

**S.G. Dollegoudar Patil's *Sharnbasva: The Scion of Mahadasoha* as an Artistic Epic: A Study**

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I

In this world, if anyone desires to express anything, it has to capture the attention of others. Thus, it has to be with full of feelings and meanings which has to be expressed in form of words. However, if one desires to express in poetic manner. Then, he has to concentrate on rhyme and rhythm in the words as these words are to be used correctly with meaning and matching words by sharpening and levelling of the words to the requirement meaning in the given stanza or per choice of words to the meaning. In order to catch the attention of the readers, one has experiment with figures of speech so that the words fix in those. Therefore, these are primarily being considered to write poetry. Moreover, one may acquire these to write and express in superfluous words. It may be direct or indirect narration of events. It all depends, how best one expresses the matter.

The words flow in the mind of poet. And these words are to be captured with an intension to give a proper meaning to those expressions of thoughts. Further, they are likely to catch the attention in the given way or the manner as it has been expressed. It has many flavours and one may feel thrilled with its charm, enthralling, capturing of beauty, its essence and didactic in nature. Hence, the poetry is very powerful flow of expression of feelings and emotions in beautiful words; nevertheless, a poet tries to expresses these feelings with use of numerous words of expression with good numbers of figures of speech. These words and

their usage depend upon how the poet tries to express his innermost thoughts with help of rhyming or unrhyming words along with melody.

On the other, the more poetic essence if the poem has, the more beauty and grandeur in it will likely to have. Hence, it will further elevate the poem's true picture by capturing minute details through images, symbols and theme towards sublimity. The major matter of concern is as to how the poet begins and captures the attention of the readers through images and symbols in form of thoughts and transforming these thoughts towards the high standard of expression and description of these experiences will transform a person to poet and the poet to new world.

The present study of is based on Sharanbasava and it is written by S.G. Dollegoudar Patil with title as Sharnbasva: *The Scion of Mahadasoha*. It is truly a masterpiece as it has Longinus' five principles which truly suits to this literary work. And it has: grandeur of thought; strong emotion; the use of figures; noble diction; dignified composition. And it is an epic which portrays the character of Lord Sharanbasava. Although, the portrayal of the character is limited in action and space moreover it covers up the life on earth and it is based on the character as common human being and there are no superficial and surrealistic characters or incident. And also, it is being portrayed with any high glorified characters. However, in invocation of the poem, the scene takes place in heaven just to inform that great persons of the Earth are creation of the God and they have godly character with them. On the other, there is no great army or grand scale of war as usually in the epic it is being depicted. It is all about Sage Sharanbasava, who devoted his life for the welfare of the human beings and often remembered for Kayaka (worship) and Dasoha (free food) which he has done for people and to the society.

## II

Lord Sharanbasava was a great sage and he was a cult persona who guided the faith of mass through spirituality. He was a staunch follower of kayaka and dasoha. He is iconic character to large mass of society. He received many devotees with at most devotion and dedication for the welfare of people who made him popular in his times and many still have belief that his existence is eternal. Since ages, it is the belief among the devotee that His guidance and affection towards His devotees are being nurtured. This belief has made them to accept that Sharanbasava as mystic person and the many miracles have taken place. Moreover, this belief has been foregrounded among the devotee and public in large. It is not folk epic which is being transferred from orature. It is truly an artistic presentation of life Shivsharan and Jagamananath, Sharanbasava. The poet has used Virgil's technique of invocation as even John Milton used the same in the invocation while writing epics. The poet has used classic words of epic and even followed to manage modern poetic technique as he is providing detail as well as have maintained imagery of life of character with true human feelings and deep human feelings and experience of life which are expressed in more common manner and lively manner which looks apt to certain age group of life.

Further, many of them are aware that India is known as land of history and heroes. There are many heroic people whose songs have sung by folk artists in form of ballad or the other. As long as the heroes exist in the world to protect and guide the public for the welfare of society and humanity exists until then, there are good numbers of singers singing about their favourite heroes and their creating stories. Further, there would poet to sing such heroic deeds of such personality. Similarly, the *Ramayan and the Mahabharat* are the heroic epics which tell about moral values which are being upheld in the society.

Orient nations have belief of creation of great nation and great heroes whereas the modernised nations have only modern thinkers and thoughts. Nevertheless, these thoughts may be not applicable for the practical purpose. Although, many thoughts have been created for the welfare of society, but these thoughts consist only many 'isms' in them. And in short span, these change a lot from time to time. However, oriental thinkers always believe in hero worshipping. Hence, they never felt any absurdity in life. In the modern times heroes have died there are no heroes left. Therefore, heroic values and heroism is not seen in the society and we have only issue oriented literature not of heroic or iconic figure. American and British poets have tried their level best in writing epics. None of them were successful. In modern literature of Indian English Literature Aurobindo wrote epic, was not successful in reaching readers as the language looked more poetic and epic usually have prosaic in it.

Nevertheless, until now, we never had great epic as much beautiful epic when compare with S.G. Dollegoudar Patil's Sharnbasva: *The Scion of Mahadasoha*. Many American and British poets have tried their hands. They were unsuccessful in achieving the poetic beauty and diction. And on the other existentialistic thoughts and other modern thoughts have kept them a bay. This piece of literary work is truly a great work of art. One will likely to praise use of the diction and arrangement of thoughts by the poet. It is an artistic epic and it has surpassed the expectations of the readers' thoughts.

The magnanimity of the epic lies in capturing the events of persona which looks like every day event, which is being portrayed with minute detail tread of *Sharnbasva's* life and philosophy. Further, the poet has created a sense of knowing further in readers' mind by entangling with thoughts of explaining of the events and growth of persona towards mystical person in the society. And also the poet has imbibed himself in narrating the events of *Sharanbasava* and making others to believe that he was just a common human being who has

become a deity with his thoughts and devotion to the people's welfare and the society. Like Milton and Tasso, the poet has used few moments of life of *Sharanbasava* as common man's life and in explaining about each moment of life. The poet has used worldly life of common's life and which makes one to believe that these things happen in everyone's life and these situations likely to take place everyone's life.

If not today, at least tomorrow  
Let the division take place.  
Brothers not live together forever,  
Division of a family is the eternal order!  
We are not free from such an order,  
Realize it my sibling Sharana!  
Let the home and lands be divided...

Further, the poet says that:

Words of brothers  
Caused injuries deeply to heart of Sharnbasva  
"Where is a mind single and unified,  
When mind and home are divided."...  
"Let the issues of home be at home."(pp.103-104)

These comments explain very in depth of understanding of life, philosophy and experience in life. This is what the poet does by sharing deep sense of understandings of life and knowledge as which we see throughout the epic.

## III

Epic is regarded as one of the best forms of poetry. It is never written by simple poets as it is written by great personality with deep sense of knowledge in all field of life. And it is mainly used for heroic subject, wherein it is centred on the hero as everything in human race depends upon him. He is an ultimate person for the solution who has supreme power to save his people from the misery. In this, divine intervention will be more as God comes to help the hero with host of assistants or sending someone to assist the hero who would take part in helping and guiding the hero.

There are three types of epic form which are classified mainly folk, artistic and romantic. However, artistic epic is very popular and has been used by many poets. Epic conventions were in use first especially in folk epic. As it is seen through orature as some thoughts of borrowed from those works and gradually it got the shape as it is belief of many critics. The materials of the epic have been initiated in this style and have taken this structure and expression. The epics which do not have any kind authorship are considered as folk epics. These were seen when written did not exist and they have been transferred from generation to generation. Hence, many of them believe in those stories and they are very common among the public.

There are certain common traits of epic poem and its character. They often represent these traits. Thus, these epics have these common characteristics:

The hero is a figure of imposing stature, of national or international importance, and of great historical or legendary significance; the setting is vast in scope, covering great nations, the world, or the universe; the action consists of deeds of great valour or requiring superhuman courage; supernatural forces—gods, angels, and demons--

interest themselves in the action and intervene from time to time; a style of sustained elevation and grand simplicity is used; and the *epic* poet recounts the deeds of his heroes with objectivity.( M. H. Abrams,P 106-107)

This form was in use earlier in form of orature in great civilization of Greek and Indian. Later, it became as an art of writing. It has been considered as the standard of writing. Moreover, only few poets, who aware of using this art, have taken this method in writings. Hence, many poets have followed various methods to express their ideas. Therefore, use of epic conventions varies from poet to poet as well as from thought to thought. The poet who uses these conventions likely to present in artistic manner, some of the best-known art epics are: *Virgil's Aeneid*, *Dante's Divine Comedy*, *Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost* as these epics are thought constructive epic. S.G. Dollegoudar Patil's Sharnbasva: *The Scion of Mahadasoha* is considered as an artistic epic as it covers up almost all epic conventions except few as mentioned here as these are not seen in this epic. And those are: epic digressions, vast settings, dire, foreshadowing warnings and long and formal speeches.

There are other kinds of epics which are spread through traditional method i.e., oral narratives through generation. Hence it is called as folk epic. A few important folk epics are: *The Greek, Homer's Iliad and Odyssey*, *The Old English, Beowulf*, *Indian, Ramayana and Mahabharata*, *The Spanish, Cid*, *The Finnish, Kalevala*, *The French Song of Roland* and *The German, Nibelungenlied*. And these are orature in nature.

In the Middle Ages there was a great mass of literature verging on the epic in form and purpose though not answering strictly to the conventional epic formula. These poems are

variously referred to as epic and as romance. Spenser's the *Faerie Queene* is the supreme example

American poets in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries struggled to produce a good epic poem on the American adventure, but without success. Longfellow's *Hiawatha* is an attempt at an Indian epic. Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, considered as the autobiography of a generic American, is sometimes called an American epic, as are Stephen Vincent Benét's *John Brown's Body*, Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, and Hart Crane's *The Bridge*.

At come one of important question, what is an epic?

A long narrative poem in elevated style, presenting characters of high position in a series of adventures which form an organic whole through their relation to a central figure of heroic proportions and through their development of episodes important to the history of a nation or race. The origin of epics is a matter of great scholarly dispute. (M H Abrams p 106)

To these general characteristics as some of which are omitted from particular epics, should be added a list of common devices or conventions employed by the most epic poets.

However in the epic of Sharanbasava, the poet opens by stating his theme, invokes a muse to inspire and instruct him to write the epic as he is Sannabasva, is honouring Sharanbasava to aid him and infuse all humility spread in the world in narrating life about Sharanbasava.

Prayer of mine is in need of your  
Grace's shelter, as I need to empower  
These little my fingers



to script

thy

Saga of stunning life of spirituality

Although, this epic does not have the similar beginning like European or Greek model of opening as it starts from in the middle of things as it is called *Medias res*. However, the most of artistic epic writing have these. And it is a narrative style, which often seen in the most European style of writing. Further the poet tells how the birth of Sharanbasava has taken place in the poem as it starts with Narada who is reporting instances of earthly matter to Lord Shiva. He views that there is gross materialism, assaulting and abusing on the devotees which has been taking place on regular intervals and these have become more as the devotees are not being spared from this and these have been spread on the earth. Thus, they need of immediate solace for not being swept away by the immoral and sinful acts as well as to get rid of these maladies. Further, Lord Shiva calls Nandish:

Nandish always the foundational

Part of Shiva deserved this assignment.

Look! Telepathy is at Work

This Ultra Sensory Perception

Impelled Nandish to Suddenly

Present Himself at Shiva's Court.

The necessary exposition in later portions of the epic; p.18

When Lord Nandish is assigned this work on earth:

Now, should you be son of their

being born on the planet earth.

This moment descend you down  
to assume a human form,  
ordained him Shiva thus.  
Nandish was to go there blissfully  
and instantaneously. p, 21

Thus, the epic theme is based on the religious reformer Sharnbasva's life and philosophy. And the miracle which took place during his existence and after, his soul takes a divine form in the cosmic world. And it has created a kind space of belief in certain principles which are being obeyed by the followers (disciples) with ideal thoughts of the society. And it has brought better harmony among the people. In this epic to become clear that, this epic unlike other artistic epics there are no catalogues of warriors, ships, armies; there are no extended formal speeches by the main characters and there is no epic simile.

#### IV

The story of this epic begins with divine intervention; Narada comes and seeks help of Lord Shiva. Shiva sends his trusted person Nandi on the Earth inform of Sharanbasava. He was born in the divine family of Sharana Aadeppa and Sherane Madiyamma at Aralugundige Varasalukya. Sharnbasva had to behold the Dasoha culture. At the age of seven he was sent to Salimath to learn the world of words and his Guru (teacher) was so happy for his propound knowledge and wisdom. Thus, he began to seek the root of acquisition of all Vedas. Looking at this growth, his parents became very happy as well as his Guru was so enthralled with Sharnbasva's pursuit of knowledge. During his teenage he was blessed with Deeksha-the Baptism. His parents got ready for consecrated at Deekshamath for the spiritual proceedings to have Shivachaar and Sadachaar. Now he was in a white dress, a serene seer. Soon after this ceremony he was married to Mahadevi.

After his marriage, Sharnbasva was involved in Dasoha. As the poet gives the details of life of husband and wife as it looks like a life of common man's. The details capture attention of readers as the wife is crying for leaving her paternal home and on the other adjusting to the new world (of adjustments). The whole village was looking at the girl moving in the bullock cart leading her to husband's home. After good harvest, Sharnbasva was very happy that he can perform Dasoha for three times but something went wrong. His brother wishes to get separated. In this world, brothers and sisters are likely to get separated. This separation deeply injured to the heart of Sharnbasva thinking to split house without inviting outsiders and thought to follow the principle of Shivaprasada. With this he got his true identity of living and he took agriculture as his kayaka. On the other he followed the deeds of Dasoha. To this he was supported by his elders. He started dasoha with animals and birds by watering them. Initially Sharanbasava made a heap of corn and distributed to the villagers. Once thieves entered his house to loot looking at Sharanbasva they realised their mistake and changed as sincere peasants. Once, an egoistic Sharana complained that the Prasad of Dasoha is poisoned. For this false propaganda, the victim faced many problems and was on death bed by venom. It was that he the only Sharanbasava who saved his life by writing OM on the victim's body and chanting OM NAMAHA SHIVAYA- Panchakshari mantra into his ears which brought back his life. Once a Madivala-a washer man seeks Deeksha at Mahanteshwar Math however Sharanbasava suspected his intention and this led to problem in later days as Sharanbasava would have been assassinated. Moreover, whoever does good, always good is likely to happen to him. Once Sharanbasava had to huge debt and he had to pay his debt and lord Shiva comes in the dream of money lender and clears his dues as he has done for the cause of the good people and he had said to repay the money once he gets money. Sharanbasava had a child during Dasara. Prior to this, in performing, Dasoha he faced many hurdles and had even prayed to Lord Shiva to postpone the child birth. Lastly, the

poem of Aralugundige edition ends with a note: Life is short and every moment is precious and all are like birds. Parts II, part III and Part IV speak about the miracles of Sharanbasva in Aralugundige, Parvatabad and Kalaburagi Part V speaks about Dodappa Sharana's teaching and philosophy.

### Works Cited

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