Artist

Dr. Govind raju: April 2011 and March 2012. Professor at Kannada University, Hmapi

Sri Chiranjeev singh: Feb 2012. IAS. Rtd, Former UNICEF Representative from India

Dr. Patel puttappa: March 2012 Senior Kannada Activist & Polititian

Prof. M.H. Krishnaiah: March 2011 Former Chairman, Karnataka Shitya Academy.

Sri Jagannath Prakash: Feb 2011 and Feb 2012 Registrar, Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy

Sri Gangadhara Mudaliar March 2010 Kannada Activist, Senior Editor, Prajavani.

Dr. A Narayana: March 2010, Feb 2011 and Feb 2012 Azim Premji University

Sri Shiv sundar: Aug 2011 Kannada Activist & Journalist

Sri NAM Ismail: Oct 2009, March 2010 and April 2011 Kannada Activist & Journalist

Sri Ravi Verma Arts: June 2011 Manager, Raja Varma Arts, Bangalore

Sri Ravindra doddametti: March 2012. Social Activist

Dr Manu Chakravarthy: May 2012, Professor, Critic and Writer

Dr. U R Ananthmurthy: July 2012, Janapeeth Awardee, Former Vice Chancellor, Renowned Critic

Sri Prakash Belawadi: Dec2011, June 2012, Senior Theatre Personality, Film Maker, Activist

Dr. K V Narayana: Oct 2011, Feb 2012, April 2012, Senior Kannada Lingusit, Rtd Professor

Dr. M Chidananda Murthy: June 2012. Professor, Historian, Renowned Kannada Activist

Dr. Raghavendra Kulkarni: April 2010, Professor, Art Historian, Former Dean Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath.

Sri Suresh Jayaram: Jan 2010, Aug 2011, Feb 2012, Art Critic, Activist, Curator

Sri Sugatha Srinivasa Raju: Jan 2012, Senior Editor, Writer.

Sri S G Vasudev: June 2012, Senior Artist, Art Director and Activist

Dr. S.V. Srinivas March 2010, Professor- CSCS.

Sri Parvatish June 2012, Senior Editor-Lankesh Patrike, Social Activist.

Sri Sthapathi B Jnanananda April 2011, Chairman, Shilpakala Academy, Karnataka

Sri M K Raghavenda Sept 2011, May 2012, Senior Film Critic & Author of Books Published at OUP.

GLOSSARY:

Aarathi: Flame of camphor or rice, cermilion and turmenric mixed in water that is Abhaya mudra: one of the hand expressions given to god and goddesss as blessing and protection.

Abhimani: a person who is proud and fan of someone

Advaita: one of the systems of philosophy advocating the principle of non-dualism Arishna: turmeric (often pronounced as harishna, applied on the forehead, mainly for women)

Atman: soul of individual

Avatar: incarnation

Bhakta: a devotee

Bhakti: devotion (usually to god)

Brahman: the Supreme Being

Chakra: a ringed weapon used for destruction, often seen in the hands of god Vishnu, symbolic

Circumambulated over a diety or a person as a ritual

Dasara: festivities on the nine auspicious days (in October)

Devi: goddesss

Divine.

Kali: the presiding diety of the fourth era in mythological time.

Kumkuma: crimson (applied on the upper forehead as a symbol of married women)

Kundalini: a spiral force believed to be in the body in yoga, tantra

Pasha: a rope, symbolic representation of control

Prabhavali: aura of devine, symbolic form placed behind the face of gods and

goddesss, as a

Puja: rituals related to worship

Representation of negative elimination

Sadhana: penance

Shanka: counch

Shlokas: hymns

Smruti: a man-made canonical text

Srichakra: a holy symbol in tantric worship

Tantra: occult practices

Trishul: trident

Varada mudra: one of the hand expressions given to god and goddesss as blessing. Vokkaliga: a community of farmers

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ABREVIATIONS:

BBMP- Bruhuth Bangalore Mahanagara Palike's

- BEL Bharat Electronics limited
- BEML Bharat Earth Movers Limited
- **BHEL Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited**
- DRDO Defence Research and Development Organisation
- DTP Desktop publishing
- FFF: Forms follow function. One of the principles of design.
- HAL Hindusthan Aeronautics Limited
- HMT Hindusthan Machine Tools
- ISRO Indian Space Research Organisation
- ISRO Indian Space Research Organisation
- KISS: keep it simple and studip. One of the principles of design
- KRV Karnataka Rakshana Vedhike
- NAL National Aeronautical Laboratories
- NGO Non-Government Organisation
- **IPL Indian Premiere League**
- KRV Karnataka Rakshana Vedhike
- AIADMK All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

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THE VISUAL CULTURE OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA ASSERTION OF KANNADA VISUAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALISATION