

## UTTANGI CHENNAPPA

Reverend Chennappa Daniyelappa Uttangi (ರೆವರೆಂಡ್ ಚೆನ್ನಪ್ಪ ದಾನಿಯೇಲಪ್ಪ ಉತ್ತಂಗಿ) is known all over Karnataka as the person responsible for collecting, organising and publishing the short pithy poems Sarvajna, the sixteenth century savant of Kannada. But his scholarship and literary accomplishments were multifaceted and covered many areas.

Chennappa's ancestors belonged to Uttangi a small village in Hadagali taluk of Bellary district. However, they got converted from the Veerashaiva religion to Christianity and migrated to Dharawada. Chennappa could not study beyond school level, and he moved over to Mangalore to study theology. He was ordained as preacher (evangelist) in 1908 and served in various places such as Gadag, Haveri, Hubli and Dharawada till his retirement in 1942. He was deeply interested in philosophy and theology. This led him to a comparative analysis of the western and Indian schools of philosophy.

He has published about eighteen works on Christian theology, Kannada literature and Indian culture. He has edited a few works other than the Vachanas of Sarvajna. His original works are enumerated below:

1. 'Banarasakke Bethlehemina vinanti' (ಬನಾರಸಕ್ಕೆ ಬೆತ್ಲೆಹರಮಿನ ವಿನಂತಿ), 1921
2. 'Hindu Samajada Hitachintaka' (ಹಿಂದೂ ಸಮಾಜದ ಹಿತಚಿಂತಕ), 1921
3. 'Makkala Shikshanapata' (ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣಪಟ), 1923
4. 'Narayana Vamana Tilaka' (Translation from English) 1927
5. 'Drushtantadarpana' (Translation of 50 parables) (ದೃಷ್ಟಾಂತದರ್ಪಣ), 1939
6. 'Heart of Lingayat Religion' (In English)
7. Mrutyunjaya, 1963
8. 'Lingayata Dharma mattu Kraista Dharma' 1969
9. Jaateeyateya Nirmuulanavoo Rashtreeya Bhavaikyavoo?

Uttangi wrote about Christian philosophy and about the contextual realities of Indian Christians. He wrote a four-part book on the life of Sadhu Sunder Singh and classified Sunder Singh's parables. Uttangi also worked to make the life of Narayan Vaman Tilak available to Christians of Karnataka. Uttangi translated Winslow's Biography of Tilak into Kannada. Uttangi's works on Sunder Singh and Tilak were both published by the Basel Mission.

At some point of time Chennappa developed a keen interest in the Vachanas (Tripadigalu) of Sarvajna. He was inspired to take up this job by Nelson Frazer who was trying to translate the poems of Sarvajna into English and create an alphabetical list of them. He started collecting paper and palm leaf manuscripts from various sources such as religious institutions, libraries and individuals. The oriental libraries in Madras and Mysore were of great help. Scholars such as R.Narasimhachar and Panje Mangesha Rao came out with their own suggestions. Most of the poems had variants and there was a galore of interpolations. Printed versions of these poems were in vogue right from 1868 (Reverend G.Wirth) up to 1920. (Neetisara).

Rev. Chennappa published his version of these poems in 1924, and it contained 1928 poems. This has seen many reprints in various formats such as a pocketbook, abridged version etc. He has classified the poems into three categories namely spiritual, ethical and materialistic. (AdhyAtmika, naitika and laukika) They are further sub divided into 32 paddhatis depending on their theme.

Reverend Chennappa has edited a few more literary works in addition to the poems of Sarvajna:

1. 'Molige Marayya mattu Rani Mahadeviyavara Vachanagalu', 1950.
2. 'Adayyana Vachanagalu', 1957
3. Siddarama Sahitya Sangraha, 1955

Rev. Uttangi Chennappa presided over the 32nd Kannada Sahitya Sammelana held in Gulbarga in the year 1962. Dr S.R.Gunjal has produced a doctoral thesis on the life and works of Chennappa Uttangi.