

## HALAKATTI P.G., 1880-1964

P.G. Halakatti (pha.gu.haLakaTTi) (ಫಕೀರಪ್ಪ ಗುರುಬಸಪ್ಪ ಹಳಕಟ್ಟಿ) was a scholar passionately involved in the Herculean task of resurrecting the Vachanas of the Veerashaiva saints of the twelfth century from centuries of neglect and isolation. It is a matter of regret and surprise that vachanas were in relative oblivion in spite of their social relevance and literary excellence. Halakatti took it upon himself to search the nooks and corners of North Karnataka and unearth a huge number of manuscripts and publish them incessantly through out his life. The edifice of Vachana literature that stands tall today owes its present status to the selfless service of stalwarts such as Halakatti.

He was born in Dharawada and studied in the Basel Mission High School, Dharawada and the St. Xavier's College, Bombay. He obtained his B.A. and L.L.B. degrees from the University of Bombay. However he established his legal practice in Bijapur. He was interested in Journalism as well as social service. He started many institutions involved in the cause of education such as 'Veerashaiva Shikshana Fund', 'Veerashaiva Vidyavardhaka Sangha', 'Siddeshvara Middle School', 'Siddeshvara Bank' etc. Later on he gave up his legal practice and dedicated his entire life for the cause of Vachana literature. His pursuit of Vachanas began in 1903 and lasted till he breathed his last. He started the periodical 'Shivanubhava' in the year 1926. This began as a tri monthly and later became a monthly magazine. This was devoted to articles on religion in general and Veerashaiva religion in particular. It published many literary works that were in incognito. It ran without a break for about forty years. 'Shivanubhava' ranks among the premier journals of Karnataka. Halakatti brought out a weekly magazine called 'Nava Karnataka' in 1928.

Halakatti's contribution to the editing of Vachanas is very significant. The theoretical principles of textual criticism were not evolved during those days. Most of the manuscripts were corrupt and full of interpolations. Many vachanakaras were not even known by name. To publish them in print form was a daunting task by itself. Halakatti had to scrounge for financial support. He has edited and published more than 165 works and written innumerable articles in periodicals. Some of them are compilations of Vachanas by various poets and some volumes are dedicated entirely to a single poet. He has written extensively about the philosophical and literary merits of the works edited by him. Some of the more important works edited by Halakatti are as follows:

1. Sri Basaveshvarana Vachanagalu, 1926.
2. Mahadeviayakkana Vachanagalu, 1927.
3. Prabhudevvara Vachanagalu, 1931.
4. Devara Dasimayyana Vachanagalu, 1939?

5. Sakalesha Madarasana Vachanagalu, 1929.
6. 'Shunya Sampadane' (Guluru Siddaveeranacharya), 1930.
7. Siddarameshvarana Vachanagalu, 1932.
8. 'Hariharana Ragalegalu', Part 1 to Part 4, 1933.
9. 'Hariharana Ragalegalu', Part 5 to Part 7, 1935-40.
10. Adayyana Vachanagalu, 1930.

In addition to these Halakatti has published the Vachanas of Ganadasi Veeranna, Sangana Basaveshvara, Ghanalingi, Soddala Bacharasa, Ambigara Choudayya, Hadapada Appanna, Moligeya Marayya, Satyakka, Madhuvarasa and a host of others.

He has also edited works other than Vachanas. Raghavanka's 'Somanthacharite' was published as "Adishetty Puranavu" in 1939. A rare work on agriculture by Sri Nagabhushana Ghana mAthadarya, called 'Krushi Vijnana Deepike' was brought out in 1938. In a couple of publications there is an attempt to adopt Vachanas to musical tunes.

Halakatti has written many independent works also. 'Vachanashastra Sara' in three volumes (1931, 1933 and 1939) is his Magnum Opus and it is a delineation of the theological principles of Veerashaiva religion in the back drop of Vachanas. He has produced a number of biographical accounts of important Veerashaiva saints, composers and kings. "Shivanubhava Shabda kosha" (1943) is a glossary of technical terms related to Veerashaivism. Some of the contentions and modus operandi of Halakatti are now revised in the light new research and evolution of new methodologies. However his work continues to be foundational and deserves all appreciation.

Halakatti's contribution to Kannada culture and literature was hailed and honored by a grateful society. He was conferred with titles such as Rao Bahaddur and Rao Sahib by the British government. He was made the president of the 12th Kannada Sahitya Sammelan held in 1926 at Bellary. Karnatak University honored him with its honorary doctorate.

#### References: (selected)

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3. 'Maniha' (Divangata Pujya Pha.Gu.Halakatti Samsmarana Samputa) Edited by R.Sheshashastry, (Chief Editor Siddayya Puranika) 1981, B.M.Sri.Smaraka Prathishtana, Bangalore.
4. F.G. Halakatti, by Devendrakumara Hakari, 1994, Sahitya Academy, New Delhi.