

SOMANATHA PALKURIKI (Telugu; c. 13th c.) The period between Namaya and Tilkana is generally called the age of the Shiva poets, and **Palkuriki** Somanatha is the foremost among them. He utilised his life and works solely for the propagation of the Shaiva religion founded by Basavanna. There is difference of opinion about his name, parentage, time and place of birth. Many are of the opinion that he was a brahmin well-versed in the Vedas and the Vedāngas and became a Jaṅgama after adopting the Shaiva religion, while Bandaru Tannaṃya tried to establish that he was a born Jaṅgama. In his first work *Basavagaruḥa*, Somanatha mentioned the names of his parents as Vamaṅgaḍeva and Sūyadevi. Generally Shaivites are prohibited from writing the names of their mother and father since they consider Shiva and Parvati as their parents. Regarding his time also scholars are at variance. *Saḥayya*, however, concludes on the strength of inscriptional evidence that he lived during the reign of Pratyakṛta II, that is, during the second half of 13th and first quarter of the 14th century. There is difference of opinion regarding his place of birth also. The name **Palkuriki** goes along with his name in some of his works. This may be the name of the village where he lived. But there is a village by name **Palkuriki** near Warangal and many critics are of the opinion that Somanatha hailed from that village. Others hold that he belonged to a village named (Sh) **Palkuriki** in the Kannada country.

Four persons are mentioned in the Orem of Somanatha, viz. Katakavi Puḍḍevaṛa, Kaccathali Somanathayya, Gureḷinga and the grandson of Beḷḷevaṛa Vamaṅgaḍayya whose name is not known. Of these, he seems to have received his initial training from the first, and learnt the art of poetry from the second; the third must have given him 'Shivadhāra' and he might have learnt the Shaiva metres from the fourth.

Somanatha was a great scholar of Sanskrit, Telugu and Kannada and wrote works in all the three languages. He was acquainted with Tamil, Marathi, and some other languages also, as well as with music. *Basavagaruḥa* (Dvīpada), *Pradhānadhīya chāḍṛa* (Dvīpada), *Aḷḷamaṅḍiraṅgaṅga* (Dvīpada), *Somanatha mūḷa* (Dvīpada), *Aḷḷavaṅḍa* (verse), *Chennamaḷḷa rāṅḡala* (śloka-verse), *Vīṅḡabhāṅḡaṅḡa* (verse), *Chāḍṛavaḍḍava* (verse), *Basavodaharaṅḡa* (verse and ṅāḍa) and *Basavagaruḥa* are his Telugu works. *Somanathakāḡḡaṅḡa*, *Basavakāḡḡaṅḡa*, *Vīṅḡabhāṅḡaṅḡa*, *Basavodaharaṅḡa*, *Basavashloka*, *Basava panchaka*, *Aḷḷamaṅḍiraṅḡaṅḡa*, *Paṅḡka pradhānagaruḥa*, and *Aḷḷavaṅḍaṅḡaṅḡa*, are his Sanskrit works. His Kannada works are *Basavagaruḥa*, *Basavayyā ṅāḍa*, and *Kaḍḡava ṅāḍa*. Of these the first two works in Sanskrit and Telugu have been published and are considered of high standard. Many other works of Somanatha were printed in one volume with the name *Somanathavimāna* by Bandaru Tannaṅḡa.

Somanatha was devoted to Shiva and Rama and was indifferent of other religions. He lived near Trichāḷi for a long time where he completed his works. He used the simplest metre dvīpada and the śloka language in his important works so that all people might understand them. Poligari Somana, the author of *Facts Basavagaruḥa*, states that he entered 'samādhi' in village Kalkāḡa in the Mysore state, while others hold that his 'samādhi' is in village Palkuriki near Warangal, where the temple of Somanathaswami was later built.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Andhra*, *Samagra Andhra sahityaḡa*; *Basavaḡa Tannaṅḡa*, *Palkuriki Somanathakāḡḡa*; Ch. Sūyayya, *Andhra Sahityaḡa*, Vol. III (1939); P. Lakshmināḡaḡa, *Andhra sahitya chāḍṛa* (1936).