GANDHI-CHARAKHA
AND
SUDARSHANA CHAKRA

By

V. VEERABRAHAMAM

PUBLISHERS :
SRI VEERABRAHMENDRA MISSION
ANANDASHRAM (P. O.)
(Cuddapah Dt.)
Thanks to T. T. D.

This Book is published with the financial assistance of Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams, Tirupati, under their scheme ‘Aid to publish Religious books.’
Sri Veerabrahmendra Mission of Anandashram, Myduru, Cuddapah Dt, Andhra Pradesh, has brought out many publications, big and small, focussing on the precepts and prophesies of that great 17th century Andhra saint and seer, popularly and affectionately referred to as Pothuluri Veerappayya. The Mission bears his full name.

In these volumes a serious attempt, backed by intense study and research, is made to interpret the mind and soul of the saint in the context of the challenges and compulsions of the present century, Veerappayya, with an uncanny sense of the coming events, predicted many things three hundred years ahead of their occurrence. How he did it is a mystery which modern mind will never be able to unravel. The fact remains that he could foresee and foretell the events of the 20th century, in the 17th century. Such a remarkable achievement remains almost unprecedented in world history, the only other example of similar prescience being that of the Frenchman Nostradamus of the 16th century.

Sri Veerabrahmendra Mission, with its Gandhian bias and background, has been making a special study of Veerappayya’s predictions which relate to India’s freedom struggle in Gandhian phase. Surprisingly, the seer predicted with astounding precision the birth of a bania (Guggilla rayudu) Gandhi by name, in North India and it was also prophesised that the weapon the child would use for liberating the country
from the colonial rule was the incredibly harmless and rudimentary spinning wheel, Charkha. What further evidence do we need for accepting the perennial relevance of the saint's philosophy which represents a unique blend of spirituality and secularism, humanism and patriotism and earthiness and transcendentalism.

The present volume deals with Veerappayya's prophesy regarding the charkha, Gandhi's premitive, peasant's weapon against the fiercely formidable might of the British imperialism. The idea of Charkha must have been suggested to Veerappayya by Chakra (Sudarsana), Lord Vishnu's unfailing weapon for the destruction of evil. Veerappayya was a great devotee of Sri Ranganathaswami of Sreerangam (Kaveti Ranga) and since the Sudarsana discus could be used only by Lord Vishnu or one of his many manifestations. Veerappayya decided that whatever weapon India's freedom fighters might use had to be circular in shape to derive its power from the Chakra. So Lord Vishnu's Chakra became Charkha in the hands of Gandhi. Veerappayya talks of eku (a sliver of cotton) "Gandhi" and thus affirms the ethos of the freedom struggle. Through the medium of Charkha, eku and Gandhi, referred to in the saint's magnum opus, Kalagnanam in Telugu, India won her freedom from the British rule. Veerappayya describes eku as meku, a nail driven into the coffin of British imperialism. It is significant that Gandhi used charkha and eku not only for achieving political freedom for his country but for consolidating it through economic reconstruction which was possible only through the revitalisation of rural economy. Among Veerappayya's other principles, practices and prophesises with sharp relevance to the Gandhian way of life were: A commitment to dignity of labour, harmony between castes and communities, eradication of the evils of caste system, egalitarians with the emphasis on deep humanism governing the relations between the top dog and the under dog, use of religion, not for spreading blind and obsolete dogmas, but for enabling the people to lead better lives, a through a self imposed moral code, service to God through service to Man etc.
This book is very important because it brings into sharp focus the great 17th century saint’s basic philosophy as it affected India’s freedom struggle and Sarvodaya movement. The author, Sri Ummettala Kesava Rao, a highly respected Bhoodan worker, and the translator, Dr. D. Anjaneyulu, have succeeded in capturing the spirit of the saint’s thoughts and precepts in the correct context. Indeed it is very appropriate that this valuable volume is being dedicated to that deeply dedicated pioneer of Sarvodaya in South India, D. Venkatachalapathi who rose from the level of a mere village worker to the exalted position of Chief Commissioner of Rural Development, Government of Madras (undivided province). He brought the benefits of Sarvodaya to the doorstep of the villager long before the term was reduced to Gandhian jargon. Temple entry, panchayat raj, prohibition, Khadi, cottage industries, eradication of adult illiteracy, Harijan uplift, emancipation of women through education and employment: Venkatachalapathi involved himself intensely in all these and several related Gandhian programmes with devotion, humility and utter selflessness. His highest ambition and programme of action began and ended with service for its own sake at the grassroot level. He had the privilege of working with many national leaders of his day and making a tremendous impact on them through his humility, honesty and hard work.

A. S. RAMAN
Dear Shri Veera Brahmam,

Thank you for your letter of 5th March, enclosing your publication “Gandhi Charakha and Sudarsana Chakra”. I have gone through this book and congratulate you for having brought out this book, which gives excellency information and excerpts from Kalagnanm.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) P. Venkatasubbaiah
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in the year 1869 on 2nd October. Since he became a Mahatma — a great soul — people began to celebrate his birth day even during his life time. Mahatmaji did not like his birthday to be celebrated. Therefore he desired that his birthday should be celebrated as the birthday of the Charkha. According to him, the charkha was to free the masses from the thraldom of British Imperialism. Charkha was the weapon to fight the British. It was a symbol of Non-Violence. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that Khadi was “the livery of freedom.”

Pothuluri Veera Bahmendra Swami of Kandimallayapalli in the district of Cuddapah who lived for nearly ninety years was a great saint and social activist. He was also a great seer. He has prophesised about the advent of Gandhiji and predicted that he will be wielding the prema Chakra unlike Krishna who wielded his ‘Sudarshana Chakra’. The Prema Chakra — The charkha of Gandhi — gave a new life to the oppressed masses of India whereas the Sudarshana chakra of Sri Vishnu destroyed the wicked and saved the devotees. Gandhiji saw the Charkha in a vision in the year 1908 when he was in London. This is how he describes about his discovery of the Charkha, in his Autobiography: “I do not remember to have seen a handloom or a spinning wheel wherein in 1908 I described it in Hind Swaraj as the panacea for the growing pauprism of India. In that
I took it as understood that anything that helped India to get rid of the grinding poverty of her masses would in the same process also establish Swaraj. Even in 1915, when I returned to India from South Africa I had not actually seen a spinning wheel. When the Satyagraha Ashram was founded at Sabarmati, we introduced a few handlooms there...."

"The object that we set before ourselves was to be able to clothe ourselves entirely in cloth manufactured by our own hands.... We became impatient to be able to spin our own yarn. It was clear that until we could do this ourselves, dependence on the mills would remain. We did not feel that we could render any service to the country by continuing as agents of Indian Spinning mills."

"No end of difficulties again faced us. We could get neither a spinning wheel nor a spinner to teach us how to spin. We were employing some wheels for filling pears and bobbins for weaving in the Ashram. But we had no idea that these could be used as spinning wheels. Once Kalidas 1haveri discovered a woman who, he said, would demonstrate to us how spinning was done. We sent to her a member of the Ashram who was known for his great versatility in learning new things. But even he returned without wrestling the secret of the art."

"So the time passed on, and my impatience grew with the time. I plied every chance visitor to the Ashram who was likely to possess some information about hand spinning with questions about the art. But the art being confined to women and having been all but exterminated, if there was some stray spinner still surviving in some obscure corner, only a member of that sex was likely to find out her whereabouts."

"In the year 1917 I was taken by my Gujarati friends to preside at the Broach Educational Conference. It was here that I discovered that remarkable lady Gangabehn Majmundar. She was a widow, but her enterprising spirit knew no bounds. Her
education, in the accepted sense of the term, was not much. But in courage and commonsense she easily surpassed the general run of our educated women. She had already got rid of the curse of untouchability, and fearlessly moved among and served the suppressed classes. She had means of her own, and her needs were few. She had a well seasoned constitution, and went about everywhere without an escort. She felt quite at home on horseback. I came to know her more intimately at the Godhra Conference. To her I poured out my grief about the Charkha, and she lightened my burden by a promise to prosecute an earnest and incessant search for the spinning wheel.”

“At last, after no end of wandering in Gujrat, Gangabehn found the spinning wheel in Vijapur in the Baroda State. Quite a number of people there had spinning wheels in their homes, but had long since consigned them to the lofts as useless lumber. They expressed to Gangabehn their readiness to resume spinning, if someone promised to provide them with a regular supply of slivers, and to buy the yarn spun by them. Gangabehn communicated the joyful news to me. The providing of slivers was found to be a difficult task. On my mentioning the thing to the late Umar Sobani, he solved the difficulty by immediately undertaking to send a sufficient supply of slivers from his mill. I sent to Gangabehn the slivers received from Umar Sobani and soon yarn began to pour in at such a rate that it became quite a problem how to cope with it.”

Maganlal Gandhi, a close associate and relative of Gandhiji, by his indefatigable effort found out the process of manufacturing slivers from cotton. From then on even the help of Umar Sobani who was willing to assist Gandhiji in his pursuit of weaving and spinning was done away with. Khadi was produced with Indian cotton handspun and hand woven. Khadi slowly took a rebirth and began to grow. By the year 1924 the Charkha was given its rightful place in the national flag by the Indian National Congress. Khadi spread far and wide. In the year 1947 the Union jack was replaced by the national charkha flag. Charka symbolised liberty, equality and fraternity.
The Non-violent political, social and economic freedom became a reality for the first time in the world. In 1951, on August 15 the Dharma Chakra flew high in the Parliament buildings of the Indian Republic.

I find that Sri Veerabrahmam Garu of Ananda Ashram, Mydukur, Sanchalak of the Mission is bent upon popularising the idea of Charkha as a Dharmapravartthika. The inumerable constructive workers especially the Khadi workers are beholden to the Veerabrahmendra Mission and its Sanchalak Sri Veerabrahmam Garu for bringing the spiritual message of khadi and the Charkha. May the Mission live and flourish for ever.

- K. ARUNACHALAM
THE UNKNOWN SAINTS
(As Unknown Worriers)

S. JAGANNADHAN
Sarvodaya Leader

RELAVLUR
Tanjavuru
(Tamilnadu)

Are the Nurtures of spiritual Rejuvenation

India under the alien rule was subjected to depredation and economic ruin but her spirit could not be. On the contrary, it surged to new heights of suppressed glory.

The flag of spirituality was unfurled by great men like Swami Vivekananda beyond the western seas and it is flying aloft, blessed by saints and sages of this ancient country. A new missionary wave of Vedanta is at its crest, carrying the message of universality of all religions, the oneness of the human spirit, the science of inner peace through sadhana and meditation.

The politically enslaved Bharat reacted to a spiritual upsurge to produce saints to conquer the suppressors not by weapons of destruction but by Truth and Love. Mahatma Gandhi heralded as a universal leader for the whole world now threatened by the destructive powers of modern science. He is acknowledged as the New Messiah applying spirituality and a new morality in the realm of economics and politics. He is the answer to the evils of the modern scientific age. The world will go to ruins in a movement if tolerance and peace are not there. The people's movement for Non-Violence and peace is more strong in the west than in India and Gandhiji's relevance realised more deeply and sincerely.
Bharat has given birth to many such universal spiritual saints like Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi in numbers, but there are many more unknown spiritual savants like Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami. As the fertile mother earth nurtures the seed to grow into a gigantic tree, Saint Veerabrahmendra Swami contains the womb of spirituality to nurture the mighty Mahatma Gandhi. The mother earth nurturing the seed is underground, unknown to the naked eye or human perception. There are unknown warriors whose valour and heroic deeds are unwritten in the history books, but they are the bedrock for the glorious victory of any nation.

There are such unknown spiritual saints as Veerabrahmendra Swami who have been containing the womb of spirituality for the Mahatmas, to be nurtured and raised to the heights. Saint Veerabrahmendra Swami has prophesised over three hundred years ago the coming of Mahatma Gandhi as John the Baptist proclaimed the coming of Jesus. Veerabrahmendra Swami in the Telugu country and Ramalinga Swamy in the Tamil country have preached equal reverence for all religions, universality of all religions and the oneness of humanity, cutting across the hundreds of castes, creeds and nationalities.

We pay our obeisance and reverence to the unknown saints as we salute the unknown warriors. Both Veerabrahmendra Swami and Saint Ramalinga Swami have attained Jeeva Samadhi and their living places are ever sublimated with spiritual atmosphere, ennobling our spirit.

S. Jagannadhan.
MESSAGE

V. PADMANABHAN
Managing Trustee

Gandhigram Trust
GANDHIGRAM-624 302
Anna Dist. Tamil Nadu.

I had an occasion to go through the writings of Mahayogi Sri Veerabrahmendra. These publications were the translation of some of his writings. I was struck by the forecast made by him. It can be said to be an object lesson in futurology. Among many other things he had very precisely stated that a Vaisya would be born in India and redeem it from foreign yoke. This definitely came true in the shape of Mahatma Gandhi. Most surprisingly his writings talk of a spinning wheel (charka) which would have a great role to play in the emancipation of this country. We owe a debt to his admirers specially to Sri V. Veerabrahmam, Sanchalak, Sree Veerabrahmendra Mission, Anandashram Cuddapah Dt., (A. P.) who has taken all the trouble to bring to the knowledge of people not only in India but in many other countries, the greatness of this prophet.

(Sd.) V. PADMANABHAN
Managing Trustee.
FOREWORD

Mandali Venkata Krishna Rao
Ex.-Minister (A.P.)
Member:
KHADI Village Industries Commission

Gandhi Kshetram,
AVANIGADDA
Krishna Dt. (A.P.)

Sri V. Veerabrahmam, Sanchalak of Sree Veera Brahmendra Mission, Anandashram, has conveyed his desire through my friend Sri C. V. Chary of the Andhra Pradesh Bhoodan Board, Hyderabad, that I should contribute my opinion to the book the Mission proposes to publish shortly under the Caption "BRAHMAVANI - GANDHI - CHARKA AND SUDARSANA CHAKRA" containing treatises and articles, written by eminent scholars, replete with erudition in their respective fields rendered into English by Dr. D. Anjaneyulu, a Journalist of a high calibre in his own right.

To write an opinion to such a unique publication is for me, to use the words of Dr. B. Pattabhi Seetha Ramaiah when placed in a similar predicament, "a super-abundance of redundancies". Nevertheless, I consider, in all humility that it is my duty to accede to the wishes of persons held by me in high esteem and it is in this spirit that in the following lines, I set forth the quintessence of my opinions on the subject.

The book deals with the Seer and Saint Sri Pothuluru Veera Brahmam Garu and his "Kaalajnanam" and depicts him as an incarnation of Sri Ranganatha of Sri Rangam with his Sudarsana Chakram. The book depicts Mahatma Gandhi as an incarnation of "Brahmam" garu with his Charakha being interpreted as the Sudarsana Chakram of Sri Ranganatha.
It is an undisputed fact that “Sri Brahmam” guru is a revered saint and his “Kaalajnanam” is a treasurehouse where the future was accurately foretold. It is stated that the whole of “Kaalajnanam” is available in its original palmleaf manuscripts and only a part of it has been printed as a book. If that is so, I think that the first and foremost thing to do is to bring out the whole of “Kaalajnanam” in print and make it widely available to the people. If the whole book is printed in Telugu, in course of time, it will be translated into other languages also, so that the entire nation will thereby benefit from it. I commend such an activity to be taken up by Sri Veera Brahmendra Mission thereby rendering a great service not only to our Telegu people but to the entire country and the whole world at large.

As regards the arguments backed by their own logic adduced by Sri Veerabrahmendra Mission that Mahatma Gandhi is an incarnation of Sri Pothuluru Veera Brahmam Guru, who in his turn, was an incarnation of Sri Ranganatha and that Gandhiji’s Charkha was the Sudarsana Chakram of Sri Ranganadha, it is their deep faith which sustains such a belief. Although we may or may not understand it, we need not certainly caril at it, keeping in our minds the motto that “faith can intuitively see things where they can not be perceived by mere intellect and sophistry.” So far as I am concerned, I have been a lifelong practical follower of Gandhian precepts, if I may say so in all humility and I have neither the inclination nor the aptitude to indulge in metaphysics or spiritual and supernatural polemics.

In conclusion, I fervently hope that the activities of Sri Veera Brahmendra Mission will reap good dividends for which it strives and aspires.

- M. Venkata Krishna Rao
A TRIBUTE

P. V. RAGHAVAN
Rtd. Deputy Chief Executive Officer,
KHADI Village Industries Commission

Sage Pothuluri Veerabrahmam's Epic KAALA GNANAM can be said to be verily, the Divine Vision of cosmic thought, emerging from a superconscious state, a very high, if not the highest state of spiritual attainment given only to the chosen few by the grace of God. It is an attribute of the highest order beyond the reach of ordinary sages and saints, in the realm of spirituality. What he is reported to have written about 400 years ago on palm leaves, about things to come and events to happen hundreds of years later, should not be misconstrued as an astrologer's whim and brushed aside cheaply, but treated as invaluable treasure bequeathed to the present and future generations to come, as the gift of God.

Yet, it appears people seem to know very little of such sacred and precious gems in their correct perspective. I am reminded of my days three decades ago, when I was moving about in the interior of the coastal districts of Andhra during the course of my official duties for propagating Khadi programmes, ordinary people and farmers were frequently referring to Brahmamgari Kalagnanam in facing their daily viccitudes stresses and strains of everyday life and drawing inspiration from it. But little did they know who this Brahmam Garu was and where from he came, lived and attained Samadhi. I was also curious to know more about this sage. But there was no way to reach the source of this inspiring truth. Years later when
I happened to be acquainted with Shri V. Veerabrahmam Garu, of Anandashram, during the course of my works, I was curious to know if by any chance he happened to be a descendent of the sage, not merely his name-sake. For, he, in his simple attire, something nearing lion-cloth around his waist and a Khadi upper cloth, in Gandhiji’s style appeared to be an ascetic from an Ashram. I had very strong reasons to hold such notions, more so because I would find him often in the company of such noble souls as Shri Motey Narayana Rao of Eluru, Sadhu Subramaniam Garu of Gudivada, Shri Prabhakarji of Sevagram in those early days of the Bhooman Movemnet launched by Baba Vinobaji. It, however, appeared later as time passed by, that I was not far from being nearer the target. Shri Brahmam Garu happened to be one, not only having his area of operations (Anandashram) close to the proximity of Sage Veerabrahmam’s place of Nirvana, but was also closely acquainted with the Matham at Kandi mallayapalle in badvel taluka of Cuddapah District. Heartened by the knowledge of his close association with such a sacred place, I decided to prefer Kandimallayapalle as the next venue of our periodical conferences of workers engaged in Khadi work from all over Andhra, to which most of the Sarvodaya leaders of Andhra, including Shri V. Veerabrahmam Garu were also invited, as usual. Shri Veerabrahmam Garu agreed to play host and was kind enough to make all necessary arrangements for our conference including boarding and lodging for more than 100 persons, for the duration of the conference which was usually for 3 days. During this period I had the good fortune of paying my humble homage and prayer at the Samadhi of the sage in the Matham, almost on all the days of my stay at the place.

It is indeed a sacred place and I felt as if a sort of Divine Force and energy pervades all over the place. But I was sorry to seem the place almost suffering from neglect and an air of poverty all round, as it was not being frequented by devotees except on rare occasions. Thoughts came to my mind at the time how such sacred places are neglected in this country especially when they are located in the midst of poverty - stricken people,
where really God lived. The Matham itself survives on bare existence with hardly any monetary contributions coming from anywhere.

It gladdened my heart to know that Shri V. Veerabrahmam Garu, has in right earnest taken up the cause of propagating and popularising this sacred place with which is associated the sacred memory of the Sage Veerabrahmam, by publishing the various aspects of KAALA GNANAM, through the medium of Shri Veerabrahmendra Mission, established by him, all on his own. It is indeed the work of a Missionary, that Brahmam Garu has been all his life, taking up such causes of serving and uplifting the poor, unmindful of the bouquets and brickbats that may be showered on him by his admirers and critics alike, in the spirit of a real crusader. I cannot but admire his devotion and earnestness in not minding of men being a lone crusader of such deserving causes.

I have gone through the script of this book THEGANDHI-CHARKHAN and SUDARSANACHAKRA proposed to be published by the Mission. The Sage’s references in his KAALA GNANAM to the eventual birth of Gandhiji, his mission and the struggle he was to launch against the British Rule and the ultimate emancipation of India from the British yoke, through the power of the simple SPINNING WHEEL, have been highlighted. A detailed analysis and interpretation of the reference has been attempted to establish the wisdom and sagacity of the Sage in looking beyond centuries ahead, of events yet to take place. It has been established beyond doubt that the vision of the Sage on many other events have come true. So is the birth of Gandhiji and his re-discovery of the power of the Spinning Wheel, the Charkha, which has been indentified as the Sudarshana Chakra wielded by Lord Vishnu to establish on this earth, the ultimate victory of Dharma over Adharana.

Looking back over the history of the struggle for independence launched by this great nation under the inspiring leadership of Gandhiji, none can dispute the fact that to this
unfortunate country, which once flourished with bountiful affluence and happiness, Gandhiji emerged as an AVATAR of the Lord, to break the shackles of the ugly British rule and a ray of hope to the teeming millions of our countrymen suffering from abject and grinding poverty and distitution. It is also true that he fought his battle essentially with the Charkha, the Sudarsan Chakra, the non-violent symbol of people's agony. The glorious history of our epic freedom struggle is too recent and too well known to need any detailed discussion. He stood like a rock against the might of the British Empire, on which it was claimed that the Sun never sets. He amply demonstrated the hollowness of this claim to the whole world. He could galvanise the entire nation into one man, as if by magic and mesmerised the world in his struggle against the rule of Adharma of the British, not in any violent battle with guns and arrows but with Truth and Non-violence symbolised by the Charkha and the EKU (Sliver) spoken of by the Sage. He was not an individual. He was an institution, a movement as it were. He could attract and convert the highest and the lowliest towards him and his noble mission, by the mere glance and the smile, like a powerful magnet. What was the power behind him, if not that of the Divine? Who can deny that he was not an incarnation of the Lord, on which great emphasis has been rightly laid in the book under study at the moment. He was indeed a Prophet, an Apostle, a saint and a beggar, all rolled into one, a Divine attribute:

As to the visionary words of the Sage that the EKU (sliver) in his hand would prove to be the MEKU (nail), Gandhiji wielded this most harmless medium to shake the mighty British off their hooves. Everyone including several leading lights of the day, not to speak of the British, poohpoohed it as a cruel joke, when he declared that he would demonstrate the power and the might of the slender yarn spun on the Charkha in attaining freedom for the country. Although his life he has not spoken or written on any subject more than on the efficacy of the Spinning Wheel and Khadi in bringing about a revolutionary change in the structure of the presentday Indian conditions.
He considered the Spinning Wheel as his powerful weapon and the symbol of the people’s might of this impoverished country. Can anyone doubt the resounding success he achieved in his Mission? Can anyone also doubt the segacity and the Vision of the Sage Veerabrahmam in preaching that a day would come when a Sliver (eku in Telugu), meaning the “Charkha” in Gandhi’s hand would turn out to be the most potent weapon and prove to be the last Nail (MEKU in Telugu) in the coffin of the British Rule? What a Vision! What a Prophecy!.

It is said that there are many similar words of prophecy written by the Sage Veerabrahmam. I fervently hope that the Veerabrahmendra Mission would no doubt bring out many more publications on all such aspects and reveal to the world the hidden mysteries, in years to come. The Mission has taken upon itself with devotion and selfless service, this noble cause. Can anyone doubt again, if this is also not a Divine Act on the part of the Sage in motivating Shri V. Veerabrahmam Guru to undertake this sacred task, with little or no monetary help from any quarters. I am fully convinced that with the Divine Hand behind this effort, the Veerabrahmendra Mission will meet with resounding success all the way, in not only enabling the world to know the secrets and the hidden mysteries unfolded by the Sage Veerabrahmam, but also incidentally, in enthusing people to visit in tens of thousands although the year, the sacred place of Brahmamgari Matham at Kandimallayapalle, even as people visit Shri Balaji Venkateswara Swami in Tirumala to offer their humble homage and prayer to the sacred memory of the SAGE ETERNAL and receive his Divine blessings.

— P. V. RAGHAVAN
MESSAGE

C. D. V. RAGHAVULU
Manager:
Khadi Gramodyog Bhavan
844, Anna Salai, MADRAS-600 002

It was with great pleasure that I happened to go through the beautiful booklet on the Chakra and the Charkha, brought out by Sri Veerabrahmendra Mission, under the direction of my old friend and colleague, Sri V. Veerabrahmam Garu.

The book seeks to underline the mystical link between the two wheels, the Sudarshna Chakra of Mahavishnu and the Charkha of Mahatma Gandhi. The one was a symbol of divine power, used by the Lord for the destruction of the wicked and villainous and the protection of the weak and the virtuous. The other was employed as a weapon against the foreign oppressors and the encouragement and resuscitation of Indian Cottage Industries.

As a life-long worker in the Khadi movement, I am naturally more familiar with the Charkha. It stands for the concept of self-sufficiency at the grassroots level and removal of exploitation at all levels. Now, I have come to know about the Chakra as well. It was Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, the secular saint of Andhra, who worshipped Sri Ranganatha, the Lord of the wheel, and foresaw the birth of Gandhi, who would fight the foreign rulers with the other wheel, i.e. the Charkha and the sliver that goes with it.
According to traditional Hindu belief in the Avatars, God appears in different forms in different ages. It is not surprising that there are pious friends who believe that Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami and Mahatma Gandhi are Avatars (Manifestations) of Maha Vishnu.

Striking a personal note, let me say how I have some connections with both Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami and Mahatma Gandhi. I was interested to learn that my mother had vowed to offer a bell to be hung in Sri Brahmamgari Matham (monastery) for an early settlement of my marriage. The object was realised and the vow was duly fulfilled. The memory and message of the Saint are always cherished in my family.

Now, this book succeeds in presenting the message of the Saint and the wisdom of the Sage in proper perspective and brings them within the reach of everyone through the medium of a world language. My hearty congratulations to Sri Veerabrahmam Garu and his mission on supplying a longfelt need.

— C. D. V. RAGHAVULU
I have gone through the monograph "Brahmavani Gandhiji–Charkha and Sudarsana Chakra" ably rendered into English by my esteemed friend and distinguished journalist Dr. D. Anjaneyulu.

As the title suggests, this little book deals with two prophets of our country – Sri Veerabrahmendra Swamy and Mahatma Gandhi. The latter is well-known throughout the world while the former is a household word in Andhra Pradesh. In this book has been successfully attempted to explain some events of the Gandhian era through the prophetic observations of Veerabrahmendra Swamy, reverentially called Brahmamgaru. The twelve appendices included enhance the value of the book.

Brahmam Garu is one definitely of the Seers and Saints that our country has seen. Swamiji, in his KAALAJNANAM, which literally means knowledge of the time past, present and future, has forecast the birth of Gandhiji in the North, besides many interesting predictions – Political, Social and Cultural. True to his forecast, the Father of the Nation was born in the North and he dedicated his life for the welfare of the Humanity, as every one is aware of.

What SUDARSAN CHAKRA was to Lord Vishnu, the simple CHARKHA or the spinning wheel was to Mahatma Gandhi. As Dr. A. S. Raman in his appendix has rightly observed, Maha Vishnu’s Sudarsana Chakra brought moral
regeneration to the Indians, Gandhiji’s Charkha gave them political freedom to shape their own destiny. The simple spinning wheel is not only attained a status but also became a powerful weapon in the hands of Gandhiji. It is, therefore, no wonder that almost all national poets in Telugu and other languages have eulogised the spinning wheel as it should be.

It is quite significant to note that Brahmam Garu has observed EKUNU CHEBATTI MEKAI NILCHINA GANDHI, meaning the man who held a sliver of cotton in hand had become a thorn in the flesh of the rulers. It is equally significant that this prophetic observation of Swamiji has now become an adage in Telugu. That E K U (silver of cotton) becoming a MEKU (instrument of power) has become a reality which is something wonderful. The significance of the cotton sliver and the uniqueness of the Charkha have been discussed in detail in the appendices, thus they throw a flood of light on the prophetic words of Swamiji. Hence the learned authors of these appendices deserve our congratulations.

Swamiji’s motto was “Serve man, Serve God”, which has relevance for all times. His KAALAJNANAM contains eternal truths besides predictions of astonishing nature. This rare work which is at present available only in Telugu should be widely known.

I am sure the Brahmavani will enable the Non-Telugu readers to realise the greatness of Sri Veerabrahmendra Swamy and of his great work.

I congratulate the experienced translator for his successful rendering of a Great work, though small in size translation should be faithful and readable and Dr. Anjaneyulu has admirably achieved these twin objectives.

I also congratulate Sri Veerabrahmam Garu of the Mission for his unstinted devotion in propagating the life and work of Brahmam Garu.

— C. R. SARMA
Now-a-days facts appear stranger that fiction. It may appear that some of the observations made are far-fetched, highly astonishing and fantastic, but remembering “God fulfills himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world”, they can be construed as plausible. In the sacred lore, it is clearly said that the kings, rulers of mankind are persons possessing a fragment of divine powers. Also we hear that they ruled the kingdom rightly and cared only for the welfare of the people – at the same time leading a simple and unostentatious life. The Vaishnavas believe in some persons possessing the divine spark in them. So there is no gainsaying the fact that the father of the nation belonged to this category to save India from bondage. The weapons they use very according to times and conditions and it is but proper that Sri Gandhi wielded the “Charkha” as his emblem and weapon. One important point to be born in mind is that without much bloodshed, the country got freedom. It bears comparison with “Bali” and “Trivikrama” where unlike the other incarnations the evil was warded off and the conquerer and the vanished are both doubly blessed. Dharma blesses him that ‘gives’ and him that ‘takes’. A study of the life and doings of Sri Gandhi bears ample testimony to the fact.

In conclusion, my prayer to the readers will be to remember that the predictions of greatmen will not go in vain. Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, like the “Alwars” and Vaishnava
saints had a vision of Sri Ranganatha which led him to sing the glory and beauty in many lyrics. His extraordinary merit led him to the divine vision and the divine spark enabled him to foresee the future in all its glory and pristine beauty. These predictions have come true as they are seen to-day. Sri Veerabrahmam, Sanchalak, Sri Veerabrahmedra Mission is to be congratulated for bringing to light all these, and richly deserves our praise for all the troubles he has taken to publish his writing.

Let our prayer be:—

“Sarve Janah Sukino bhavantu
Bharatha Desa Eko Abedya Astu”

Let all people live in happiness, amity and concord and this Bharatha land of ours is one and indivisible.

— S. Sreenivasa Raghavan
As I Look At It

Sahitya - Vidya Praveena - Bhasha Praveena

Sri K. S. RAMANUJACHARYULU, M. A.,
Principal,
Veda Sanskrit College, NELLORE

It is indisputable that God, from time to time, attains different forms to put down evil (ADHARMA) and restore righteousness (DHARMA) to the status that it deserves. This undoubtedly is the purpose of His incarnations, including that of Sri Ramakrishna. "Bahunime Vyatithani Janmani" and "Yadyadvibhuti Matsyatvam — Srimadurjitamenava — Tattadevavagacchatvam, Mamatejomasasambhavam" — which constitutes the eternal message of the Gita, clearly suggests that all that is potent bears the unmistakable stamp of God. If only properly construed, Mahatma Gandhi, the liberator of this land from foreign yoke, must be viewed as God's yet another incarnation. The same Lord who annihilated evil in the form of Vamana of yore without recourse to bloodshed, put on the form of Gandhi to achieve success through non-violence. The weapons employed by Him to achieve the object would vary with the needs of the time. If 'Kodandam' was needed by Sri Kodandarama, Parasurama required the battle axe (PARASUVU).

The weapons are instrumental in assisting Him in the attainment of the Divine goal. His weapon for the Gandhi form was the Charakha which is none other than the sacred 'Chakravyudha'. Hence the Charkha was no less invincible than the Chakra. Little wonder that cotton sliver which Gandhiji churned out of his spinning wheel could prove the death-nail for the British Raj. How is it that only Gandhiji's Charakha could
acquire such incomprehensible might, while the same Charakha confined itself to producing only yarn when others handled it before, deserves serious thought. The Charkha could prove disastrous to the enemy only because it was yet another form of the ‘Chakra’ of Lord Vishnu.

The powers that accrue to the weapon depend on the hand that wields it. At Sri Ramachandra’s hands a blade of grass turned into a deadly ‘Brahmastram’ while Sri Narasimha’s nails could transform into deadly ‘Vajrayudham’ when the occasion demanded it. So was Gandhiji’s seemingly mundane weapon ‘charakha’, which became the object of veneration in the Indian household. It is none but ‘Sudarsan chakra’, the “wheel beautiful”, the Lord’s invincible weapon.

The “Kaalajnaanam”, of Sri Virat Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami, the 17th century saint, seer, prophet—philosopher of Andhra which echoes eternal truths and predicts the future with astonishing accuracy testifies the above statement. The Swami could visualise the birth of Gandhiji more than 3 centuries before its actual occurrence. He could also foresee Gandhiji’s mission and the universal adoration he commanded, in the 17th century itself, when he stated (1) “Uttaradesamuna Vaisya Kulamunandu Uttama Gandhokadu Puttenima! (2) Lokamu Nanthayu ekambagaajese eku pattedivadu vacchenima! Prakatambugaaunu Lokambulo taanu mekai nilichi janula melenchenima! (Kaalajnaanam, Page 223)

Facts sound stranger than fiction. These should be viewed in their correct perspective for gaining an insight of the ways of God. If only he could bestow a bit of his serious thought, that one could get convinced that Lord Vishnu is present at Srirangam enshrined as Sri Ranganadha Swamy. He assumed the form of Sri Veerabrahmendra Swamy who in turn extolled Vishnu’s Ranganadha form and adored the Lord of Srirangam. It was with the lofty object achieving universalism that the Swami found it necessary to assume Gandhi’s form and
turned the "wheel beautiful" through the 'charkha', for universal welfare relieving society of servitude and foreign exploitation. Little wonder that the 'cotton sliver' proved the "deathnail" for the exploitors, as Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami could correctly predict. That all this was divinely ordained, and was in the scheme of things that Sri Ranganadha Swamy planned could be guaged from the 'Kaalajnaanam'. Several other mysteries are lying hidden in the great work. The "Veerabrahmendra Mission" and the 'Anandasramam' engaged in interpreting these 'mysteries, with a missionary zeal and the unrelenting and dedicated efforts of the founder Sri V. Veerabrahmam in this direction, deserve the gratitude of the entire sub-continent.

— K. S. Ramanujacharyulu
I congratulate poojya Sri Veerabrahmamgaru and Sri Veerabrahmendra Mission for bringing out a publication on "Vishnu Chakra and Spinning wheel, khadi and Indian Freedom" which was found out from the works of great saint Pothuluru - Veerabrahmendra swami of Kandimallayapalli, Cuddapah Dt. (A. P.) who predicted many many which came true after hundreds of years. His prophecy of Vishnu Chakra, spinning wheel, khadi and Indian freedom and Gandhi reflects the divine and spiritual power of Sri Veerabrahmendra swami.

Sri Veerabrahmamgaru deserves all our help and encouragement to continue his Mission so that the message of Brahmamgaru reaches every nook and corner of our country to benefit mankind for its resurrection, emancipation and prosperity.

— S. Krishna Moorthy.
The Chakra and Charkha

Kanakarajitha Chakram Basuraramya Chakram
Girivaraguru Chakram Kesavaswami Chakram
Asurandhana Chakram Kaladandaguni Chakram
Bavathu Bavathu Chakram, Bandhavo Vishnu Chakram.
— Sri Raghavashtakam.

T. R. Krishnamoorthy, B. A.,
202, East Chitra Street,
Srinangam, TRICHY - 6

How admirably has the efficacy and the glory of the Vishnu Chakram been brought out by our ancestors in these sweet words!

Truly the Sudarsana Chakra in the hands of Lord Sri Ranganatha symbolises the eternal driving energy behind the universe and also holds out the positive hope of relief to the oppressed and down-trodden from the tyranny and exploitation by the wicked and power-mad monsters even in human form.

The Planets of the Solar System which are constantly in circular or parabolic motion determine the life and fortunes of the inhabitants of Mother Earth and a calm and sober reflection will convince us that this magnificent driving force is nothing else than the dynamic and all powerful revolutions of the Chakra of the supreme Ruler of the Universe, Lord Sri Ranganatha. The saints and seers of India had realised this universal truth long before the dawn of history and the entire march of the nation down to the present day can be interpreted as an amplification of this universal truth. Whenever the Indian nation was threatened by foreign invasions or oppression by militant and tyrannical groups, great men have sprung up who, by their exemplary conduct and righteous deeds have met the challenge and restored the balance. The glorious achievements of these illustrious national heroes have been a source of perennial inspiration for the generations to come and we owe a deep debt of gratitude to them for re-establishing our faith and confidence in ourselves and our destiny. The divine incarnations of Sri Ramachandra and Lord Sri Krishna the two great Epic heroes,
the emergence of King Vikramaditya, Yasodharman of Malwa, Salivahana of Andhra, Raja Bhoja, Prithviraj Chowhan, Rana Pratap Singh and Udai Singh of Mewar, the establishment of the Vijayanagar Empire by Harihara and Bukka, the Metric rise of the people of Maharashtra under the leadership of Chatrapathi Sivaji, the noble sacrifices of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi and above all the re-awakening of the nation under the spiritual and magnetic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the Twentieth Century are all shining examples of the innate strength and solidness of the foundations of our national existence. The Chakra in the hands of the Lord representing the rule of Dharma (Dharma Chakra) has time and again rescued the nation from falling a prey to the dominance of Adharma or Forces of evil and it has helped to keep the torch of Indian culture burning throughout the long period of history.

Viewed in this context, the significance of Raatna chakra (Spinning wheel) which Mahatma Gandhi handled and propagated cannot be ignored lightly as a symbol without any effect. Like the Vishnu Chakra it represented at once the spirit of the nation and a symbol of unity. It is this chakra which helped to awaken the masses from the slumber into which they had fallen under the British rule and helped them to secure their freedom and liberation. It acted as a powerful instrument for mobilising the hidden powers of the people into a mighty and gigantic Jana Sakti before which the British imperialism vanished like a passing cloud before sun rise.

We are deeply indebted to Dr. D. Anjaneyalu for his masterly analysis of the glories of the Chakra and Charkha and the publishers of Sri Veerabramhendra Mission, Cuddapah, have done a signal service in bringing out the book—let for the benefit of all those who love Bharath and her rich and noble cultural heritage.

I sincerely wish that the appeal of the author will sink deeply into the hearts of the youth of the Country and inspire them in their efforts to build a new world order based on the eternal laws of Dharma and Justice for all.

— T. R. Krishnamoorthy
AN APPRECIATION

Kalapropoorna, Kaviraju,

Dr. Kondaveeti Venkatakavi,
Poet Laureate,

Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami Math
KANDIMALLAYAPALLE
Cuddapah District, (A. P.)

Sri Virat Potuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami was a man of destiny come down here to counteract the fanaticism of creed, caste and other evil forces. His teachings are of lasting value. It behoves those responsible for the administration of the land to propagate these teachings among the people as well as to practise them. They must bestir themselves soon in this direction. Hope they will.

That a part, it is gratifying to note that Sri V. Veerabrahmamgaru founder of the Ananda Ashram, had taken the initiative to spread the word of Sri Brahmamgaru not only among the people of Andhra, but those of India as a whole and the wider world as well. He has spared no pains in making the message available in Hindi and English, in addition to the Telugu original.

It was long, long ago, that the great prophet called his hermitage the “Ananda Ashram”. Today, an Ashram by the same name has come into existence to work for “Charkha and
Bhoodan", two vital points in the Sarvodaya movement. Sri Veerabrahmam garu the moving spirit behind the ashram, has been devoting his attention to the ideal of eastern society and communal harmony through inter-dining and other programmes of social welfare.

Efforts are also being made to promote love and harmony in a hate-filled world.

The shape of things to come, including the advent of the Mahatma, was unequivocally forecast by Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami about four centuries ago.

To quote his own words:

"A man called Gandhi, who will take birth in the Vaisya Caste in the north of India, will become great and receive the homage of people the world over". ... Kaalajnaanam, verse...Page 223.

Such words of wisdom from Kaalajnaanam, the memorable work of the saint, Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, are now being publicised by our friend Sri Veerabrahmam garu. He deserves the co-operation of one and all in his mission.

My tribute to his tireless service.

— Kondaveeti Venkatakavi.
1. BIRTH OF GANDHI FORECAST

Over three centuries ago, there lived in Andhra a saint by name Srimad Viraat Potuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami, considered an incarnation of God.

Historians believe that he lived between the years 1604 and 1690 A.D. He is known to have attained SAMAADHI, while still alive, at village Kandimallayapalle in Cuddapah District (in the State of Andhra Pradesh). On the site of his SAMAADHI arose a structure, known as BRAHMAMGARI MATHAM (or the Math, i.e., place of meditation, of Sri Brahman). Daily worship is offered to him here by groups of devotees and those in charge of the Math.

The name of Sri Brahman reminds everyone of what is known as KAALAJNAANAM (or book of prescience). It is a bundle of palmleaf manuscripts, in which he is believed to have written about the shape of things to come—political developments, socio-economic changes, and many other things besides. Part of this has been printed by the authorities of the Math and made available to the general public.
There are many references in this work to the events of the Gandhian era. The birth of Gandhi in India is clearly indicated in the following lines.

“A man called Gandhi, who will take birth in the Vaisya Caste in the north of India, will become great and receive the homage of people the world over”

KAALAJNAANAM, verse.. page 223.

True to this forecast, Gandhi was born at Porbunder in the state of Gujarat, on 2 October, 1869. His full name was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. His mother was Putali Bai and father Karamchand. Vaisya was his caste.
2. E K U (Sliver)

It is also mentioned in KAALAJNAANAM that the man, “will upset the rulers, with a sliver (of cotton) in his hand and unite the whole world.”

“Eku pattedu vaadu”
Lokamantayu ekambuga jese
Eku pattedu vaadu
Vachchenima,
Prakatambuganu lokambulo
Tanu mekai niliche ganula.
Melenchenima .. K.P. 223

Eku (or sliver) is derived, after the seed is removed from KAPAS (raw cotton), which is carded and made into slivers (cylindrical in shape), fit for spinning.

Continuing, the same verse says:

“The man with a sliver of cotton in his hand, will prove a thorn in the flesh of the rulers, and a godsend to the ruled.”

From this we can understand how a weapon, no stronger than a hank of cotton, in the hand
of Candhi had proved powerful enough to drive the white rulers away and win ‘SWARAJ’ (or self-government) for India.

Nor did he have any other weapon with him, except the Charkha (or spining wheel), with the aid of which you can spin yarn out of the cotton. It is a kind of revolution that he wrought, a non-violent revolution.

Here, a word of two about the cult of the Charkha and the movement of Khadi which had spread far and wide, may not be out of place.

3. THE ORIGIN OF KHADI

To look back a little in Indian history, Muslim rule began in India around the Eleventh Century, A.D. British Supremacy was estab-
ished by the Eighteenth Century. The result of centuries of foreign rule was clearly to be seen in economic backwardness and intellectual slavery. These were much in evidence, when Gandhiji re-
turned home after his education in England.
When he plunged into the service of the country, Gandhi felt that decay of cottage industries, symbolized by the spindle (KADURU) and the churning staff (KAVVAM), was mainly responsible for the country's poverty. Many Indians, who got accustomed to the slavery under the British, began to patronise the textiles imported from England. This resulted in a decline in the use of the spinning wheel and the unemployment and impoverishment of the handloom weavers. Gandhiji, therefore, decided that development of Khadi was the only effective method of stopping the import of foreign textiles.

He started work with a spinning wheel which he secured through the help of a lady by name Ganga Bhavani. He first installed the weavers' handlooms at the Sabarmati Ashram, extending them gradually to Baroda and other places. He solved the problem of cotton slivers for spinning by setting up a unit at the Ashram itself.

Thus, the attention of Gandhi, who wanted to give a fillip to the indigenous handloom industry, was soon focussed on the sliver of cotton, as forecast in the KAALAJAVAANAM composed by Sri Brahmam garu.
4. SEEDS OF REVOLUTION

For Gandhiji, Khadi has a philosophy of its own.

Khadi is a symbol of unity, economic freedom and equality of the Indian people. In the apt and poetic words of Jawaharlal Nehru, Khadi is the livery of the soldiers in the struggle of Indian freedom.

The campaign for Khadi involves a number of other activities—like the growing of cotton in the fields, ginning, preparation of slivers, spinning of yarn, classification into fine and coarse, dying, weaving, washing, bleaching etc. With the destruction of this kind of cottage industries, Indian villages became dull and lifeless.

I am unable to hold the Indian farmer responsible for the deterioration in cotton culture. The whole incentive was taken away when hand spinning was destroyed. The state never cared for the cultivator.
My activity, I am proud to think, has already turned the cultivator's attention to the Improvement of cotton. The artistic sense of the nation will insist on fine counts for which long staple is a necessity. Cotton culture by itself cannot solve the problem of India's poverty. For it will still leave the question of enforced idleness untouched.

I, therefore, claim for the CHARKHA the honour of being able to solve the problem of economic distress in a most natural, simple, inexpensive and businesslike manner. The CHARKHA, therefore, is not only not useless, as the writer ignorantly suggests, but it is a useful and indispensable article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war but of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill-will towards the nations of the earth but of good-will and self-help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources, but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as to-day they cook their food in their own homes. I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the CHARKHA. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, good-will
and love. And with all that, in as much as the loss of it brought about India's slavery, its voluntary revival, with all its implications, must mean India's freedom.

**YOUNG INDIA,**
(Page 406) December 8, 1921

5. GREATNESS OF EKU (Sliver)

"The man with the sliver will come," are the simple words of Sri Brahman garu, which are so pregnant with meaning. Gandhiji proved not only the commentator, but the implementer.

The Indian people heartily responded to the revolutionary gospel of Gandhi and not only spun yarn and wore Khadi, but staked their all in the struggle for India's Freedom.
6. A SYMBOL OF NON-VIOLENCE

The article “sliver of cotton” (‘EKU’ in Telugu) used in everyday life had become a symbol of the non-violent revolution to come. It is an object of little weight. That it would prove a “Brahmastra” (a powerful weapon used in the Battle of Mahabharata) in bringing about a far-reaching social change through peaceful means, was a prediction made by Sri Brahman garu some three centuries ago. On the basis of this prediction, we now feel confident that an egalitarian society can be established, by means not of violence, but through a change of heart. On this subject, it is worth recalling Gandhi ji’s own words:—

‘But you can’t teach non-violence to the masses. It is only possible for individuals and that too in rare cases.’ This is, in my opinion, a gross self-deception. If mankind was not habitually non-violent, it would have been self-destroyed ages ago. But in the duel between forces of violence and those of non-violence the latter have always come out victorious in the end. The truth is that we have not had patience 2)
enough to wait and apply ourselves whole heartedly to the spread of non-violence among the people as a means for political ends.

(YOUNG INDIA, 2 January, 1930)

The main item is the evidence of coercion and untruth in the process of social reform. No social reform worth mentioning has ever succeeded through a policy of force. Though it might appear to have succeeded, on the surface, it would bring in other evils in its wake, even worse than the original ones.

It is not difficult to conclude that the revolution which spread the campaign for khaddar far and wide, throwing the spinning mills of England out of work was caused by this sliver of cotton. Nor can we forget that, alongside, it has provided employment for the handloom weavers in India, thereby improving their way of life, and adding to social welfare in general.
7. INTEGRAL VISION

Gandhiji tried his best to bring about a change in all the fields of social service. He gave women an equal status with men and enrolled them as Satyagrahis in the struggle for freedom, thus exploding the myth about women being the weaker sex.

He convinced the rich about the value of the theory of Trusteeship and enlisted their goodwill for the service of the poor. He upheld the ideals of service to enrich human life and discouraged the multiplication of wants and vanities. He declared his faith in the potentialities of India to strengthen the cause of world peace and universal brotherhood.

A sliver is made of cotton, which is one of the lightest of materials. Gandhiji proved that with a sliver in hand, you can develop lofty thoughts, and build up character with sacrifice.

It was the same sliver of cotton mentioned by Sri Brahmam garu, THAT WAS DEPLOYED in the task of removing inequality between men and women and strengthening social unity. It
is wellknown how women like Kasturba exemplified this idea by spinning.

Sri Brahmagar, who predicted the birth of Gandhi in the north, also envisaged him as the unifier of mankind and the opponent of British Rule. In other words, he looked upon him as one who would practise his own ideals. ("EKU Pattedu Vaade Lokaanni, Ekam Chestaadu, Atani Eke Britishu Varini Cheekaku Parustundi").

Sri Brahmagar has thereby indicated in these words not only the Freedom movement of Gandhi, but also the devices and weapons he would use for it, like Khaddar, removal of untouchability, women's welfare, promotion of cottage industries, prohibition and salt satyagraha. Which becomes clear in the minds of readers of KAALAJNAANAM, who can interpret its words liberally and reconcile the past with the present. What we need is an enterprising and competent commentator for 'KAALAJNAANAM'.
8. CHALLENGE TO THE RULERS

Khaddar caused panic among the British rulers. To start with, they did not understand its revolutionary implications. Having won an empire by armed war and military victory, they felt that the spinning wheel was little more than a device to provide some work for the villages. Even Indian Politicians felt the same way. In fact, Pandit Nehru said it in so many words.

Only when Gandhiji gave a call for boycott of foreign cloth, in keeping with the message of Swadeshi, did the potentialities of a revolution through Khaddar begin to dawn on the British. When large quantities of foreign cloth were collected in Bombay and burnt, the mill-owners of Manchester and Lankashire woke up to the power of Khaddar. Those who wore Khaddar in India were looked upon as sworn enemies by the British. Even those who wore the Gandhi cap were hauled up during the satyagraha campaigns in India.

The nearly one lakh people who were arrested during the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 were all wearers of Khadi. Even affluent housewives
began to play the spinning wheel, and gave up wearing mill-made cloth.

This activity was looked after by the All India Spinners Association, under the supervision of Mahatma Gandhi. The British did not know how to stem the tide of the Khadi movement.

9. A SHOCKING INCIDENT

Regular consignments of foreign cloth imports used to reach Bombay Fort. Satyagrahis picketing there at the harbour gates used to obstruct the lorries transporting the bundles. They were not only arrested, but kicked with jackboots. When the masses rose like the surging sea and arrests became difficult, lathi-charge was resorted to.

In one incident a sturdy teenaged coolie boy, by name Babu, tried to obstruct one of these lorries. He did not budge, even after he was hit by the police in the lorry. Thereupon,
they drove the lorry upon him, resulting in his death on the spot. That blood-spattered spot became a holy place for patriotic Indians, including women who began to visit it in all reverence; and pay homage to the martyr. All the Britishers in the city, including the Governor of the province, were shaken by this. The ruthlessness of the rulers was exposed. The courage and heroism shown by the common people, including women and children in the campaign against foreign cloth were indeed remarkable.

This campaign was conducted with great enthusiasm in Guntur, Rajahmundry and other centres of Andhra. Women from well-to-do families did not hesitate to destroy foreign cloth, and the idea that it was a symbol of slavery percolated to the poor masses too.

10. EFFICACY OF THE CHARKHA

Mahatma Gandhi always used to play the spinning wheel, which he considered an incarnation of God. It was only while doing so that he used to get new ideas. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhai Patel also span.
President Rajendra Prasad used to play the Charkha, even while talking to people on his official tours. The author has had occasion to watch this in his Bhoodan Campaign.

Acharya Kripalani was responsible for founding the Khadi organisation. Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Kaka Kalekar, Prof. Bhansali, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Swami Sitaram, Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Shrimati Prabhavati Devi wife of Jayaprakash Narayan, to name only a few of those influenced by Gandhiji, were all devoted to the spinning wheel. Khaddar wearing became a rule with all the Satyagrahis and Seva Dal volunteers. When the takli came into vogue, along with the Charkha, spinning became easier and more popular.

It is true that only Gandhi and ‘Eku’ (Sliver of cotton) were mentioned by Sri Brahmam garu in his ‘KAALAJNAANAM’. We can now take it that Pandit Nehru, Rajen Babu, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and all the other great men and women influenced by the Mahatma are included in the word Gandhi.
11. A SHORT-SIGHTED POLICY

Because the British Government in 1940, declared war against Germany on behalf of India, without consulting the Indian people, Gandhiji advised the congress ministries in the provinces formed under the Government of India Act, 1935, to resign. All those Ministers were given to spinning, including K. M. Munshi, Home Minister of Bombay. A British Governor of those days, who happened to see Munshi spinning on a takli, asked with a smile if he hoped thereby to win Swaraj for India. But, what was it that actually happened? The individual Satyagraha of 1940 was followed by the ‘Quit India’ Movement of 1942, which ultimately led to the departure of the British rulers from India.

Until then, the British rulers and political thinkers could not realise the true efficacy of the Charkha and Khadi

As already mentioned, about a lakh of people were arrested in the Salt Satyagraha
Movement. So were rounded up indiscriminately all those who wore the Gandhi Cap. These indiscriminate arrests were denounced by members of the Labour opposition in the British Parliament as being the result of a shortsighted policy. These people had obviously recognised the merit of the policy of non-violence and its philosophy.

It was indeed a problem for the British rulers how to change the Khadi-spinners and the Gandhi cap-wearers.

12. SPINNING WHEEL AND VISHNU’ WHEEL

The movement for Swaraj was all conducted under the banner of the Charkha. It was the Charkha which inspired hundreds of thousands of Indian with courage and valour to fight against the armed might of British Imperialism. Poets, therefore, feel that the spinning wheel is comparable in its power to the wheel of Vishnu (or Sudarshana Chakra). The YAJNOPAVEETA (or the sacred thread) is also handspun (on the takle or the spinning wheel) and so the same
sacred quality attached to Khaddar, which is also handspun and hand-woven. The philosophy of Khaddar cut across all the differences, of religion and caste, like Hindu, Muslim, Harijan, Christian, Sikh etc., and brought all Indians together to present a united front against the British.

In this connection, it may also be recalled that the link between Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami and Lord Sri Ranganatha of Srirangam is established by the words from the 'KAALAJNAA-NAM'. Sri Ranganatha was but an incarnation of Sri Mahavishnu, whose weapon is the Sudarshana Chakra. From this we can proceed a step further and infer that the spinning wheel of Gandhi, which he used to drive the British rulers away from India, was not unlike the wheel of Vishnu (or Sudarshana Chakra).
13. A BAND OF DEVOTEES

Volunteers of the Seva Dal, clad in white Khadi, looked like the disciples and other inmates in the ashram of a Rishi. The Charkha flags brought lustre and colour to the festoons of mango-leaves. Bands of Satyagrahis were known as ‘Rama Dandu’ (i.e., Rama’s army) in the Chirala-Perala Campaign in Andhra, organised by Andhra Ratna Duggirala Gopala-krishnayya, which was a remarkable phenomenon. So were the Satyagraha campaigns at Bardoli, Dandi, the Individual Satyagraha of 1940, not to speak of the Mahatma’s fasts, all of which were undertaken by the devotees of Khadi.
14. ABOVE PARTY POLITICS

When India was firmly under British rule, the Indian National Congress was the first to raise the banner of Political Independence. Others like the Communist and Socialist parties arrived on the scene later. Independence of India was a common goal for all of them. Most of them started as followers of Gandhi, and supporters of the principle of Khadi.

Intrinsically, Khadi is not something connected with a party or a group. It is part of the philosophy of non-violence, inherited by India for her liberation from slavery. It is a simple device within the reach of the rich and the poor alike.

It is unfortunate that some of the political parties have not reached this realisation, and some members of the Legislative Assembly and Parliament have not made a habit of wearing Khadi. It is unlikely that those who do not wear Khadi can identify themselves with the poor of the land. To forget Khadi is to forget
the history of the struggle for freedom and the role of the valiant heroes in it. Was it not the CHARKHA which had saved us from the disastrous effects of foreign cloth imports?

15. SIGN OF HOPE

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, the spinning wheel is a sign of hope for the people. In the days gone by, the masses enjoyed a measure of freedom. With the disappearance of the CHARKHA, that also has disappeared. The CHARKHA used to be a supplement to the agricultural life of the rural masses, which helped sustain this occupation. It was a source of support for helpless women. It provided work for the villagers and prevented them from being idle. It therefore, seems to me that the revival of the Khadi industry is a natural device for the renaissance of the Indian villages.
16. PROPHETIC WORDS

We see that the words of the 'KAALA-JNAANAM', of an avatar of God, uttered some three centuries ago, are pregnant with profound thought. Unless we elaborate their meaning in the present context, we cannot understand their true significance. Let us take the simple words "LOKAM EKAMAGUNU – BRITISHUVARU CHIKAAKULA PAALAYYEDARU" (Meaning Gandhi will be born and handle the sliver of cotton. People will become one, to the discomfiture of the British). These words go to sum up the entire history of our freedom struggle. There are also the words like "UTTARADESAM KATTULA PALAYYENU" – which could refer to the holocaust of Noakhali and the rest, foreseen by Sri Bramham garu.
17. FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Gandhiji thought of the spinning wheel in lofty terms. He described the Charkha or spinning wheel as "RASHTRA CHAKRA" (literally "wheel of the state"), symbolising the freedom of India and the process of spinning as "SUTRA YAGNA".

There are also economic and spiritual aspects to this symbolism. Spinning is a kind of physical labour, fit for being given as an offering to God.

The equation of the spinning wheel with the wheel of Vishnu is reinforced by support from the prophetic words of Sri Brahmagar. The words "EKUNU CHEBATTI MEKAI NILA-CHINA GANDHI" are significant. They literally mean that "The man who held a sliver of cotton in hand had become a thorn in the flesh of the rulers". Some divine power is indicated in the playing of the spinning wheel.
18. INCARNATIONS

There is enough evidence for us to believe that Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami can be identified with Lord Sri Ranganatha of Srirangam, who was an avatar of Sri Mahavishnu. It is also possible to venture the surmise that Sri Brahmagaru, in turn, was born as Gandhi, and the SUDARSHANA CHAKRA (wheel of Vishnu) he wielded in an earlier avatar, was transferred to Gandhi, after being transformed into a RAATNA CHAKRA (or spinning wheel).

It was remarkable that the Mahatma not only cherished and worshipped the spinning wheel at all times, but even converted the sceptics to his way and made them spin. Just as the SUDARSHANA CHAKRA (wheel of Vishnu) was able to protect the world, the RAATNA CHAKRA (or the spinning wheel) protected the people of India by winning them political freedom. The Mahatma’s faith was, therefore, not misplaced.

The basic idea of the equation of the two wheels is implicit in the predictions of Sri Brah-
mam garu and not superimposed by us. Without this exercise in reconciliation, it will not be possible to interpret ‘KAALAJNAAM’ (of Sri Brahmam garu) meaningfully and satisfactorily.

19. CONCLUSION

The SUDARSHANA CHAKRA (wheel of Vishnu) of that age, with its sharp edge, destroyed sin and rewarded virtue and merit, establishing the rule of Dharma (or law eternal) in the world.

The Raatna Chakra (spinning wheel) of this age destroyed the political and intellectual slavery of the Indians, and with the soft slivers of cotton softened the hearts of people to love and universal brotherhood.

Just as slivers of cotton were spun into a single thread, masses of people were brought together in harmony and led along a single path, likewise, the hearts of the British rulers were also softened and ennobled and an atmosphere was created, conducive to the freedom of India.
All this was possible through the instrumentality of an object so soft and light as a sliver of cotton. Would this miracle have been possible without the effect of a great spiritual power? Of course, not; and Gandhiji believed that every simple, physical act of ours released a spiritual force, a divine power.

It is against this background that we should understand the "Eku" (sliver of cotton) becoming a 'MEKU' (a nail or instrument of power).

One cannot speak here for those who have no faith in the spiritual power, familiar to the Indian tradition. But from the point of view of seekers like Mahatma Gandhi, experimenting with full faith and reaping the fruits, no explanation other than the one indicated above is possible. And Gandhiji's experiments were only with truth, love and other basic values of our life.

What, after all, was Gandhiji's life and work but a commentary on the prophetic words of Sri Veerabrahmam?
APPENDICES
APPENDIX-I

GANDHI - GOD'S MESSIAH

A specific reference to the eventual birth of Gandhi in the immortal works in Telugu of the sage Veerabrahmendra, popularly known as Shri Brahmmam Garu, written about 400 years ago, has been high-lighted in the book "THE TWO PROPHETS" proposed to be published by Shri Veerabrahmendra Mission. Closely associated with this event also visualise in the same works, in a reference to "EKU" in Telugu (meaning "sliver"), which in Gandhi's hand, would bring about a silent and a non-violent revolution in this country, which in turn, would sweep across the five continents. This was not meant as an astrological prediction but was a Divine Mission of a realised soul, written down for posterity on palm leaves in a super-conscious state. This is but one of the scores of events encompassing a variety of aspects of life such as social, spiritual, cultural, educational, economic fields, that the sage Veerabrahmendra has touched upon, that the world would have to contend with as
years pass by, Brahmagari KALAGNANAM, which is the title of the original works written in Telugu, is well known among the Telugu speaking people of Andhra, which is treated as a Divine gift to guide the destinies of people in the everyday life of stress and strain, trials and tribulations, intended to provide immense strength and solace to mankind as a whole.

It is unfortunate that the existence of such an immortal and all-absorbing work such as the KALAGNANAM (knowledge of times to come) written in Telugu, is not known, outside the Telugu-speaking areas of this country. Even in these areas its knowledge is very limited and vague. Shri Veerabrahmendran had not established any organisation nor had he named anyone as his chosen representative. All that remains as his sacred memory is a humble “Matham” (monastery) popularly known as “Sri Brahmagari Matham” at an obscure village called Kandimallayapalle, in the Badvel Taluk of Cuddapah District in Andhra Pradesh, where he attained Jeeva Samadhi. The Matham itself consists of a few simple structures built around the main precincts of the Samadhi, and inhabited by a few permanent residents distantly and remotely claiming to be the descendents of the Sage Veerabrahmendra. They live almost in penury with hardly any financial support from any quarters. In the circumstances, therefore, it is not surprising that they have made no con-
certed attempt what soever, to propagate or publicise in any manner the immortal works left behind for posterity by the sage.

It is therefore gratifying to know that Shri Veerabrahmendra Mission set up recently with headquarters at Anandashram in the district of Cuddapah, A.P. has taken up the challenging task of broadcasting to the world, the life and works of this Divine soul by bringing out a series of publications based on the original KALAGNANAM. This book under study is one such among the many that the Mission plans to place before the public in the years to come.

This brief digression form the main topic of discussion of the subject matter of this analysis and is considered relevant if only to provide a correct perspective of the background to a realistic appreciation of the contents of this small publication focussing attention to the single aspect of the eventual birth of Gandhi and the "sliver" (EKU in Telugu), in Gandhi's hand would prove to be the last "Nail" (Meku in Telugu) in the coffin of the British rule.

Yes, as visualised about 400 years ago, Gandhi was born. It is also well known how he fought the mighty British Empire wielding his only weapon, the CHARKHA (Spinning wheel) which symbolised the two facts of tyrannical British rule. It was not as if Gandhiji discovered the spinning wheel. It was there already
from times immemorial in this country. It was nothing new to the world. But what was indeed new was Gandhiji’s instinctive discovery of the revolutionary potentialities that the CHARHKA possessed for the emancipation of this great country, impoverished systematically and methodically by the British over a period of time. He thus actually “rediscovered” the CHARHKA and made it his chief instrument to fight the British in a long-drawn battle, based on the cardinal principle of TRUTH and NON-VIOLENCE, as his creed.

Eversince he came into the Indian Political scene, after his successful struggle in South Africa, Gandhiji, as if ordained by the sage Veerabrahmendra instinctively, as it were, picked up the symbolic “EKU” (sliver of all the things, which is however meant to be actually a reference to the CHARHKA with which it is spun into yarn which in turn is woven by hand into cloth, which is known as “Khaddar” or “Khadi”).

How did Gandhiji go about his task of waging a multifaceted battle against the British rule with this most innocuous, seemingly mediocre thing as a “sliver” (“Eku”). It is now well-known how he went about making this the most potent weapon of all in the armoury of a non-violent solidarity possessed. He bestowed to it the utmost sanctity one had never visualised before, because he wanted his weapon to be the
purest, devoid of all impurities of thought, deed and action. For he was a staunch believer of the purity of the means to achieve a noble end.

Incidentally, it may be recalled how he had wanted ever the "sliver" (Éku) to be of the highest and the best quality, if it has to field the best results right through. He did not patronise a sliver made crudely using the balepressed cotton and the carders' carding bow. He insisted that spinning is an "YAGNA" and should be done with all the sanctity associated with it. So it was that the sliver used for spinning was required to be of the best quality. It was clearly laid down by him as to how this could be achieved. In brief, the process prescribed for the purpose was, to have the cotton plucked fresh and clean from the plants in the early hours of the morning, stored in damage-free (from rats and rodents) conditions, the seeds removed either with the help of the simple hand-operated gin, or by "salai and otni" (an iron rod and a small rectangular wooden block), carding the lint so obtained with a small improvised carding how after the fibres are properly drawn parallel to each other "Tunai" (as the process is called in Hindi) by use of fingers, in such a perfect manner that the carded lint could almost be rendered transparent and then finally rolled with the help of an iron rod ("Ponni-salai"
in Hindi) into slivers (Ekus) of uniform thickness breakages with the help of a CHARKHA, thus ensuing the best quality of yarn for its strength and durability.

Having thus discovered its potential, Gandhiji sought to revive the CHARKHA and through it launch a countrywide movement, as a first step to redeem the country from slavery. He made his first announcement in this direction in the annual session of the Indian National Congress held at Bejawada (Vijayawada) in the year 1923 that 25 lakh CHARKHAS should be manufactured and distributed throughout the country and a fund called the “PAISA FUND” or the “Tilak Swarajya Fund” named after his political Guru, with a contribution of just only “ONE PAISA” (1/64th of a rupee) from each individual for the propagation of CHARAKHA should be raised. This was the signal for the great historic revolution, unprecedented in the history of the world, Gandhiji was to launch in the years to come.

With this above resolution as the base, Gandhiji saw to it that the All India Congress Committee at its subsequent session at Patna in the year 1925, adopted a historic resolution as a result of which an organisation named the ALL INDIA SPINNERS’ ASSOCIATION (A.I.S.A.) was established, as an independent, autonomous body exclusively charged with the responsibility
of promoting and propagating the movement associated with the CHARAKHA. What is most significant and unique here and needs to be carefully noted is the name he chose to give to this organisation, as indicated to emphasise the aspect of “Spinners” (of yarn with the “CHARAKHA”). Charkha being prominent and assigned a dominant role in his scheme of things.

Gandhiji did not just stop with the bringing into existence of the A.I.S.A. He had very wisely got the AICC to concede as an integral part of the resolution relating to the setting up of the AISA that it would be a non-political organisation and shall have no organic links with the Indian National Congress although it would enjoy its fullest support and patronage for which Gandhiji had his own very cogent and convincing reasons, to carry on relentlessly the fight for freedom from foreign rule through this medium. It was also further made explicit that those associated with AISA in any capacity whatsoever, would not and should not be even an ordinary four-anna member (primary member) of the Indian National Congress. In other words AISA was kept out of the political sphere. This was also conceded by the Congress.

The final bombshell, however was yet to come. He then announced that he had decided to be the president of this organisation and
guide its deliberations and destiny and that in consonance with the spirit of the resolution he ceases to be even an ordinary member of the Congress. Although the AICC was reluctant to appreciate how and why of all the persons he could devote his time for such an organisation, when he was chosen the undisputed leader of the Indian National Congress to guide the struggle for freedom launched by the Congress, it was eventually accepted by the AICC after intense deliberations and genuine disappointment. The Congress was convinced of the immense potentialities of the CHARAKHA as a means to achieve its cherished goal.

Eversince then, i.e., from the year 1925, Gandhiji consequently ceased to be even a member of the Congress party until the last, as he remained the President of the AISA all through his life. Perhaps this fact is little known to the outside world in as much as the Indian National Congress had not given him up as its undisputed leader in the fight for independence right through. He had continued to guide the destinies of the Congress as an individual from outside the Party, not as a Congressman. Although for all practical purposes he was recognised by one and all including the British as the sole representative of and spokesmen for the Indian National Congress, it was perhaps given to none other than the Quade Azam Jinnah to question Gandhiji’s credentials gone to meet him in
Bombay with a view to dissuade him from insisting on the division of India, as a last effort to plead with him to accept the one-nation theory only to maintain the country's integral unity. Shri Jinnah had known full well that Gandhiji had long ceased to be even an ordinary member of the Congress party. Gandhiji had to concede this very relevant and correct statement of facts and had to return rather a disappointed person.

It would be observed from the instances briefly narrated how much importance and value Gandhiji attached to the CHARKHA and everything associated with it during the country's struggle for freedom and how effectively and judiciously he used this symbolic weapon in his hands on different occasions to ward off the many evil designs and moves of the British rulers. To Jawaharlal Nehru Khadi was the "Livery of Freedom" and rightly so. It was the official dress of all the freedom fighters voluntarily and willingly adopted. Its was given to the weavers a rate inspiration and indomitable courage to fight the injustices inflicted upon the countrymen by the foreign rulers, without fear deferred by the risks involved to their lives and safety and security of their kith and kin. People plunged into the battle under the leadership of Gandhiji as disciplined solidiers of an army under an able commander - in - chief. They sacrificed everything at the altar of the Flag with CHARKHA occupying the Central
and dominant position thereon, symbolising their ambitions and aspirations. All this was made possible by the magic wand (EKU) held by Gandhiji by assigning to the CHARAKHA a symbolic significance of sacrifice and selfless service to the motherland.

It was not only the political emancipation and freedom of the country for which Gandhiji fought the battle but a multi-faceted war for the economic, social and cultural freedom of the people through the revolutionary programme. In fact he likened CHARAKHA (Khadi) as occupying the pivotal position in the Solar system as the SUN and all other rural occupations (village industries) revolving round the Charkha, in the same manner as all the other planets revolved round the sun. In fact he was firmly convinced that without the economic and social freedom, mere political freedom had little or no relevance and significance and worked ceaselessly to achieve this end through the medium of CHARAKHA. Such was the place of honour that Gandhiji assigned to the CHARAKHA in carrying out the historic non-violent revolution, unprecedented in the annals of the history of the world. Such was the Divine power granted to him that he could wield the most harmless and non-descript object as the EKU (sliver) in his hand with such fine deftness and calculated precision. Can one yet doubt after witnessing the unique success of Gandhiji, the
clairvoyant VISION of the Sage Veerabrahmendra Swami to the effect that "a man called Gandhi would be born in the North in the Vaisya community and that an "EKU" (Sliver) in his hand would prove the ultimate end of the British rule and slavery of the Indian Nation?" Can anyone also deny that Gandhiji was a Messiah of God if not His chosen human representative to fulfil the Mission he was assigned by Divine ordinance to establish good over evil? Has not Lord Sri Krishna said in the Bhagwadgeeta:

Yadayadhi Dharmasya
Glanirbhayati Bharata
Abhyuthanam Adharmasya
Tadatmanam Srujamyaham

(Ch. 4 V. 7)

P. V. RAGHAVAN,
Retd. Deputy Chief Executive Officer,
Khadi Village Industries Commission,
Government of India,
BOMBAY.
APPENDIX - II

MAHATMA GANDHI

CHARKHA-SUDARSHANA CHAKRAM

Srirangam has always attracted not only pilgrims but politicians, social reformers and crusaders for moral regeneration. Mahatma Gandhi’s preference for the Charkha (spinning wheel) and Eku (Sliver) as weapons to fight the British imperialism with was particularly significant in this context. His choice was not accidental. It was deliberate and hard thinking and deep meditation preceded it in the sense that in his mind the Charkha was only a variation of Lord Vishnu’s Sudarshana Chakra which he used for destroying evil and making the world safe for the virtuous. Being a great Vaishnava, Gandhiji naturally believed in the immense power of Sudarshana Chakra as a moral weapon. He adopted it in the form of Charkha which he thought was particularly relevant in the context of the heartrending poverty of the Indian masses.
The relation between Sri Mahavishnu's Sudarshana Chakra and Gandhiji's Charkha was established nearly three hundred years ago by a saint-prophet and social activist who was himself a devotee of Lord Ranganatha of Srirangam. In fact his followers firmly believe that he was an incarnation of the Supreme Lord of Srirangam His name was Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swamy (1604-1690). In his opus magnum, Kalagnanam (knowledge of Time) in Telugu he makes many predictions which have come true. The emergence of screen (tera) artistes as rulers (N.T.R., M.G.R. and Reagan), the advent of the railways, taking over of the central Government by a widow, the emancipation of women, the frequent eruptions of communal violence, the birth of Gandhiji and his successful non-violent fight against the British imperialism with no weapon other than a mere 'Charkha' etc. Veerabrahmendra Swamy's prediction about Gandhiji's role in India's political emancipation made nearly four hundred years before the occurrence of the event was easily the most important among his incredible prognostications. In his 86th year he went into Sajeevvasamadhi (entombed alive at his request) at Kandimalla-yapalle in the district of Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh. He was essentially a man of the masses far ahead of his time. He preached what he practised and practised only what was good for the common man. He worked hard for a
living because he believed in the dignity of labour. He worked as carpenter, blacksmith, stone carver etc. It is believed that the imposing idol of Veerabhadrswamy at Alladapally near Proddutur, Andhra Pradesh, was sculpted by him. He exposed the hypocrisies of the religious hierarchies, rejected the caste and communal divisions and practised the humanist philosophy of universal love and brotherhood of man. Among his favourite disciples were a Brahmin, a Muslim and a Harijan though he himself was a Viswakarma by birth.

What imparted great power and thrust to his precepts and prophesies was his own total identification with Lord Ranganatha of Srirangam. In his writings there are frequent references to the Lord whom he addresses as Kaveti (Kaveri) Ranga. He says: Rangani Mahima Teliyangaleru, Kaaranameyyaru Kaanangaleru" (Who can grasp the greatness of Ranga, who can probe the reason why ?)". He claims that he says whatever he says under the inspiration of and in the presence of the Supreme Lord of Srirangam.

There is a belief widely shared by the followers of Veerabrahmendraswamy that he was the incarnation of Lord Vishnu and in turn Gandhiji was the incarnation of Veerabrahmendraswamy. So Gandhiji could use only ‘Charkha’, the contemporary successor to ‘Sudarshana Chakra’ as his
weapon for liberating the Indian masses from the colonial oppression of the British. The hungry, illiterate masses of Indian rallied round Gandhiji like one man, just like slivers of cotton spun neatly and harmoniously into a single thread by the 'Charkha.'

If Sri Mahavishnu's 'Sudarshana Chakra' brought moral regeneration to the Indians, Gandhiji's 'Charkha' gave them political freedom to shape their own destiny.

Dr. A. S. RAMAN,
Former Editor,
Illustrated Weekly,
BOMBAY.

Phone: 447071
48-A, B.N. Reddy Road
T. Nagar,
MADRAS - 600 017.
APPENDIX III

THE COTTON SLIVER STORY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

It is said in the Kaalajnaanam of Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami that the man with a cotton sliver in hand will turn a fighter for the cause of the people. Such a one was Mahatma Gandhi.

Let us examine the nature and background of this sliver. The ‘Suutra Yajna’ (spinning as a sacrifice) was started by Mahatma Gandhi, as an act of worship, as a token of the nation’s welfare, ‘Yajna’ in general is believed to be an aid to fulfilment, and ‘Suutrayajna’ is an aid to effecting unity in diversity. The words from the Bhagavadgita. “Sutre mani ganaa iva ....” refer to the omnipresent God almighty as the thread running through the precious stones, to keep them together. It is the cotton sliver, which had helped in the achievement of unity in diversity, so dear to the Mahatma’s heart.
In his ‘Ramacharitamanas’, Goswami Tulasidas had this to say about the cotton sliver.

“Saadh Charyt Subha Charyt Kapaaasu, Niraa, Saabi Sadaa, Gunamaaya, Phala’aasu, joo saavaa dhukha paraa bhidra duraavaa, banda meeya jeevaam jasa jasa, paavee,........”

Which can be paraphrased as follows:

“Though dry in itself, this cotton (sliver) covers the faults of others and functions in the world, like the helpful men of virtue.”

In this task, the Sudarshana Chakra (disc) and the Saranga dhanus (bow) came in most handy of all the Panchayudhas (or five weapons). The former was thus put to good effect, in ‘Gajendramoksha’ (rescuing the king of elephants), in killing Saindhava in the battle of Mahabharata, and in teaching Durvasa a lesson in ‘Ambarisha charita’. As for the bow of Sri Rama, it is even better known.

Thus, it could be seen that the cotton sliver is a manifestation of God. The Mahatma, who took the Charkha (spinning wheel) as his chakra (or wheel of a weapon), used this sliver as his bow and arrows. It was through this weapon that he drove the foreign foes away from the land.

Without the cotton sliver, the Charkha would be useless. How could the Mahatma then think of the path of non-violence?
"Vallavanukku pullum Villaam" Thus a Tamil proverb, meaning - that a blade of grass could become a powerful weapon of bow and arrows in the hands of a valiant warrior.

We are familiar with the story of how Sri-Rama used a blade of sanctified kusha grass as the Brahmastra (the all-powerful weapon) for destroying Kaakaasura (the Crow-demon) was it not his own finger - nails that served Lord Narasimha as his Vajraayudha (dismond weapon) in slaying Hiranyakasipu?

Small wonder then that the cotton sliver in the hands of Gandhiji turned into a powerful nail (in the coffin of the foreign rulers)

In vanquishing the demons of Tripura, Brahma, Vishnu and the other Gods were of great help to Shiva. Among them, Vishnu assumed the form of an arrow for piercing the enemies with. So goes the story from the Vedic tradition.

It was but natural that Gandhiji should have sought the aid of the cotton sliver as a manifestation of Vishnu to obtain victory in his campaign.

God responded and strengthened the hands of Gandhi. There need be no doubt on the question how God took the form of a cotton sliver, for victory without violence. Simple and easy,
when we recall that he assumed the form of little Vamana to snatch the celestial kingdom from the hands of Emperor Bali for returning it to Indra. By the same token, Gandhiji sought the protection of the cotton sliver, in the spirit of the Bhagavadgita...

"Maamekam Saranam Vrāja........."

Thus the liberated Mahatma liberated his country as well from the foreign Yoke. Little doubt that all this was the work of his cotton sliver – the fruit of his Sutra Yajna.

The innocuous cotton sliver became a mighty weapon in the hands of Gandhi. Thanks to the benediction of Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, let us all recognize it.

The unique identity of the cotton sliver as a manifestation of God almighty was first suggested by Sri Ummettala Kesava Rao (first State Sanchalak, Bhoodan movement, Hyderabad).

K. S. RAMANUJACHARYULU, M. A.,
Principal, Veda Sanskrit College,
NELLORE. (A. P.)

(English rendering by Dr. D. ĀNJANEYULU)
Indeed the TRIMURTIs viz., BRAHMA, VISHNU and SIVA are functioning in their respective fields and discharging their duties accordingly. These three are called the Gods of Trinity. It is quite well known that Brahma is the God of Creation, Vishnu the God of Protection and Siva the God of Destruction. It is therefore, quite obvious that for the ruling of the country or for the sustenance of the people, the mercy of LORD VISHNU is indispensable. The great sage Manu, Maandhata, Ikshvaku and Sri Rama had worshipped LORD SRIRANGA NATHA who is the manifestation of LORD VISHNU, and sought His perennial kindness to rule the Kingdom. Rama's Kingdom was blessed fully well and was popularly known as RAMARAJYA with all subjects living happily. It is therefore, evident that if a peaceful administration or protection of public welfare are to be achieved, the boundless blessings of LORD SRIRANGANATHA have to be sought by the ruler of a country.
2. A deep analysis may reveal that Vaishnavism strives its best to cater to the needs of the poor people and the downtrodden. Indeed the helpless Harijans were allowed temple entry at Melkote in Mysore by the great Acharya Sri Ramanuja over a thousand years ago out of pity, mercy and compassion towards them. Sri Ramanuja named the Harijans as THIRUKKULA-THOR, the meaning behind this being the blessed persons by the Goddess Mahalakshmi (which is meant by the Tamil word THIRU).

3. LORD SRI RANGANATHA has got SHODASA AYUDHA one among which is called as CHAKRAAYUDHA. This weapon of Chakraayudha (in the form of a wheel) is called as SUDARSHANA CHAKRA. Indeed this is a most powerful weapon used by the LORD for protection. The great power of this SUDARSHANA CHAKRA has been well described in SUDARSHANAASHTAKA by Sri Swami Desika.

4. Sri Mahatma Gandhi who was a true follower of Vaishnavism, understanding its great significance was using the spinning wheel (RAATTAI). Perhaps, it was his weapon in the form of wheel like CHAKRAAYUDHA and he was able to achieve independence for our country driving away the Britishers from our Bharata Bhoomi. It strikes the mind here that the
Sudarshana Chakra is also liberating persons from their problems and giving them independence, driving away the evils and desires.

5. In Purushasooktha, it is said as VISH-NORARATAMASI. This means that LORD VISHNU is for protection and is the symbol of the wheel of protection. With this significance the Raattai indicates that:

"SUKHASYA ANANTARAM DUKHAM
DUKHASYA ANANTARAM SUKHAM
SUKHA DUKHE MANUSHYAANAAM
CHAKRAVART PARIVARTHATHE"

without realising this truth, if men are impulsive and bent upon the pure materialistic way of living alone, it will only produce Sukha and Dukha, always revolving round like a wheel.

6. To lead a happy life, to have relief and to attain permanent peace, this wonderful SUDARSHANA CHAKRA of great power must be worshipped. By doing so, persons would be relieved of all their problems and thus be leading happy lives, ultimately also resulting in release from the bondage of samasara and attaining liberation thereafter.

7. It is no surprise that the great statesman and the first Governor-General of our country Śri Rajaji was moved and touched by Mahatma Gandhi and also dedicated himself to
the true Vaishnavism and worked along with him to get independence. Indeed he was also the person who was responsible for the entry of Harijans into temples, following the footstpes of Sri Ramanujacharya.

8. As the cloth is woven by the thread produced by the use of the spinning (Raattai) and is stronger due to the threads being interwoven, so as the nation becoming stronger due to the unity and integrity of the people being interwoven to culminate in national integration.

9. LORD SRI KRISHNA says in the 7th sloka in 7th chapter of the GITA as MAYI-SARVAM IDAM PROTHAM SOOTHREY MANIGANA IVA. The soothra, namely the thread, is to tie all the souls to adorn the neck of LORD SRI KRISHNA. Indeed it is very essential for every ruler to have as frequently as possible the Darshan of The LORD SRIRANGANATHA whose perennial and boundless mercy alone can come to the rescue of the people and for their protection.

Dr. N. Devanathan, Ph.D. 10, Dr. Rangachari Road, Mylapore
Former, Chief Advisor to Sri N. T. Rama Rao, Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh.

MADRAS - 600 004.
Phone : 71642.
APPENDIX V

SECULAR SAINT OF ANDHRA WHO FORESAW THE ADVENT OF MAHATMA

(The Aradhana or Annual Worship, at the Matham, or the Shrine of Sri Potuluri Veerabrahmendraswami, popularly known as Brammam Garu, at Kandimallayapalle in Cuddapah District, Andhra Pradesh, will be held on May 8).

Time past and time present are contained in time future, said T. S. Eliot. Or words to that effect. We are always intrigued and impressed by those with proven powers of clairvoyance, not always derived from crystal-gazing or tea-bowl watching. Nostradamus (1503–1566), the wandering Jew of France, who could predict cataclysmic events like the world wars centuries before they occurred, was essentially an astrologer, Cheireo (literally hand), of the latter part of the last century and the early part of this, who could foretell a bright future for Balfour (who became Prime Minister of
England) and not-so-bright an end for the Kaiser, Wilhelm II, was primarily an astrologer. But there were many saintly men and women in India, who could not be easily identified as trained astrologers or palmists and yet they could see the shape of coming events as the palm of their hands.

One of such saints was Sri Potuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami; popularly known as Brammam Garu, who lived in the western part of Andhra (known as Rayalaseema or Ceded Districts) in the seventeenth century (1604–1690). His Kalagnana Tattvaalu (literally, the sons of knowledge of time), are still on the lips of wandering minstrels in the countryside of Andhra. Because they happen to be in colloquial Telugu, often as quaint as they are cryptic, their meaning could be vague, and their message is confined to the Telugu-speaking people. But their scope is wider than that and their significance is deeper, as could be gauged by scholars who had bestowed attention on their implications.

Some of the prognostications of the Swami have already come true, while there are quite a few others which remain to be verified. They cover a wide range in time and space. He was able to visualize the establishment of British rule in India, long before it turned into a reality as could be understood from his words in Telugu.
"Bharata Bhoomini Paripaalanajeyu Paradesa Vaasulu Vacheruma" (which can be translated as "People from a foreign country will come to rule over the land of India).

There are also references in his work to the laying of the railway track in India by the white people and other industrial developments and socio-economic changes to come.

In some ways, more significant than all those statements, certainly more vivid and striking, was the mention of the birth in future of a man of destiny, who could be easily identified by us at this point of time, with the advantage of hindsight.

The relevant couplet, in the original, is as follows:

"Uttaradesamuna Vysyakulamandu
Uttama Gandhokadu butteema,
Hatunga vanniu Desamulavartanta
Sattuga Poojalu Jeseruma"

(which can be rendered as:

"A man by name Gandhi will be born in the Vysya caste in the north of the country and people of all countries will offer him worship or pay him homage").

Mention is also made here of a number of expressions, which are taken by erudite scholars
of the Kaalagnaanam to refer to the spinning wheel, the Khadi movement and the freedom struggle of India leading to the unity and greater good of humanity. Let us look at the words:

"Lokamantayunu Ekambugajese,
Ekubattedu Vaadu Vacchenima,
Praakatambunganu Lokambulo,
taanu mekai nilichi Janulamelen chenuma"

(which can be paraphrased as:

"The man with the cotton sliver will come, he will stand firm as a rock, and striving for the unity of the world, will promote the welfare of humanity, in general," ....could also be read as...."he will prove a thorn in the flesh of the foreign rulers etc."

Even the shockingly violent end of this apostle of non-violence, is seen by some to be broadly hinted as in the following lines, whose full and precise meaning is yet to be probed by linguistic experts.

"Gugella Rayudu Vacchenu
Pagatula Gundelanniuyu Adara Chendenima
Daggara Choopulu Choocheti Vaarella
Dadtha Patalaa Mayyi Poyeruma,
Enugucheta Chaccheni..."

Gugella Rayudu, is explained by the erudite as a term of compliment, in the old days, for a
leader of the Vysya community which was engaged among other things in preparing and selling boiled gram as an item of snacks.

So the passage may be read to mean...“As the Vysya leader arrives on the scene, the hearts of his foes will go a-quiver. The crooked and the short-sighted will be consumed by fire.

And finally, the leader will meet his end from an aggressive elephant”.

In the expression ‘elephant’ is seen a reference to the name “Vinayak”-which is found traceable, not only to the familiar God, the elephant-faced Lord of the hosts, but to the ruthless assassin, Nathuram Vinayak Godse.

To the uncommitted sceptic, this might sound a little farfetched, but it must set every interested reader a-thinking, for arriving at what might be the nearest to the essence of the original meaning.

The Swami was a truly integrated personality, whose thought, word and deed formed a seamless garment. When we look back on the main events in his life, we can’t help the impression that it reads like an essay in national integration no less than in spiritual experience (Sadhana).

Born on the banks of the river Saraswati, at the hermitage of sage Arti, the effulgent baby
is known to have lost both his parents, soon after birth. He was then adopted by a pious couple, who brought him up at Papaghni peetham (of the then Mysore State, now in Karnataka). After early schooling and upanayanam (initiation or sacred thread ceremony) he set out on a tour of the whole country, performing severe penance at Hariharpuram.

From there, the Swami proceeded to Banganapalle in Kurnool District. It is here that he started writing the book, Kaalagnananam, and lived there for about 20 years. He then left this place and reached Kandimallayapalle, in Cuddapah district, where he would be staying for many years. It was during his stay here that he got married, working as a carpenter and blacksmith for his livelihood.

His spiritual pursuit was in steady progress at the same time. He believed that distinctions based on caste, creed, sex, religion and region, were no bar to the propagation of spiritual knowledge. In fact, he proved this by selecting Siddayya, a Muslim, Kakkayya a Harijan, as his chief disciples as also ANNAJAIAH, a Brahmin. He went further, by teaching Hindu scriptures to some Muslim rulers and, in the process, influencing them to be more tolerant towards the members of the other religious faiths.

8)
The Swami is known to have spent many years at the holy feet of the Lord Sri Ranganatha, of Srirangam. His own impression of the greatness of Sri Ranganatha is recorded at many places in the Kaalaganaanam. Though born and bred in the Saivite tradition (founded by Basava, promoted by Panditaradhya and popularised by Palkuriki Somanadha), he was drawn to the Vaishnavite Deity, obviously because of the social catholicism of the school of thought founded by Ramanuja, who was against untouchability and the rigours of the caste system.

Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami attained, Jaeeva Samadhi’ ("or entering the grave alive") in the last decade of the 17th century at Kandimallayapalle after completing 86 years.

Traditional minded devotees believe that the Swami was a re-incarnation of Sri Ranganatha (who is an incarnation of Sri Maha vishnu). In turn, the belief prevails that Mahatma Gandhi was an incarnation of the Swami, with his own weapon, the spinning wheel (or Raatna Chakra) standing for the Sudarshana Chakra of Maha Vishnu.

Incarnations apart, Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, who taught by exampe as well as by precept, stood for certain fundamental social values, which remain as valid today as when they were first propagated by him. One is the
basic unity of all religious and philosophical systems. Another is the irrelevance and irrationality of prejudices based on clan, caste and class. A third is the need for reform of society, by introducing widow-remarriage and other whole-some and necessary changes from time to time.

His vision of a casteless society is expressed in many places in his Kaalagnanam....“Astaadasa Varnaalavaru Oka Chota Neellu Traaguduru” (All castes will drink water from the same tub.) “Naalugu Jaatula Varu Okka Jaatiyai Yunduru” (All the four castes will merge into one).

Similar was his vision of a classless society without distinction of rich and poor.

Another teaching of his was on the dignity of labour. Manual labour should not be looked down upon as it was by the scholastics. He himself earned his bread by honest labour as a carpenter and blacksmith (compare him with Valluvar, who made his living as a weaver).

The last, and perhaps the most important of his lessons is the one which proclaims that family life is by no means inconsistent with, or inimical to, spiritual striving. The Swami was a good familyman from the beginning to the ahend, and few could have led a more pious or purposeful, saintly or significant life.
When politicians and publicists, choose to hold forth on the concept of national integration, they might be quite oblivious of the fact that the saint-singers of the past....like the great Kabir, Tukaram, Namadev, Chaitanya, Nandanar, Tyagaraja, have been our real integrators, the best and the most effective. It is high time that we paid closer attention to the life and work of less known but no less genuine, integrators like Sri Potuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami.

Dr. D. ANJANEYULU, M.A., B.L., D.Litt.,

Author & Journalist,
President:
Madras Press Club.

14, Mandavalli St.,
MADRAS - 600 028.
Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami-the Philosopher-prophet of Andhra, is a seer and a saint who attained perfection and who was able to foresee the past and the future. His work ‘Kaalagnanam’ clearly reveals that he was an ardent lover and unflinching devotee of Sri Ranganatha of Srirangam. This work is one of the purest contributions to human knowledge made by a saint of virile and honest thinking. Having had the ‘Darsan’ of Sri Ranganatha in all his glory. His omnipotence and omnipresence, his utterances have become specially significant.

The Swami predicted the coming of Gandhi who will be able to redeem the land from foreign bondage. I can be safely said that Mr. Gandhi was endowed with mental fortitude for the great task of restoring and regaining the ancient
glory of the land. He was a Vaishnavite as is
evident from his favourite song and the regard
and respect he paid to 'Geetha'. We cannot
definitely say that he ever visited the Srirangam
temple and offered worship to the presiding
diety of Srirangam, it is certain that the Lord
in his infinite mercy gave him right knowledge,
mental strength, endurance and patience against
odds. As a true Vaishnavite he confessed openly
his wrongs and always prayed to the Lord to
'Lead, kindly light amidst the encircling gloom'.
With no weapons in his hands he fought a mighty
nation, purely by spiritual strength in which
there was no bloodshed and both the winner and
the vanquished became friends finally. One of
the greatest and powerful weapons wielded by
him was the Charka-spinning wheel, which dis-
mayed not only the people around him, but also
created the greatest commotion in the minds of
Britishers. It cannot be viewed as adventitious
that he chose the Charka as his foremost wea-
pon. It is too well-known that the important
ayudha of Sri Vishnu is his 'Chakra' which he
used when the need arose for the destruction of
the wicked who harassed the good. This 'Cha-
akra' of Vishnu was not only infallible in his
attack, but displayed many wonders. In the
same manner the 'Charka' of Mr. Gandhi-the
spinning wheel too, subdued the insolvent-
might and made them relent to the wishes of
the people. Thus there seems to be a close
resemblance between the whirling and dazzling
Chakrayudha of Vishnu and the spinning wheel rotating which rocked a mighty empire.

Viewed purely from this point of view, Gandhi, being a Vaishnavite chose probably after much deliberation the ‘Charka’-spinning wheel as his weapon. Also it can be guessed that in as much as the Seer of Andhra forestalled the advent of Mr. Gandhi, must have endowed him with such qualities as are necessary for the great task he was destined to undertake. Therefore, we see the prognostication of the Swamy has come true and the land enjoyed freedom.

May our land, as visualized by the saints, stand aloft among the comity of nations and lead them forward to the ancient glory of spiritual conquest immutable and permanent, over material joys which are fleeting. Let not science frown upon the utterances of the saints, nor philosophy sneer at or fear at scientific innovations.

Hail to the Andhra saint - a devotee of Sri Ranganatha for his life of unfailing sympathy and unbounded love for the entire humanity.

S. Srinivasa Raghavan, M.A., Litt.,
Retired Professor,
Tiruchy National College.

North Chitra Street,
SRIRANGAM - 6
(Tamilnadu).
APPENDIX - VII

‘VISHNU RARAATAMASI’

A Note on ‘Raatnam-Vishnu Chakram’ (i.e., The spinning wheel and Vishnu’s wheel) by Kalaprapoorna Sri Konduru Veera Raghava Charya.

(Author of ‘RIGVEDA DARSANAM’)

1. ‘Vishno Raraatamasi’ :- In this Vishnu mantra (or invocation of Vishnu) is presented the idea: ‘Oh, Lord Vishnu! you are raraata’. The Sanskrit root ‘Rata’ has the meaning ‘to move’, ‘to revolve’ or ‘to spread’. The Expression ‘Raata’, which is a part on variation of ‘Raraata’ gives the annotation. ‘Oh, Maha Vishnu! you can be seen in the form of a Raata’. Which suggests that Lord Vishnu has the quality of spreading everywhere, or being all pervasive.

The term, ‘Raata’ can also be applied to the ‘Sudarshana Chakra’, which has the quality of turning or revolving. This would go to esta-
blish the identity (absence of difference) between Lord Vishnu and his weapon, Sudarshana Chakra.

'Raatna Chakra' (or the spinning wheel) is also marked by the quality of turning or revolving. In view of the reference in the Mantra ('Oh, Vishnu! you are actually a Raata'), we can go a step further and identify the spinning wheel of Mahatma Gandhi with the Sudarshana wheel of Vishnu, thereby investing the term with a new meaning.

That 'Sankha' (Conch) and Chakra (wheel) take new incarnations along with Vishnu, is revealed to us by sacred books like the Ramayana. From this it may reasonably be argued that the spinning wheel, which is an incarnation of Sri Maha Vishnu as well as his Sudarshana wheel, had become the weapon of Mahatma Gandhi in this age; and it served him as effectively in winning political independence for India as Vishnu's wheel had served its master in an earlier age.

This literal meaning of the Mantra may be given as Vishnoh = Vishnu's and Raatamasi = Raatam or wheel you are, i.e., 'You are Vishnu's wheel'.

2. 'Sukasyaanantaram Dukham
Dukhasyaanantaram Sukham
Sukha Dukha Manushyaanam
Vartate Chakravatsadaa'.
Human life is a mixture of joys and sorrows. They come one after the other and have to be experienced by all human beings. No one can hope to have only joy or only sorrow all the times. It is therefore joy for sometime and sorrow for sometime. That is the law of nature.

This can be compared to the turning of the wheel in which one side comes up while the other goes down and vice versa. That is why the poet suggests that joys and sorrows are like the turns of the wheel.

Not only joys and sorrows but all other dualities in human life alternate like the ups and downs of the revolving wheel. Hence the apt metaphor of the wheel of life, So also the wheel of Dharma - and the wheel of Samsaara.

Thus, it can be seen that the wheel has a specially important place in the understanding of our philosophical tradition. It was not without some significance that our artists and of sculptors and fixed the wheel as a weapon in the hands of many of the Gods of the Hindu Pantheon.

3. ‘Mayi Sarva Midam Protam Sutre Mani Gadda Iva’
   Bhagavadgita (7-7)

God (the Supreme) is like a sutraa (i.e., a thread or a rope). So that thread of God are attached to the earth and the sky and all living
beings all the precious stones (mani or diamonds) have to depend on the thread for becoming a garland. Without the thread they are scattered to the winds. Likewise, all the living objects (bhootas) become a ‘Brahmaanda’ only when they are linked to the thread (Sootra) of God. The term ‘Sootra’ has therefore a significance comparable to that of God.

Inspired only by this ‘Sootra’, Gandhiji started his ‘Sootra Yajna’. This ‘Sootra’ (or thread) cannot be produced without the aid of the ‘Raatnam’ (or spinning wheel). The ‘Sootra’, coming into existence with the help of a spinning wheel and a spindle, rises to the level of a Maha Yajna (great sacrifice). It may therefore be understood that a ‘Sootra’ is invested with celestial powers. In Indian languages with a liberal admixture of Sanskrit it is common to ask for a ‘Sulabha Sootra’ (easy device or principle) in achieving any object.

All over ancient classes in the literacy, religious, philosophical tradition are in the form of ‘Sootras’. Eg. Vyaakarana Sootra, Bhrahma Sootra, Meemaamsa Sootra, Saankhya Sootra etc. Against this background, the significance of the term ‘Raatna’ can be grasped from the mantra of Yajurveda and that of Sootra from the Bhagavadgita.

All these ideas were in the mind of Sri Veera Brahmendra Swamy when he presented us with the pregnant words in Kaalajnaanam. Eku Pattedu
Vaadu Vachchenimaa, EKU meku Ayyenumaa.
(Literally - 'The one with a sliver in hand will come down to us; and the sliver will prove a scimitar'.

The implication of these cryptic words must be grasped with insight and imagination.

'Kalaprapurna'

Dr. K. VEERA RAGHAVACHARYULU,
TENALI,
Guntur District, A. P.
GANDHI - CHARKHA

From the text of this book, the reader must have become familiar with the suggestion that 'Gandhiji was a man of destiny, born with something of the power of Vishnu, and the spinning wheel that he adopted in the fight for Independence was nothing but the Sudarshana Chakra'.

These two points have been elaborated and reinforced, with the authority of the Vedas and the Sastras by the wellknown 'Scholar' - Poet, Agamapravartaka, Vastu Ratna, Sri Pratapa Krishna Murthy Sastri, Siddhanthi,' Tenali.

It is hoped that the readers will read this with care and verify it for themselves.

In the Kaalajnaanam of Sri Veerabrahmangar, there are references to Gandhi, and the cotton sliver ('Eku') with the aid of which he would put an end to British rule (in India).
But then, who is this Gandhi?

Long, long ago, in the Tretayuga (i.e., the Age of Rama), there lived in the Solar dynasty a King by name ‘Gadhi’. He was the father of the sage Viswamitra, who initiated Sri Rama into the Mantra and gave him the celestial weapons, including ‘Bala’ and ‘Atibala’.

Sri Rama was a complete incarnation of Sri Mahavishnu, come down to the earth to rid the people of the scourge of the Rakshasas and thereby become an object of worship.

In the next age, i.e., the Dwapara Yuga, which saw the rise of insufferable tyrants like Jarasandha, Sisupala, Dantavakra and Kamsa, in addition to the problem of the Rakshasas, Vishnu had to come down again, this time in the incarnation of Sri Krishna. He then performed many miracles, beyond the powers of man, like lifting the Govardhana mountain. He also destroyed evil men and established the rule of Divine Law (or Dharma) as mentioned in the Bhagavadeeta, (which says: ‘Dharma Samsthanpansaardhaaya Sambhavaami Yugay Yugay’). In the Mahabharata war, between the Pandavas and the Kowravas, he lightened the burden of the earth and enthroned Dharmaraja on it.

Though Sri Krishna was not a ruler of men like Sri Rama, he was shown as a great Yogi (a Yogi of Yogis) and exercised all powers.
After the demise of Krishna, Kali entered the scene in this country, making the growth of Adharama. Native Kings lost their prowess giving way to foreign invaders. The British then established their great empire, plunging mother India into a long spell of grief, which moved her valiant sons, like Lokamanya Tilak, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.

It was at this time that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi too girded his loins.

We have now to look back a little in time and know who is this man Gandhi.

The forbears of Gandhi, who ruled the land in Treta Yuga, saw a gradual decline in their fortunes. By the time of Kaliyuga, they became weakened, losing their Kingdoms, and began to earn their livelihood through government service and business. Thus arose the family of Gandhi. The word ‘Gadhi’, changed, in due course, into ‘Gandhi’, becoming the surname of certain families.

It may be inferred here that the great sage Viswamitra, who then created the Trisanku Swarga, by the power of his penance (Tapasya), with the addition of ray of the shining personality of Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, now took birth as Gandhi to lead the struggle for freedom from British rule.
It may be noted here that though Gandhi was an ordinary man, he was a man of extraordinary powers—mental and spiritual. He had the divine element of Vishnu in him. That was why he was able to lead the whole mass of the Indian people, as no one else could do in the epic struggle for national Independence.

MEANING OF THE TERM ‘GANDHI’

Reference has already been made to Gadhi, the father of Viswamitra. Let us remember that in this country, the source of all sacred knowledge is the ‘Gayatri’ mantra, the mother of the Vedas. The first letter of this word is ‘ga’.

The work that expresses the total effect of ‘Gayatri’ is ‘Dhimahi’. Its first letter is ‘dhi’. If we combine these two, we get ‘Gadhi’. The meaningful link between these esoteric letters is ‘Poorna Bindu’. (O) a symbol of the supreme. Interposed between these two letters (from the Yogic point of view) it makes the word ‘Gandhi’.

The man called Gandhi, the celestial flame in human form, had absorbed in himself an element of Vishnu. Were there is Vishnu there is sure to be his ‘Chakra’ as well.

VISHNU CHAKRA AND THE SPINNING WHEEL

The Veda mantra contains mantra lingas. One of them reads: Vishnoh Ra Raatamasi',
also 'Tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam' 'Ra·Raata' implies the urge ('aarata', in Telugu) to become free. The Vishnu Chakra burns without guns or pistols. That was why our Gandhi adopted it as his weapon. It was also used for burning foreign cloth.

This weapon in the shape of a spinning wheel, became the most effective device in winning the battle for freedom. It also earned a place in the Congress tricolour flag. In the face of this flag which was adopted, with a slight change, as the national flag, the British quit the land, with the least violence. The spinning wheel is therefore to be seen as the Sudarshana Wheel.

This truth was grasped by Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami four centuries ago, and announced in his Kaalajnaanam. It is yet to be grasped by the people of this country.

SRI RANGANATHA

It is, well known that on his return from Lanka, Sri Ramachandra installed the idol of Ramalingeswara at Rameswaram and after worshipping Lord Ranganatha at Srirangam left for Ayodhya along with Sita.

In the same way Gandhi too, campaigning during the Satyagrah movement along with C. Rajagopalachari, visited Srirangam and bowed
to Sri Ranganatha. It may be recalled that Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami worshipped Sri Ranganatha for many years and blessed his disciples.

It was only due to the divine element of Mahavishnu in him that Sri Rajagopalachari could become the first Governor General of Free India.

From the conduct of Satyagraha to the attainment of Swaraj, every stage in the nation’s progress bears the imprint of the power of Vishnu (exemplifying the truth of the saying ‘Naa Vishnuh Prithvi Patih’). It is indeed significant that Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami should have prognosticated the rise of Gandhi as the Central Character in the National Drama and the spinning wheel could be seen as the Sudarshana Chakra (wheel of Vishnu), our national flag could be seen as the Vishnudhwaja (or banner of Vishnu).

It may, likewise, be surmised that all this is but a result of the grace of Lord Sri Ranganatha.

INCARNATIONS:

If Gandhi was really an incarnation of God, why should he experience reverses in the Satyagraha campaign, like an ordinary human being? This is a reasonable doubt that could arise in the reader’s mind.
It should be remembered in this connection that in certain situations incarnations too were subject to defeats, according to the puranas.

The following points may be useful in helping the reader to understand the problem in the proper perspective.

Have we not read that even complete incarnations of God Rama and Krishna had to bide their time, when confronted by adverse forces.

Examples:

1) When Sita was abducted by force and fraud, what was Rama able to do, though he was an incarnation of Mahavishnu?

2) In the fight between Vali and Sugreeva, why should a complete incarnation like Rama have had to shoot the former from behind a tree?

3) In the incarnation of Krishna, why should he have resorted to lies and trickery in the killing of Kalanemi?

Why should he have to flee Dwaraka for fear of Jarasandha?

What about the exercise in prevarication, in ‘Aswathaama hatah Kunjarah’ etc., etc.,?

It may, therefore, be concluded that even incarnations of God had to undergo hardships in the interest of the welfare of people at large.
SAANDRA SINDHU VEDA

Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami was a spiritual preceptor of deep insight and of high intellectual calibre. Yet he was essentially a man of the people. That was why he presented his prognostications to his disciples of his time, in his Kaalajnaanam, also known as the Saandra Sindhu Veda. It is cherished as another Veda by his disciples and devotees.

Coming to think of incarnations, let us remember that Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami never had a reverse in his life as far as we could learn from his recorded his toxy.

This could be because of the fact that he was the most complete avatar, incorporating all the powers of all the Gods. That was presumably why this great being described himself as ‘Virat’ a title not used by anyone else.

People too hailed him as ‘Sri Virat Potuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami’, in the process of seeking their own fulfilment.

‘Agama Pravartaka’
Sri Pratapa Krishna Murthy Sastri,
Siddhanti,
TENALI, Guntur Dt., A. P.

English Rendered by:
Dr. D. Anjaneyulu
SRI RANGANADHA SUDARSHANA CHAKRA

Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami is undoubtedly an Avathara Purusha like other Alwars because of his great adoration for Lord Ranganatha whom he loved so much, who had realised the greatness of the prowess of Sri Ranganatha whose mahima alone can protect the world. In this connection, it will be befitting and apt to say that all Alwars without any exception have sung about the greatness of Sri Ranganatha. Veerabrahmendra Swami when he refers in his ‘Kaalajnaanam’, Sri Ranganatha, his heart is melting like other Alwars, great Vaishnava Acharyas like Nathamuni, Alavandhar, Sri Ramanuja and Swami Vedantha Desika who have sought about Lord Ranganatha forgetting themselves and becoming one with the Lord, in high ecstasy.

In the ‘Kaalajanaanam’ given by the revered Saint Veerabrahmendra Swami, the Avathara Purusha a salient point has been clearly empha-
sized by him that Lord Ranganatha alone can bless and come forward to protect the country, saving it from trouble and guiding one and all in a righteous path.

According to mythology, Lord Brahma had showed Manu Mandhatha the King of Ikshvaku Vamsa the greatness of Lord Ranganatha and requested them to do pooja to the Lord. King Dasaratha was sought after by the Devas for their protection from Asuras and the King, because of his constant prayers and Aradhana of Lord Ranganatha, had such an amount of boundless strength and courage beyond description, he not only saved the people in the Bhooloka but also saved the Devas. Sri Rama, son of the King Dasaratha who was ruling the country for many years following the footsteps of Dasaratha was worshipping Lord Ranganatha who is described as ‘Ikshvaku Vamsa Kula Dhana’ and this was a perennial source of prosperity, strength and courage to him to curb bad tendencies in people, punish the wicked and promote Dharma and protect the good people.

Therefore it is very clear that the rulers of countries should seek the blessings of Lord Ranganatha to save the countries from chaos and heading towards danger and annihilation. If really violence has to be put down, shanthi to be preserved and righteousness to be followed by the people, it can be done only with the grace of Lord Ranganatha. This quintessence we cle-
arly understand after going through the ‘Kaala-
jaanam’ given by the great devotee of Lord
Ranganatha, Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami who
had prophesised the revolt against the British
rule by Mahatma Gandhi in a non-violent man-
ner and the use of spinning wheel (Charkha) as
the symbol of Chakrayudha of Lord Vishnu
(Sudarshana Chakra) in the battle for freedom.

Lord Ranganatha has abode in Srirangam
which is one of the 108 Divya Kshetras and con-
sidered to be the first among all other Divya
Kshetras. Srirangam is also called by the names
of Thiruvarangam, Krishnarays, Uttirarangam,
Bhooloka Vaikuntam. When we say Kovil (i.e.
temple, in Tamil language) it only connotes
Srirangam Temple and not any other temple. Of
the eight swayembu ‘Kshetras’, Srirangam is the
first one.

Sri Ramanuja lived in Srirangam after pro-
pagation of Vishistadvita and his Saranagathi
Gadyam.

Lord Ranganatha is lying on the coils of the
snake Anantha who is holding his hood as an
umberalla Him. The Lord is in Yoga Mudra
posture keeping his right hand near His head
showing Abaya Mudra and imparting Veda to
Lord Brahma by the left hand. The Lord is tur-
med towards East with a smile on His lips. His
feet to the North and His head to the South,
Sri Mahalakshmi is seated on His chest. Sri-
devi is seated near His left shoulder, Bhooidevi is seated near His feet and Garuda is seated to the right below the Lord as though ready to do His bidding. On the walls of Garbha graha above Lord Ranganatha, Siva, Indra and Devas are positioned hearing the Vedas taught to Brahma by the Lord. The Lord is seen using a ‘Marakkhl’ (a measure sure) as His Pillow.

The shrine of Lord Ranganatha is situated on an elevated place on the southern bank of Pennar river. Rivers Kaveri and Kolliadam flow on either side of Srirangam forming an island. The total area of the temple precincts including the area covered by the outer high compound walls is about 3 acres and 37 cents and the area covered by the inner compound walls is about one acre. Besides the main temple for Sri Ranganatha, there are temples in the compound precincts for the Goddess Ranganayaki (consort of Lord Ranganatha) Sri Krishna, The Kshetradhipathi, Sri Varadha; Sri Rama Sri Andal, Sri Vishvaksena, Sri Vedanta Desika. There is also the Navarathri Mantapam, Unjal Mantapam, Vahana Mantapam and Chandra Pushkarani, within the temple area. There are rock edicts on the walls of the entrance of temple area. There are rock edicts on the walls of the temple of Sri Ranganatha. In the north eastern side of the temple in the outer compound, there is a granary measuring about 70' in circumference and 80' in height. The Vimana Gopuram
Tower above the gharbha griham is said to be Veda Swaroopa which dispelas darkness (Ajnaana). The three Kalasas on the tower represent the three Vedas.

The Present 44th jeer of Ahobila Mutt Sri Azzhaghia Singar has taken much pains to get the co-operation of elders, wealthy people, philanthropists, and State Governments in mobiliising financial resources for the construction of a very high entrance to the temple, which higher-to had not been undertaken by the kings who built the temple. The samprokshanam of this entrance tower which is stated to be the tallest in the whole of Asia, is to take place shortly.

As foreseen by Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami it is our fervent appeal to one and all particularly to the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers of the States to have the Darshan of Lord Ranganatha as often as possible whose blessings alone will undoubtedly act as a kavacham for them and also give them much courage and strength to put down the violence which is spreading unnecessarily and unexpectedly in many parts of India and also to save the innocent followers of righteous path and the law abiding citizens.

Om Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthihi

Dr. N. Devanathan, Ph.D., 10, Rangachari Road
Member : T. T. D. Board,
Former Chief Advisor to
Sri N. T. Rama Rao, Chief Minister, A.P.
MADRAS - 600 024
APPENDIX-X

INVINCIBLE CHARKHA

The great saint and prophet of Andhra Sri Madvirat Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami in his ‘Kaalagnaanam’ (Knowledge of Time) prophesied the birth of Gandhiji about 400 years ahead of his time in the following words:

‘Uttara Desamuna Vaisya Kulamandu
Uttama Gandhokadu Puttemimaa
Hattuganu Annidesamula Vaarantaa
Sattuga Pujalu Cheserumaa’ (Page 223)

‘Lokamantayu Ekambugajese
Ekupattedivaadu Vacchenimaa
Prakatamburganu Lokambulo taanu
Mekainilichi Janula Melenchenimaa’ (Page 223)

(A Gandhi would be born in North India in the Vaisya caste. People of all countries will adore and worship this great soul. The holder of sliver who will unite all mankind will arrive. He proves himself an invincible nail (in the Coffin of the British Raj) and clamour for the well being of the people.)
When unrighteousness or Adharma reigns supreme, God assumes human form and saves mankind by destroying Adharama. God assumes this responsibility time and again as and when there is need of Him to do so. It must be presumed that as Siddhapurusha Sri Veerabrahmendra has conveyed in advance the message about Gandhiji's birth, Gandhiji is an Avatar Purusha. He liberated this country from the shackles of foreign rule and did away with the unrighteous British rule so that Indians could breathe the air of freedom. It is indisputable that this is the greatest occurrence of the present century. It is equally undeniable that it was he who mobilised the entire nation right from the Himalayas down to Kanya Kumari to plunge into the struggle for freedom and led it to its successful conclusion. While the battles of Indians and their victories in the past were regional, the achievement of freedom from foreign yoke was a concern for the whole nation. Could this achievement be possible if Gandhiji who led it was not God incarnate? God's avatars are infinite indeed. As some of them are God-inspired, Gandhiji's should be construed as one such. To Gandhiji it was a sacred programme to conduct Sutra Yagna every day. This he did not inherit from his forbears. He adopted this programme as a sacred Yagna for driving away from this land the English who were perpetrating unrighteous rule. Hence all those who participated in this great Yagna undertaken by him
regarded it as sacred. Charkha was the Chief medium for him to carry out this great mission. The Charkha in Gandhiji’s hand is synonymous with the Sudarshana Chakra of Lord Vishnu. Eku or sliver in symbolic of Sankhu. It is formed with the Omkaranadha. Sankhu or Conch with the thundering sound debilitates the mightiest enemy.

"SAGHOSHO DHARTA RASHTRANAM, HRIDA-YANIVYADAARAYAT" of the Bhagavadgeeta corroborates this truth. The Chakra annihi-
lates the enemy. The Sankhu blows once again to spread the message of victory far and wide. Both Eku and Sankhu are identically white and smooth. The identical characteristics of Chakra and Charkha too are beyond doubt. It is inconcert that these two work to destroy the enemy. The Charkha and sliver too work in unison to spin out yarn which clothes mankind. Gandhiji’s charkha and sliver clothed the self-
respect of Indians indeed.

As Gandhiji’s battle for freedom was of a non-violent nature, the Sudarshan Chakra turned into charkha when he wielded it. Instances are not rare of Sudarshana Chakra’s violence-free victories. Did not the chakra hide the sun and cause illusion of sunset to annihilate Saindhava in the battle-field?

SLOKAM

Anastamitha Adithye Etan
Nirjitya Syndhavah.
Nasakyo Hantu Mityevam
Manyano Janardhanah
Sasmara Chakram
Dythyahrihi Harissatru
Vinasanah,
Tamadidesa Bhagavan
Smruthimatra Mupasthitam,
Astangata Mivadityam,
Tamasa Bhava Etiv”.

Jayadradhavadha Parva.
125A, 136 Slo.

Didn’t the Chakra Chase Durvasa and secure his surrender, when he attempted to disturb Ambarisha’s penance?

Pragadishtam Bhrutyam Rakshayam
Purushena Mahatmana,
Dadaha Krutyantam Chakram
Krudhahi Miva Pavakah

Srimadbhagavatham
9 Ska. 4 A. 48 Slo.

Ithi Samstuvatho Rajno Vishnuchakram Sudarsanam.
Asamyaath Sarvato Vipram
Pradahat Rajayachjanya,

Srimadbhagavatham
9 Ska. 5A. 12 Slo.

It was the chakra that assisted Lord Krishna to win over Bhishma even after he pledged to renounce arms forever.

“Krudhonama Mahayogi Prachaskanda
Rathothamath
Gruhit chakro Bhishmantam
Abhidudrava Vybai.”

Bhishmaparvam 102A, 63 Slo.
"Ehyehi Pundareekasha"
Vasudeva Namostute
Mamadya Satvata Sresshta
Patayasva Mahamathe

Bhishmaparvam 102A. 70 Slo.

In the same way Gandhiji’s Charkha provided a taste of sunset to the English who boasted to have presided over an empire on which the sun never set. The Chakra chased them day in and day out and secured their surrender without resort to annihilation. They were made to acknowledge defeat and quit India. Was not this a miracle wrought by the Chakra of Gandhiji? As Chakra is a concomitant to other items of armoury the charkha-wheel also is an indispensable element among the independent worktools. Gandhiji’s wish was that Indians should pursue independent avocations and professions and lead lives of freedom, contentment and self-reliance. He abhorred dependence and slavery. He preferred the charkha to various other professional worktools as it alone conformed to this acid test and proved its efficacy in fulfilling the set goals and stood as symbolic of the Sudarshana Chakra. Is not God a believer in universal equality, as he proclaimed “Samoham Sarvabhyuteshe”. So was Gandhiji. God with his Chakra eliminates inequalities and differences among mankind. So did Gandhiji, when he settled, scores with the British with the “Charkha Chakra”!

“Parasparam Bhavayantah
Sreyah Parama Vapsyadha”
“Aim at wellbeing through mutual co-operation”, says the Gita. Similar is the massage of Gandhiji, which is vouched by the call of the Charkha-chakra.

It was Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami, an ardent devotee of Sri Ranganadhaswami, who first prophesised Gandhiji’s birth. A cursory reading of Kaalaganaanam proves this fact. Sri Ramachandra too worshipped Lord Sri Ranganadha. It is well known that Gandhiji’s reverence for Lord Sri Ranganadha is testified by the Sutra Yagna idols installed on the Pillayar Shrine (Ganapati temple) in Tiruchi near Srirangam. Gandhiji owes his power of mass appeal to the grace of Sri Ranganadha. All rulers of the past with righteous rule as their goal paid obeisance at Sri Rangandha’s gracious feet to secure the necessary strength to fulfil their object. History bears ample testimony to this irrefutable fact.

Let us serve the Charkha Chakra too, as we do Sri Ranganadha’s Sudarshana Chakra and promote the wellbeing of all mankind.

“Sankhuchakramaya Sri Ranga Namaste Namah,
Sarvejanah Sukhinobhavantu”.

K. S. Ramanuja Charyulu,
Principal,
Veda Sanskrit College, NELLORE (A. P.)

English Rendered by:
Sri P. Venkateswara Rao
Man is the supreme being in God’s creation. He has always endeavoured to get into the higher spiritual realms, his ultimate goal being realisation of God and salvation or ‘Mukti’.

India is a large and ancient country with the natural boundaries of the Himalayas and the sea. It is a land of Saints, Rishis, Seers, Godmen, Yogis, Mahatmas, Hermits, Avadhootas, Parivrajakacharyas and Paramahamsas. Sri Virat Potuluri Veera Brahmendra Swami was one of such great Seers. He belonged to Kandimalla-yapalle of Cuddapah District in Andhra Pradesh.

PLACE OF BIRTH:

Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami was born of pious couple, Paripoornayya Acharya and Prakruthamba, in the first decade of the 17th century at the hermitage of ATRI MUNI on the
bank of River Saraswathi in UTTAR PRADESH while they were returning home in their village from a pilgrimage to Varanasi.

CHILDHOOD:

Sri Veerabrahmendra was adopted by the Papaghni Peetham of the then Mysore State (present Karnataka) in his first year. He stayed there till his twelfth year and then proceeded on a tour of various places in the country after upanayana Samskaram i.e., wearing the sacred thread.

PENANCE AND PROPHECY:

On his tour, he visited many sacred places and shrines and performed severe penance at Hariharapuram (Harihara). Then he went to Banaganapalle in Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh. Here he started writing the book ‘Kaalanajnaanam’, literally ‘knowledge of time’ full of prophecies and spiritual teachings as a cowherd in the house of Garimireddi Atchamma. He lived here for about 20 years.

MARRIAGE:

Sri Veerabrahmendra Swami left Banaganapalle and reached Kandimallayapalle in Cuddapah District. He worked as a sculptor, carpenter and blacksmith for his livelihood and married a pious woman Govindamma, the daughter of Kotaacharyulu of Peddakomarla.
During his stay at Kandimallayapalle, he selected Siddayya, a muslim, and Kakkayya, a harijan, as his main disciples and imparted spiritual knowledge to one and all, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, religion and region. Besides, he also taught the scriptures to the Muslim rulers of that period (Nawabs) and persuaded them to respect all the other religions.

ENTERING THE DIVINE BODY:

It was written in the book Kaalajnaanam that he was in the human body till the completion of his austerities at Hariharapuram and then entered the divine body. The Swami performed many miracles while he was on a visit to the different parts of South India.

VISITS TO HOLY PLACES:

Sri Veerabrahmendraswami visited a number of sacred places, shrines and religious centres, such as Srisailam, Tirupathi, Virupaksham, Pushpagiri, Srirangam etc., and spread spiritual knowledge, striking a new path for the future generations.

ATTAINING SIDDHI:

Sree Veerabrahmendraswami attained Sa-jeeva Samaadhi' (living samaadhi) by entering his grave alive in the last decade of the 17th century A. D. after leading a saintly life for about 90 years at his matham in the village of Kandimallayapalle of Cuddapah District.
APPENDIX - XII

'WHAT IS KAALAJNAANAM'?

Sri Veerabrahmendraswami composed a work by name 'KAALAJNAANAM' about 400 years ago (i.e., in the 17th Century A. D.) in Telugu on dried palm leaves. The literal meaning of Kaalajnaanam is 'knowledge of the time-past, present and future'. It comprises prophecies, mostly on the spiritual, social, political and cultural life of the people.

Complex spiritual precepts and complicated philosophic concepts are presented here in simple and easy terms in the spoken language of the common people. Even the illiterate masses, with a minimum of commonsense and general knowledge can follow the verses and assimilate their essence.

The Swami might have written this book to propagate the concept of oneness of God and the brotherhood of man. He firmly believed in the equality of men, irrespective of caste, creed, status, sex, religion and nationality. This is
nothing but a code of conduct, which can be followed and practised in one's day-to-day life.

Many of the prophecies made so vividly in this book have already come true. Its beauty and distinction lie in the fact that the message of oneness of God and brotherhood of man is presented in simple Telugu, in verse form.

Most of the prophecies made by the Swami on the political situation are accepted facts. These happenings have thrown light on the world and made people realise that they can live happily and purposefully by listening to the great seer. This book also gives the people courage and confidence to face the future. To put it in a nutshell, this book could be a philosopher, friend and guide to the modern man.

The prophecies already fulfilled, or about to be fulfilled, will rouse the curiosity of the readers and it is for them to analyse and interpret them according to the spirit of the age and its social ethos, the challenges and responses of the present day. Then only can the readers fully benefit from its contents. Then only the noble purpose of the book will be fulfilled.

If the prophecies are too easily identified with individuals or circumstances, just to glorify the saint, it will only be an exercise in self-deception. They will also earn the anger of the saint himself, if they try to add to or delete from the verses. While reading the Kaalajnaa-
nam, one should have deep devotion and an open fearless mind. People are specially cautioned that interpolations in the text of KAALAINAANAM during a discussion or a discourse or in future editions will be regarded serious literary offences and grave spiritual lapses. They are therefore requested not to add to or delete from the text.

Every one should read this book only to understand the true meaning of the prophecies in the right spirit and then analyse and assess their relevance and apply their lessons to practical life for achieving the three ‘SSS’ namely, Santhi (Peace) Sukham (Happiness) and Sowbhangyam (Prosperity) for themselves and for mankind as a whole.
APPENDIX - XIII

THE HANDLOOM AND ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE
SRI VEE RabrahmaNdra Swami's inspiring message

Among the prophets of the modern world are some who combine profundity of thought with a pragmatic outlook, spiritual striving with a social awareness and a sense of purpose. Notable among such men of destiny in this century is Sri Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swami born in the sixteenth century. In his rare and vibrant personality, which needs to be better known, are to be found together the prognostic powers of a Nostradamus and the social dynamism of a Swami Vivekananda. His MAGNUM OPUS, the 'KAALAJNAANAM', is a storehouse of wisdom, throwing light not only on the shape of things to come in our society, but on the path leading to the salvation of man.

In this work were mentioned, four hundred years ago, coming events like the establishment of the white man's rule and the laying of railway
lines, the birth of a man called Gandhi and his use of CHARKHA as a weapon for winning the country’s freedom. What is even more remarkable in this connection is the reference to the handloom as a handy aid to spiritual endeavour.

Following are two of those lines:

“Maggambatti Nesetanduku
Mokshambadige Vinarayya .”
(“Hold fast to the handloom,
And there you have salvation at hand”)

The complex of activities connected with this, like laying the loom, preparing the yarn, arranging the threads into a warp and getting the shuttle moving, is all beautifully linked to the control of the mind. Uttering the GAYATRI MANTRA beginning with the words, “BHARGO DEVASYA etc”., (literally meaning: Let him give us the intellect of illumination”). One should discipline the mind, keeping out KAMA (sexual desire) and KRODHA (anger), and concentrating on the goal in view, viz., handling the shuttle and the loom, which is the immediate goal, and working for salvation of the soul, which is the ultimate goal.

The GAYATRI MANTRA is valued as being efficacious in dispelling ignorance and capturing light, for the elevation of the soul.
THE SWAMI SAYS FURTHER:

“Aadi Kamalamu Ganapathi Neppu’du
Archinchichi poojalu Salupa Valen
 Patel parachi Taa bahuvinayambuna
Bandhinchi Aasu pettavalen
Baddikato Vinayambulane Noolu
Chedaraka Aasupoya Valen..........”

[To be roughly rendered as:

“The very first lotus is to be offered invariably to Ganapathi, the Lord of the Hosts, before any Puja or Worship is undertaken; Before laying the loom, the whole bundle of yarn has to be wound and unwound carefully, without letting the threads of yarn go this way or that.”]

Worship of Vighneswara or Ganapati, known as the Lord of obstacles, is the very first thing done in any auspicious ceremony. Only after that, the other rituals are undertaken, with the attendant gestures of hands and limbs, in all respect and obedience. The fine threads of yarn are compared here to the delicate texture of the mind, which has to be concentrated on the JAPA.

THE SWAMI SAYS FURTHER.

“Kama Krodha Lobha Mohamulanu
Kadalakundunatlul Kattavalen
Neeyamu Dappaka Neeti Margamuna
Nemmadi ga Parugetavalen
Marulanu Basi Mayanurosi
Margamane Padugucheyavalen
Emaarakanu Niruvidiantanench
Padugesi Mardinchavalen.”
Can be roughly translated as:

["Sensual passions like sexual desire, anger, greed and cupidity have to be firmly controlled. Not ignoring the rule of discipline, the warp has to be laid along the straight and narrow path, resisting temptation, rejecting illusion. Collections of threads numbering 25 will have to be taken out and beaten into shape."]

This has something to do with the technique of handloom weaving—getting the threads ready before starting the process. Bundles of yarn, produced by the CHARKHA are carefully bound and soaked in starch (KANJU); and after a specified period of time, say a day, they are taken out and the threads are separated. Threads numbering 25 are counted and put together in hanks, and beaten with a wooden club for proper tempering.

According to the Swamiji's teachings, worship has to be undertaken, in a state of tranquillity, with a concentration, after the human mind is brought under perfect control, leaving no room for sensual passions like KAMA (sexual desire), LOBHA (greed), MOHA (illusion), MADA (arrogance), and MAASTARYA (envy). They are known as the six grievous enemies to be conquered and kept out of the system. Whatever be the struggle and strain involved, it was incumbent upon the earnest seeker to achieve concentration of mind and worship for 25 years to
attain proficiency in the art of ‘SANJEEKA-RANA’.

Another verse from the ‘KAALAJNAANAM’ reads as follows:

“Pooni Guru Vaakyamanu Kunchadesikoni
Ba’upuna Padugu Veyavalen
Antara Astamadambula neppudu
Antakunda nantetavalen
Vigasina Pancha Bhotamula Batti
Yenasi Padugu Nenchavalen
Panichoochi, Gurudrushti Padila Parachi,
Lessa Bhaavambane Atchatuka Valen”

May be easily rendered as:

“With the help of a brush, which is the word of the preceptor (GURU VAAKYA), the warp has to be laid with the help of a rope. Taking the yarn out, without being entangled, with the eight evils inside (ANTARA ASHTAMADAS), it has to be counted when the five elements are favourable. Cherishing the Guru’s view, in tackling the job as a whole, the yarn (or the path) has to be straightened out with the wooden club or lofty thoughts”.

Which might be perhaps explained further. The yarn has to be taken out, early in the morning, before the sun is hot, and the warp straightened out, and smoothened with a brush, removing the unevenness caused by the starch. While

★ The Five Elements (PANCHA BHootAS) are:
Prithivyaapastejovayuraakaasa (Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Sky.)
laying the warp, split bamboo pieces have to be inserted at specified intervals (or distances), and the threads neatly separated. While using the brush on the surface, care has to be taken to join the broken threads. The warp may then be arranged according to the design in view, as may be felt necessary.

At the spiritual level, the instruction could be understood as follows:

The MANTRA JAPA (or formal worship with the prescribed mantras) has to be performed according to the guidance of the preceptor (GURU UPADESA). Not letting the sensory organs run riot (or have a free rein), yogic exercise has to be embarked upon, with the eight limbs (or ASHTAANGAS). The five elements have to be bound with the power of the mind, just as the broken threads are joined. After which, concentrate attention on the teaching of the preceptor (GURU BODHA) and conduct the process of meditation (or JAPA) correctly, like fixing the design in the loom.

The next verse proceeds as follows:

"Alalu, sullu leni aatma veedhilo,
Palgu vesi melipetta valen
Velasina Bhrooyuga Madhyamu
Vadalaka maggamu neruga chacha valen
Balimiga Nadambaniyedi mokuna
Bandhinchiyu Neta neya valen
Taiku talukumani talukkuna,
Merisedutaatini taatinchavalen"
After fixing the design, the warp has to be mounted on the loom and straightened out, to avoid knots and twists. Care has to be taken to see that the split bamboo pieces and the other parts of the loom operate smoothly. Tightening the warp with a rope, the woof threads taken from left to right and fixed in position with the aid of a wooden plank.

In the other sense, while performing JAPA or practising YOGA, one's vision has to be concentrated on the central point between the eyes. Just as the bundle of yarn (for laying as warp) is secured with a strong rope, the mind, easily disturbed and difficult to restrain, is tightly bound for JAPA and YOGA, with the aid of a powerful MANTRA.

The next verse reads:

"Nadi Naalaluna Naadi Kommana
Nayamuga Kandikkincha valen
Kudiyedamalaku Tirige Pavanammu
Gurutu Delisi neta Neyavalen
Nincu Vedukato Panduga Vennelalo
Tamantata Merugavalcu
Dandi Siddhaguru Andanjeri
Daari Erigi Digi Neyavalen"

The spindles of yarn had to be fitted into the shuttle, which has to pass to and fro between alternate threads of the warp. For this, the loom, has to be kept in operation. For the operation to be efficient and successful, the weaver
must have skill, along with enthusiasm. It has to be done, if found necessary, under the guidance and supervision of a trained GURU.

This manual and mechanical exercise can be interpreted in yogic terms, with particular reference to the serpent power (or KUNDALINI-SAKTI) in the human system, according to the theory of CHAKRAS. This power which is believed to be upside down in SUSHUPTI AVASTA (sub-conscious state of sleep) has to be awakened and sent up to a spot in the cerebellum (BRAHMA RANDRA), for the JAPA to be apt and effective. PRANAAYAMA (regulated process of inhaling and exhaling) has to be practised, in this connection, according to a prescribed method, watching the direction of the wind (right to left or left to right, as the case may be) and controlling the breath for the YOGA. Beyond the influence of temperal ups and downs, like joy and sorrow, the yogic seeker can turn the searchlight inwards, in an effort at knowing himself. The path to self-realization and true knowledge could be rendered easy under the guidance of a proper GURU.

No one would have been happier than Mahatma Gandhi to read this illuminating interpretation by Sri VeerabrahmendraSwami of a mechanical implement like the handloom, with its spiritual significance and yogic symbolism. For the obvious reason that Gandhiji identified himself not only with the CHARKHA but the
humble profession of the handloom weaver. Rather early in his political career, after his return, for good, from South Africa, finding himself in the court of a sessions judge, he described himself as a “weaver” in reply to a question about his profession. He was, presumably, hardly aware of the esoteric significance of his statement, for he was obviously thinking of this profession in the context of promotion of ‘SWADESI’ goods and the resuscitation of Indian industries at the village level. But he was wiser than he knew.

There was something extra-rational or intutional in Gandhiji’s choice of the CHARKHA as the symbol of a new life, the focal point of new national awakening. We have it on record that Gandhiji saw the CHARKHA in a vision in 1908 in London. “I do not remember to have seen a handloom or a spinning wheel, he says in his Autobiography, “when in 1908 I described it in HIND SWARAJ as the panacea for the growing pauperism of India ............ Even in 1915, when I returned to India from South Africa, I had not actually seen a spinning wheel. When the Satyagraha Ashram was founded at Sabarmathi, we introduced a few handlooms there ....”

The economic object of the handloom, along with its socio-political motivations, was clear enough. We are familiar with such unexceptionable concepts as Dignity of Labour
and Economic Self-sufficiency and Rural Reconstruction. When we see the frail and simple figure of Kabir in front of his loom, we might be impelled to ask: "Is there a vital or logical relation between handloom, communal harmony and human welfare?" We may or may not have an adequate answer to it, fortified by mystic insights. But, when we read, or re-read, the simple and telling words of Sri Veerabrahmendraswami, we feel a shock of recognition. The hidden significance of the handloom is brought before our eyes, in a blinding flash, as it were. It is a new dimension to an old subject, a new direction to reach the familiar goal, cherished by man through the ages.

Dr. D. ANJANEYULU
M. A., B. L. , D. Litt.
Author and Journalist
President, Madras Press Club,
MADRAS.
APPENDIX - XIV

WHO IS SRI VEERAPPAYYA SWAMY?

The Avatar of Sri Veerappayya is the most prominent of the Trimurti forms of God. The story of Sri Veerappayya is that of Sri Adinarayana who is the Parabrahmam of the Universe and who in different forms and diverse names promote the wellbeing of the world. The Kaalajnaanam confirms that Sri Veerappayya's is the tenth avatar of Siva. His appearance at Mount Meru in Kanakagiri near Teni at Allinagar, not far from Srirangam, Madurai and Srivilliputtur, proves the unity of Hari and Hara godhead. Hari and Hara acting in unison protect the virtuous and punish the wicked, according to the Puranas. Be it Lord Venkateswara-swami of Tirupathi or Varadaraja Ekamreswara-swami of Kanchi, Sriranganathaswami of Srirangam or Jambukeswaraswami Jalalingam of Jambukeswaram or Sundareswaraswami of Madurai or Sri Adinarayanamurti (Vatapatrasai) of Srivilliputtur, are all but the forms of Parabrahmam endowed with the divinity of Trimurtis.

Sri Veerappayya appeared as protector of the Universe with invincible powers in the form of the Lingam at Kanakagiri near Teni, not far from Madurai in Tamilnadu. There is evidence in the Kaalajnaanam that this is the tenth avatar
of the creator. The eleventh avatar of Veerappayya is Sri Veerabrahmendraswami, which is fully human and meant for preaching dharma among mankind.

Even in this eleventh avatar, the Swami, during his sojourn at Banaganapalle in Andhra Pradesh was known by the name of Sri Veerappayya and composed the Kaalajnaanam, the timeless treatise of prognosis. He subsequently moved to Kandimallayapalle in Cuddapah District, where he led the life of a householder and became famous as Sri Veerabrahmendraswami. Hence even though the Kaalajnaanam, written while he was known to the people as Sri Veerappayya, became famous as Sri Brahmam's Kaalajnaanam. The book entitled "Sri Veerappayya's Kaalajnaanam" is still lying with the Madras University library (perhaps, it might have been transferred to Tirupathi recently). The identity of Sri Veerappayya and Sri Veerabrahmendraswami must be realised by one and all. Similarly the oneness of Sriranganadha, Sri Sundareswara and Sri Veerappayya also should be recognised, as also the paramadvaita concept of Siva and Kesava be comprehended by the devout.

It is our earnest wish that the devout must realise that Sri Veerappayyaswami of Kanakagiri near Teni is the resplendent form of Para- brahman endowed with the incomprehensible
divinity of the Trimurthis, who assumed this form to protect the Universe. Sri Ranganadhaswami, Sri Sundareswaraswami and Sri Vatapatasai (of Srivilliputtur) are just variant in name only. The abode of Sri Veerappayya is roofless. The Swami in Linga form is cleaned regularly with the Aakash Ganga waters from the skies above. This is a rare phenomenon, a parallel for which is found nowhere else. Hence we proclaim that Sri Veerappayyaswami in the Swayambhü Linga form here is the real protector.

In pursuance of Kaalajnaanam's evidence in support of the connection of Sri Veerappayyaswami and Sri Veerabrahmendraswami with Anandashram, the organisers of this Anandashram explored the connection in depth and are presently engaged in propagating the mahimas and philosophy of Sri Veerappayya to the public at large.

**English rendering by:**
**Sri P. Venkateswara Rao**
Head of the department of Histoy
V. S. R. & N. V. R. College,
TENALI

**Review by:**
"Kalaapraporna"

"Darsanaacharya"

**Review by:**
Dr. KONDURU VEERARAGHAVACHARYA
TENALI
(7) I am unable to hold the Indian farmer responsible for the deterioration in cotton culture. The whole incentive was taken away when hand spinning was destroyed. The state never cared for the cultivator.

(8) My activity, I am proud to think, has already turned the cultivator’s attention to the improvement of cotton. The artistic sense of the nation will insist on fine counts for which long staple is a necessity. Cotton culture by itself cannot solve the problem of India’s poverty. For it will still leave the question of enforced idleness untouched.

(9) I therefore claim for the CHARKHA the honour of being able to solve the problem of economic distress in most natural, simple, inexpensive and business like manner. The CHARKHA therefore is not only not useless as the writer ignorantly suggests, but it is a useful and indispensible article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation’s prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war but of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill-will towards the nations of the earth but
of good-will and self-help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources, but is needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as to-day they cook their food in their own homes. I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the CHARKHA. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, good-will and love. And with all that, in as much as the loss of it brought about India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom.

**GANDHIJI ON NON-VIOLENCE**

**YOUNG INDIA, January, 2 1930**

"... But you can't teach non-violence to the masses. It is only possible for individuals and that too in rare cases. This is, in my opinion, a gross self-deception. If mankind was not habitually non-violent, it would have been self-destroyed ages ago. But in the duel between forces of violence and non-violence the later have always come out victorious in the end. The truth is that we have not had patience enough to wait and apply ourselves whole-heartedly to the spread of non-violence among the people as a means for political ends."

Many are made to serve by circumstances or by compulsion. Say the Government servants and those who serve in private and public sectosrs. Some others offer themselves for service by discretion. Workers in the Sarvodaya and other voluntary institutions are such. Very few are born Sevaks. Their Swadharma is to serve humanity. The choice is by their inborn nature and by love. Sri G. Venkatachalapathy belongs to this category. He is a born Sevak.

1930 was a crucial year in his life. He was then 20 years old, an young man, just a college student. He had to face many choices that came across. The first one was very tempting aiming at becoming an I. C. S. Officer. The second one was to proceed to undergo Police Officer’s training for which he had already been selected. The third one was to go abroad with one of his close relatives to make money. The fourth was to become a Sevak under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi to serve the country. The young man chose the fourth and hence he was a born Sevak. It was not by circumstantial choice but by “Swadharma”.

Vinobaji says in Geeta Pravachan, “Milk may be more valuable and attractive than water. If you offer milk to a fish to live in than in water, it would prefer to live in water. For, it will die in milk. It could live only in water. This is Swadharma”. Service being his Swadharma, Venkatachalapathy had no other choice than to become the Sevak of humanity, in the spirit of Swedheshi, the villagers around him.

This prompted him to stay in the village than to go to London for I. C. S. or abroad for earning money. That was the year when he founded “The Grama Sevak Sangh”. In those days there was no such Sangh in that part of the country. There
were caste wise Sanghs, Nadar Sangh, Naidu Sangh etc. People were not aware of such a Sangh and further they feared the onslaught of the police. It might be looked upon with suspicion by Government and it meant inviting trouble to the village.

When Venkatachalapathy started the Grama Sevak Sangh only a handful of people dared to attend the inaugural function. It is noteworthy that it was presided over by Shri K. Kamaraj, then the Secretary of Town Congress Committee in Virudhunagar, a town near the village. Village elders dissuaded him to do this and hesitated to offer him a roof for the Sangh. So the shades under the big banyan tree was its shelter, the vast blue sky was its roof. Later it had its shelter in the Kaliyanman Temple. His association with Sri K. Kamaraj continued till his death.

Venkatachalapathy was born in 1909 in a remote village far away from transport facilities. It was situated at the foot of a hill temple, Shri Gopalswamy the presidio deity. Whenever Venkatachalapathy was in struggle he used to take refuge in that hill temple. Often fasting with prayers for solace. Even while he was the Chief Commissioner of Madras Government, he preferred to be alone in meditation in that temple keeping himself from his busy schedule that made him spiritually strong. One who travels by the road from Madurai to Srivilliputtur, the abode of Sri Andal, will be pleased at the sight of that temple at a distance standing upright on its peak, visible to a ten mile circumference. Gopalaswamy temple was one of his inspiring spots in his life.

He lived 60 years of his earthly life and it may be divided into three chapters, wonderfully, 20 years each. The first 20 years (from 1909 to 1929) was his formative period, preparing himself for launching his Swadharma. His College education was discontinued in 1930 when he started Grama Sevak Sangh. The second chapter may be termed as a Constructive Worker and as a Freedom Fighter. The third one was the culmination of his constructive service as the Chief Commissioner of Rural
Development Department of Madras Government, then called the Composite Madras Presidency inclusive of coastal area of Andhra Pradesh.

It is true that his offering as Grama Sevak in the year 1930, but it was in 1934 he had the privilege of being christened as a Constructive Worker by no less a person than Mahatma Gandhi who was then on tour in Tamil Nadu. He was proceeding to Virudhunagar to attend a public meeting. Venkatachalapathy was very eager to meet him to present a welcome address to Gandhiji. He was following Gandhiji from Rajapalayam. As luck would have it Gandhiji was detained on the sub-urbs of Virudhunagar at Soolakkarai since the Police had a tough job of maintaining the huge surge of crowd and to prepare a smooth passage to Gandhiji. Venkatachalapathy was in the troupe that followed Gandhiji and hence had that fortune of making use of that time gap for meeting Gandhiji in person. Shri Kumarasamy Raja, then the President of District Congress Committee in-charge of this tour, introduced him to Gandhiji saying that he was one of the best constructive workers in his group. Later Raja served as the chief Minister and Governor.

Gandhiji felt happy to see him and gave him permission to read out the address. A few minutes stay there was the time for supper to Gandhiji. Venkatachalapathy had the rare opportunity of offering the oranges that he had brought with him for him. Gandhiji, after enjoying the juice, left the remains on a piece of paper. At the end of it he instructed Venkatachalapathy to remove it somewhere to a dust-bin. Venkatachalapathy did not throw it away since he considered it hold and hence kept it safe in his pocket bundled in his handkerchief. He did it stealthily and yet it could not escape the notice of Gandhiji who at once made it a joke saying, "Is this becoming to a constructive worker? Raja introduced you to me as one of his best constructive workers". Every one present laughed at it and Venkatachalapathy had no other go than throwing it into a dust-bin but with reluctance as if he were losing a costly possession. It was in this emotional moment of devotion he received the
blessings and initiation from Gandhiji worth the name of "Constructive Worker". This inspiration continued unabated till his death.

Dedication and devotion to Mother India and to God was inborn in him. When he was a student in the National College, Tiruchirapalli, he never failed to visit Sri Renganatha Temple at Sirengam which is on the other bank of the River Cauvery. Though his village was quite nearer to Madurai where there were two colleges, he chose to go to Tiruchirapalli for two reasons, one the National College and the other Sri Renganatha temple. It may look funny to say that Venkatachalapathy took meticulous care before going to Sirengam, that at every time he was so cautious not to spit or pass urine on the soil of Sirengam Area, the abode of Sri Renganatha, as he considered it holy.

In the year 1932 Gandhiji was arrested on his arrival at Bombay from London after attending the Round Table Conference. It had its repercussion—there were arrests all over the country. Venkatachalapathy was also arrested and put in the Central Prison at Tiruchirapally where he was a college student two years before. After one year's detention he was released. He returned to his village, more a matured person and a hero's welcome was then awaiting him. There was a big procession with a chariot for him, but he humbly declined to ride over it and walked along with the crowd. He never went after pomp and show. He was a humble Sevak even while he was the Chief Commissioner in the Government.

On return from jail he preferred to work in the village as a teacher. The reason for this choice was also admirable. While he was in prison, he saw a young prisoner, one Dutt from Bengal who was feared by the British Government, a dreaded revolutionary and hence was kept in chains with two policemen constantly at his guard. Being in chain all the time was really painful, yet Dutt was so magnanimous in his bearing with a smile in his face. It attracted Venkatachalapathy who looked at him with admiration. One day he got permission to meet him in
the jail and his first question to Dutt was, "Please tell me, what is that secret that you look so fearless and smiling inspite of this painful state of affairs?" Dutt's reply was, "It is the impact of my village teacher whose teaching has made me so". This impressed Venkatatachalaapathy so much that made him think that a teacher could make the younger generation fearless by precepts and practice. The Manager of his village school was immensely pleased to leave the school to his care and Venkatatachalaapathy proved to be an ideal teacher.

It was in those days that Basic Education of Gandhiji was not much heard of and experiments went on in Gandhiji's Ashram only. Venkatatachalaapathy's programme and the school curriculum are very much akin to Basic Education though he was not trained as Basic Education Teacher. He planned it to be an ideal school as a lively centre of the village where the children were involved in every aspect of life in the village. Every child in the village of school-going age was enrolled in the school. There were night literacy classes conducted for adults in the village. Children were given instructions to use urinals. Street cleaning was undertaken by the students once a week. Public paths were looked after by making repairs. Drinking water in the village well was kept clean by the school.

There was School Assembly every morning for prayer and for general announcements and moral instructions. 50 charkas were spinning during intervals. Teachers and students were persuaded to wear khadi. Gandhiji's constructive programmes were made aware of to every one in the school. Harijan students were treated with equal respect. There was Teachers' Association in the name of "Teachers National Club." Students' Association was also functioning to develop their talents and skills. National festivals were celebrated by the School Community. Important daily news were read out in the morning Assembly. Singing of "God save the king" was dropped. "Vande Matarm" by Bankim
and "Sujalam Suphalam" by Rabindranath Tagore became the School Song.

A School Library was instituted. It was very rare in those days. Later when Venkatachalapathy was the District Board Vice-President he organised a mobile Library named "Gnana Ratham". It was his aim that the school should be a central house for planning village uplift programmes and for imparting training to students and teachers as Grama Sevaks. The school by itself had become an efficient tool for Grama Seva Sangham.

There were two types of disciples who followed Gandhiji. One is politically motivated, like Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad etc., the other type is constructive workers like Vinobaji, Dr. C. Kumarappa, Shri Ariyanayagam etc. Gandhiji, both combined, wielded his sway on both these groups aiming at political freedom as well as national reconstruction. Venkatachalapathy similar to Gandhi's way he was both, politically involved in Indian National Congress and basically interested in constructive programmes. When he was in the services of Madurai District Board he took interest in the field of education. He made every school a revolutionary cell for freedom struggle. Every teacher in District Board Schools was a patriot as well as Grama Sevak.

Lokamanya Tilak said, "Swaraj is my birth right". Venkatachalapathy said, "Grama Swaraj is my birth right". He considered the School as a centre for Grama Swaraj not only to educate the younger generation but also to create awareness of rights and duties among the adults in the village. Teachers did not participate directly in political activities, but were guiding spirit behind freedom movement and rural reconstruction. When the epic struggle, "Quit India Movement" was launched in 1942 Venkatachalapathy made history in District Board passing a historic resolution closing all the schools as a protest against the British Rule in the country. This was brought to the
notice of the Governor who immediately dissolved the Board and arrested all the members of the Board. Venkatachalapathy was arrested and sent to the prison at Alipore.

As a political worker he organised political conferences, village level, Taluk and District level. He invited National Leaders to Conferences and created political awareness among villagers. He also organised Khadi Conference, Harijan Conference, Prohibition Conference and Constructive Workers Conference. The Charka Conference, organised in Kallupatti Circle, is a historic one, 2000 village women in their Khadi uniform spinning by Charka. Sri Rajendra Prasad who participated in that Conference, on witnessing such a scene, wondered at it saying that he had never seen such a sight before. Temple Entry Conference was also organised under his guidance when Srimathi Rameswari Nehru participated. In the Congress Conference held at Ammapatti near Kallupatti he organised a Khadi Exhibition. Some 12,000 Charkas were plying in villages in Kallupatti Circle.

Grama Sevak Sangham that Venkatachalapathy founded in his village in 1930 was the nucleus for founding an Ashram for Constructive Work at Kallupatti in 1940. Shri G. Ramachandran, a close associate of Gandhiji, named it “Gandhiniketan”. Gandhiniketan Ashram became a beehive centre for political and constructive work in that area. State level and national level leaders visited the Ashram. Workers’ Training Camps became a regular feature in the Ashram. A band of dedicated workers helped him and some of them were his fellow prisoners both in Tiruchirapalli and Alipore. It became a training centre for village industries. Basic Education was imparted to students. They were run without Government grant. Villagers offered their lands and money for them.

When Gandhiji, was on his tour in South in 1946, Venkatachalapathy met him in Madurai Camp. He brought with him a pen made of horn, a shaving razor, a spectacle frame and
Khadi cloth, all made in Gandhiniketan Ashram to be presented to Gandhiji. Gandhiji took the Shaving razor with a curious look saying, “If this does not suit me for shaving, would you permit me to use it for vegetable cutting?” All around enjoyP the joke. Venkatachalapathy requested Gandhiji to make a visit to the Ashram. Gandhiji was on a busy schedule and could not spare time for this, though he personally liked it. He offered his excuse blessing the Ashram saying, “I know you want me to come there to wish my blessings to the Ashram. You also know I am not as young as you are. Two hours car journey is hard for me, further there is very little time to spare. I bless all your work in the Ashram. Wherever constructive work is going on, my blessings are inevitably there. My blessings are to Gandhiniketan Ashram.” Venkatachalapathy felt it as if his Life mission was fulfilled. Later in 1953 Dr. J. C. Kumararappa came to the Ashram and lived there for five years. By that time Babu Rajendra Prasad, as President of India, made a visit to the Ashram.

Venkatachalapathy was a revolutionary writer. His style was simple and direct and inspiring. He made literature by issuing cyclostyled notices during Freedom Struggle. Though the Police made them unlawful it had its wide publicity and impact among the villages. They were distributed by secret channels. Thoughts are faster than light. Venkatachalapathy’s thought provoking messages had its impact among the people in that area. Later he started a monthly journal, “Gramarajyam” in 1946 after he returned from Alipore Jail. Now it is running as a Weekly.

After Independence one of the main projects launched by the National Government was Rural Development. Shri O. P. Ramasamy Reddiar, then Chief Minister, wanted Venkatachalapathy to help him in this project. Hesitantly Venkatachalapathy accepted it and when he once undertook the project he put his
heart and soul in it and worked wonders. As the Chief Commissioner of Rural Development Department he aimed at establishing Gram Panchayat Raj in villages. He offered responsibilities to village leaders in Gram Panchayats. He made Independence felt by the villagers. Ballot boxes are just poor reminders of Freedom visible once in five years. Thereafter there will be no trace of it till its next appearance after a lapse of another five years. Panchayat administration is ever present reminding the villagers of their duties and rights as two legs of Freedom. Village Panchayat is the pivot of Freedom decentralised throughout the Nation to make the people conscious of their Independence.

Venkatachalapathy was always in favour of sharing the responsibilities with villagers. He had faith in them. There might be pitfalls. They have to be eliminated by education and training. Pitfalls are there in Delhi and elsewhere. Venkatachalapathy used to say, "Have faith in your workers. Have faith in village leaders. Once when you bestow faith in them, their talents and sense of responsibility will be promoted to 50 percent; if you give respect to them, it will be promoted to 75 percent; and if you treat them as your equal and one amongst you, it will be promoted to 100 percent." This made his Department work in team spirit. He never prompted his colleagues to work not by power or fear but by love and education. Being a born teacher and sevak by Swadharma his way was education, persuasion and convincing, quite apt and fit for democracy.

He did wonderful work in his Department of Rural Development. Block Development Officials were made to feel "servants" of the people and not "authorities" or "officers". There was close relationship between the Government and the people. Responsibilities of the Government were shared with Grama Panchayats. Nation-building is the work of the people where as the Government machinery is just a tool at their hands. Venkatachalapathy often said, "Keeping the hands of the
villages tied and idle, how could Nation Building be possible?" Lesser the rule, more the freedom. This was his ideal. He implemented this ideal throughout his life, both as a Constructive Worker outside the Government as well as the Chief Commissioner in the Government.

A DEDICATED LIFE

— V. SELVARAJ
Chairman,
Tamilnadu Gandhi Smarak Nidhi
MADHURAI.