SHRI SANT SHUBHARAY MAHARAJ
PAINTINGS
CHITRACHIRIRANTAN

MAHARASHTRA STATE BOARD FOR LITERATURE & CULTURE
The idol of Pandurang
at Shri Shubharay Math, Solapur
SHRI SANT SHUBHARAY MAHARAJ
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MAHARASHTRA STATE BOARD FOR LITERATURE & CULTURE
निवेदन

द. स. १९६२ संये माँ षोलापुर येथे तात्मकांशी असती भोर काही कविे। १३. ३०. ताम्रपुर बेंगलुरु में मेडिकल विभाग येथे आला। ताम्रपुर में माँ धर्मार्थ सत्यस में वेद २७९ येथे गुरुभार महाराजांचा विलक्षण संबंध पाहणारा संग्रह दिली। कविकर्म में ती काही इलेक्ट्रोनिकाने मां महादेवारे भेटी। परंतु माता निताना हा संस्कृत पात्रता आला नाही।

पुढे १९६३ माता मं षोलापुर वेळी तेषा हा विभिन्न पाहणारा ठाणे म्हणंतो व्यवहारकर्म सुरक्षित आहेत त्या भी भू- अ. व. वापड यांना भेटीलो आणि लांगी मोडांना प्रेमाने आणि उत्साहाने वी दाखविला। इतरसह तेरह, भी मां यांनी माध्यम विनेविजन महाराजां प्रस्तुत वी आणि संकृती मंडळाचा वाचते हा विज्ञानीला प्रकाशित करणार्म पर्यावरण येणे झालीं। परंतु मंडळाचा वाचते हा विज्ञानीला प्रकाशित करणार्मांनी आकर्षक ती कामकाज करून होंन होऊन भी आण्यांनी केलेला संबंध आला नाही।

माध्यम अत्यन्त स्वाभाविक कालविद्या उल्लेखनीय कामेंली महापुरुष यांनी अनेकांना करू दाखविला वेंढून हे मला वातात। या विज्ञानाच्या प्रामाण्यसंतान मला सहभागी होत्या आलीं याचा मला अभिभावक वातेले व्यावहारिक आहे। या विज्ञानाच्या सामान्य माध्यम, विज्ञानाचे व समागमसंबंधी अनेक मारेच स्वागत करतील गात मला वाचा नाही।

भी. पृ. ज. रुपांतर्गत चिन्हांचे प्रकाश विज्ञान मंडळाचा वतीने करणार्म परिणामी विश्वासवाद लक्ष्य आणि विश्वासवाढ चिंतन-ध्वस्त करते, चिन्हांची ही प्रकाश देखील विश्वासवाद भी भी. अनेकवर नागरिकांनी मां आभारी आहे, भी. प. प. धोंडे, साहित्यकार, शासन मुद्रास व तेलुगु साहित्याला मनाते याच्या संदर्भात वी विभिन्न वि.विदेशी कक्षा लिहिली होती तर हा संविधान व मुंदर धारा तयार करत. तरीही माँ सहभागी मंडळाचा आवश्यक कुळ करून आपल्या विचारास धरण होते, या मंडळाचे विमुद्र विनाविष्ट करत असा महत्त्वाचा संबंध विश्वासवाद भी. म. ता. जाचार यांचे व या विज्ञान ट्रस्टबॅर्नीच तयार करून विश्वासवाद भी. नीतिन गुप्ते
यांच्या आधाराने मानणी आवश्यक आहे, मंडळांचे सरपण, सचिव व सर्वनामार्थी मांडणा महत्त्वाच्याविषय वा अभियंत्र व विकासपंजून मान्यतें होऊ शकता नसता हे थोडून न दाखलिताही कौशल्याची कठोरत्वासारखं आहे.

प्रेरक विवरक कृ. श्री. अल्पमंखक मांडणार्खालीत स्पर्धात्मक क्रमांक या घटना माही महत्त्वाकारक हिंदू पत्रांपासून नेत आहे पावसा मध्ये अभिमान वाढतो.

46, यवोधन
मुंबई ४०० ०१०
महाराष्ट्र विन
१ वे १९८८

मुरेश्वर बाहांले
अध्यक्ष,
महाराष्ट्र राष्ट्रीय साहित्य आर्जण संस्थेची मंडळ.
FOREWORD

In 1951 while I was in Solapur for some work I had an occasion to meet Late Prof. D. R. Bendre, a great Kannad poet. He suggested that I should visit Shri Shubharai Math and see the rare paintings of Shri Shubharai. On his advice I visited the Math but unfortunately could not then see the collection of these paintings.

Later, in 1983 when I visited Solapur I made it a point to have a look at these paintings and fortunately through the help of Shri P. G. Buwa who owned this valuable collection, I succeeded in my mission. Further on my request Shri Buwa allowed Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture to publish an album of some of these paintings. But it took nearly 5 years to complete the necessary formalities before the album of the paintings could be made available to the people.

I regard the present publication as an achievement of the Board and I have no doubt that these paintings will be liked and valued both by the people and the artists and the art critics.

I deem it a personal privilege in being actively associated with this publication. I am very grateful to Shri P. J. Buwa for allowing us to publish this wonderful art collection and to Shri Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni for having edited this album. I am also grateful to Shri G. D. Dhond, Director, Government Printing and Stationery for printing it artistically. But for his interest this volume would not have been as beautiful as it is today. My thanks would be incomplete if I do not mention his staff also. I am equally grateful to Shri G. N. Jadhav for giving us a positive advice that these paintings should be published without any further delay and to Shri Nitin Gupte for helping us technically and making the necessary transparencies. Last but not the
least I must mention the names of members and the Secretary and the staff of the Board for co-operating with me in making this project a success.

I am proud that during my tenure I am able to give to the public this valuable treasure which has inspired great artists like late Shri Almelkar.

42, Yashodhan
Bombay 400 020
Maharashtra Day
1st May 1988

S. S. BARTLINGAY
Chairman
State Board for Literature and Culture.
श्री संत शुभराय महाराज आणि त्यांचा चित्रसंग्रह

सोलापूरचे सुप्रसिद्ध श्री संत शुभराय महाराज यांचा चित्रसंग्रह हा अनौठ चित्रसंग्रह आहे. यापैकी देवतांच्या विविध क्रियापदांचा व त्यांचेच प्रदर्शन भरलेले आहे आणि परंपरेंचे नेहमीही सांगणारे सर्वांचा म्हणजेच दर्शनाने स्मरित केलेले टाकलेले आहे.

शुभराय महाराज एक लोकविद्यक दाः अनिवार्य होते. त्यांचे मुळ नाव सुब्रमण्य राव. त्यांचे मृत्यु परंपरेंच आंबळलेले, परंतु त्यांचा जन्म इ.स. १७५० साली कोलकातेत महुज या गावी खालील राज्यात. त्याच्या व्यवसायात ते त्याचे भुगतान आणि ब्रह्मणी होते की, त्यामुळे प्रभावित होऊन दिसून सुलतानाने त्यांचा पंतप्रधानांचा खालील आणा दिली.

मात्र काळी काळातील मुळ्या राष्ट्रांच्या व्यवसायात आले की, तिपण्यांचा पदरची ही नोकरी म्हणजे सोन्याचा पिजडा आहे. त्यांची विशेषता ही सोडली आणि अध्यात्माचा ध्यान पाहून ते घेत धर्मवृत्त दृष्टित महाराजांत सोलापूरला आले. ते सुभराय हे नाव धारण करत त्याच्याएक एक मठ स्थापन केला. तो मह अनुभवाचे अभित्वाचे आहे. त्याच्याबद्दल सुभरायांनी आपल्या आध्यात्मिक संबंधात बोहीकींपैकी पोषणिक, आणि पंतप्रधान इ.स. १८२० साली त्यांची महासमाधी पंतला.

श्री सुभराय महाराज हे सुस्तह अन्यायामोक्षाची संत नवूहे. ते क्रीडा आणि चित्रकलेची होते. त्यांची रचनेची परे आणलेली कोर्ट-प्रश्नाता वारून वाचली. गांवी श्री सुभरायांनी दहशतात उठावावरुन तो नोळ्याचे कामकाजोंत जोळाने अंगावर खेळले होते, आणि ते करताना मागवता, करून लालीका रोपणाच्या वाचला तोड चालू घेंगे.

सोलापूरच्या त्यांच्या भागात आणि नृत्याचे मुख्य कार्यक्रम होत. एका सुप्रसिद्ध गायकांनी त्यांच्या मंडळाची वाचले दिली. महाराज संगीताचे निर्मित व मुफळत निर्माणात होते. अर्थात ते सर्व कळा त्यांनी परमेश्वरांनी वाहित्य होता.
श्री शुभरायणी महाराजा चिवांना शोध प्रथम त्याच्या आरंभात तत्त्वज्ञानी शीतल के उदाहरण आपण ते परिचित होते. त्याची अभिव्यक्ती परंतु गंगी कीवी, क्षेत्र, सांस्कृतिक प्रदेश आणि तमिळनाडू या महानगर नवी चित्राचे नाव आहे. बाबां काहीं नाही, त्याच्या पत्रांना नाही, काही वेळा त्याच्या वस्तीच्या नावांना काही विद्युत येत नाही, त्याच्या वाटांना काही खिच नाहीत.

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महळ्याचा काळ हा मित्रभाषी परंतु अवढत्या वश्यात्व तत्त्व मुक्तादात होणार. ते स्वतः बहुमार्गित होते आणि दलितकडूळ ही वश्याच हस्तांत्रिक आपल्या आधार-विश्वारूढ नागारंभ आपल्या ज्ञान म्हणून चेतन्य होती. तंत्रज्ञानाचा मोठा वृद्धाक्ष राजमार्गाच्या आपल्याचा भाग राष्ट्रीय एकतासेचा स्वरूप दिलेला. फार काय, आपल्या नाटककार आणि साहित्यिक विशेषज्ञ ग्रंथांनी महाराष्ट्रामार्गाच्या कलाकृतींमध्ये कृपण होते.

आणि महादेव आज ही संत श्रीराम महाराजांचा विचार करताना राष्ट्रीय एकतासेचा कलानेही एक मोठे प्रेरक महत्त्वाच्य आपण त्याची दक्षता पाहिजे. या संवतीत त्याच्या अभेद विचारांचा आणि लूटताना त्याच्या जीवनकाळाची ही जास्त विशाल पावंभूमी आपण विसरता कामा नवे.

शामेदेव नाडकर्णी
SHUBHARAY: MAN AND SAINT

THIS is a collection of select paintings—the first of its type—by Shri Shubharay Maharaj of Solapur. These rare paintings are housed in the Shubharay Math of Solapur. But they have also travelled the width and breadth of the country winning encomiums from big and small, from Prime Minister Nehru to the proverbial man-in-the-street.

Who is Shubharay Maharaj, the author of these breathtakingly beautiful works? He spans the years that join the 18th and 19th centuries and emerges as a phenomenal figure in the history of the western region. Of Andhra stock, he was born Subba Rao in 1750 at Malur in Karnataka. At a very young age he was so impressively gifted and knowledgeable that he drew the attention of Tipu Sultan and was made Deputy Prime Minister while still under 30.

But, in due course, Subba Rao realised that he could not please the Sultan and develop his own self at the same time. He resigned his post, left Srirangapatnam and came down to live in Solapur in South Maharashtra. At this time he also embraced a spiritual course of life and changed his name to Shubharay Maharaj. In 1780 he established a math, which exists to this day. It is from this abode that he carried on his spiritual work till, in 1820, he attained his mahasamadhi.

Shubharay Maharaj was not just a mystic and an influential religious thinker. Apart from being a fine painter he was also a poet, and we still have many specimens of his philosophical or religious compositions.

Just as the European Renaissance of the 16th–17th centuries produced that scholarly specimen called the humanist, Shubharay...
Maharaj was a true humanist, a man steeped in the arts and the sciences, in philosophy and religion. But he was not a mere preacher. He took keen interest in the problems of the downtrodden and boldly championed the cause of the untouchables who were traditionally ostracised by Hindu fanatics.

It is on record that great musicians and dancers visited his math in Solapur to perform there. The outer wall of the math was built by a noted singer and devotee of Shubharay Maharaj as a token of her great regard for him.

Telugu was Shubharay's mother-tongue. But he was also a master of Sanskrit, Tamil, Kannada, Urdu and Marathi. Apart from Maharashtra, his religious compositions have been popular for the past 150 years in Goa, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. They are being used there for religious discourses.

Shubharay Maharaj was himself a musician and an expert dancer. Among those who have provided classical tunes to his compositions is a man named Baba Jaail, who was treasurer in the Solapur Fort during Shubharay's time.

The paintings of Shubharay Maharaj had lain in family trunks for many decades till they were discovered by P. J. Buwa, a fifth-generation descendant of the saint. Buwa not only manages the affairs of the math but has also been responsible for organising the travelling exhibition of Shubharay's paintings. As such, his share in the making of the present book is also immense.

The paintings in the book comprise three sections: the Dasahavatara; the life and loves of Krishna and a few episodes from the Ramayana. The Krishnaleela must be considered the central portion of the book. What Shubharay projects most prominently is the divine love of
Krishna and Radha. This also includes the boy Krishna’s special relationship with the gopis. In the poetry of medieval times this forms the cult of Madhurabhakti; but Shubharay, who was also a poet, does not adhere blindly to any cult or any philosophy.

I think one must look upon Shubharay as a lover of beauty. This includes, of course, spiritual beauty. This becomes apparent not only in the classic style of his paintings but also in the central theme of his work. It is not easy to relate Shubharay’s style to any contemporary school of painting, either in Maharashtra, in Karnataka, Andhra or generally in the Deccan. His manner of portraying the cowherds and the gopis, Krishna, Radha and Yeshoda reminds us, rather, of folk art as it has flown in a continuous stream in our country. This popular art was to be seen as much on the walls of rural houses as within temples and palaces. It has a close relationship with illuminated manuscripts from different religions. It is, thus, apt that these immortal paintings should be issued in book form.

The manner in which Shubharay draws the human beings in these paintings is full of a childlike charm. The gods, too are human here. Krishna’s childhood is obviously a subject after the saint’s heart. The various ‘props’ in the Krishna story, for example, the mortar to which the child god is tied, are drawn with a peculiar blend of stylisation and realism. Shubharay lavishes great care on drawing trees and foliage. His animals, especially the cows around Krishna, are bathed in affection. All these paintings suggest that, within the painter’s art, a great spring of bhakti is at work.

And this bhakti was the keynote of his career. His defection from Tipu Sultan reminds us of the stand taken by Becket vis-a-vis King Henry II in Jean Anouilh’s play, Becket. When Becket becomes Archbishop of Canterbury, he tells Henry that at one time he owed all loyalty to the
king; but now he owes it only to god! Similarly, the Deputy Prime Minister of Tipu embraced god and boldly spurned service of the Sultan.

Shubharay’s life and work also emphasize the role played by national integration in those distant times. Shubharay’s background and upbringing tied him to Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra in equal measure. His awareness of inter-regional integration is reflected in all his life’s work. In the 18th and 19th century, the kings of Thanjavur similarly laid down a lesson in inter-lingual and inter-cultural integration. Speaking of Maharashtra, even the pioneering dramatist Annapurna Banerjee, born in Karnataka, composed for the theatre in Kannada before writing his Marathi musical classics. This tradition of regional exchanges transcends to this day the political barriers in our country.

This is, indeed, a great heritage for us. Shubharay is a constant reminder of this fact. It is this feature of his life and work that relates him to the goals and problems of our own times. He pleases us with his paintings; he touches our heart with the ethereal beauty of his work; and he sets us an example in linguistic and regional fraternity which we can never underestimate.

DNYANESHWAR NADKARNI
Dashavatara

Dashavatar
Lord Vishnu reclining on
the mythical python Shesha
(who, in Hindu cosmology, holds aloft the world on his head)
Matsyavatar (Top) and Koormavatar : Vishnu’s incarnation of a fish and a tortoise

Varahavatar (Top) and Nrisinhavatar : the boar and the man-lion incarnations of Vishnu
Vamanavatāra: Vishnu’s incarnation of the diminutive Vaman
Parashuramavat: Vishnu’s incarnation of the axe-wielding Parashurama
Ramavatar : Vishnu's incarnation of Rama
Krishnavatar: Vishnu's incarnation of Krishna
The Buddha incarnation
Kalanki-avatar (Top)
and Buddhavatar:
Vishnu’s incarnation
of the world destroying
Kalanki and of Buddha
कृष्णलीला

Krishna-lila
Yashoda playing with Krishna and his brother Balaram

Yashoda is distributing butter while Krishna holds the pot for her
आपत्या मातृशीर्षा रूपाने आलेल्या पूर्वनेचा बालक्षण वध करू वाहे

Krishna killing the demoness Pootana who had approached him in the guise of his maternal aunt
यशोदा ताक हुस्तव्याण्यास
मबत करावणाचा
कृष्ण आव आणतो

Krishna pretends to help Yashoda churn the buttermilk
Yashoda carries Krishna on her lap as the Gopis (milkmaids) go by
Krishna, tied by Yashoda to a mortar, breaks through two trees and releases the two sons of Kubera who had once been transformed into those trees.
Krishna playing ball with his mates on the bank of the Yamuna
Childhood cowherd mates of Krishna
A mate of the boy Krishna takes cows to the Yamuna bank for grazing
Cows hypnotised by the sound of Krishna’s flute
Wives of Kaliya, the demon-serpent, praying to Krishna to spare their husband’s life
Childhood mates of Krishna with cows

Cowherds going to Mathura to sell their milk, butter and curds
Detail of 'Kaliya-mardan'
Kaliya’s wives pray to Krishna
A frieze depicting Gopis
As Akrura takes Krishna in his chariot to meet King Kansa at Mathura, the Gopis try to block his way.
Ethereal music: Radha singing for Krishna
"भज बोलुँ नको, कान्हा रे"

"Don't you say a word!"
Radha seems to say in mock anger
"या तबलणे हुरपले भान
अनु उमरल्ले मीत वैयक्त श्रीलोले "

Under the tree that unites
Krishna and Radha in an ageless embrace

“राम नको, अनुराग धरो”!

Krishna making amends to Radha
Krishna and Radha: a celestial pair
Krishna dancing with the Gopis on the sands of the Yamuna
Radha spellbound, perhaps, with thoughts of Krishna
Krishna leading the Gopis in a collective dance during the Raas-lila
Another aspect of the Raas-lila

Rejoicing Gopis
Raas-lila: the dance of Krishna and the Gopis
Even the cows listen raptly
as Krishna plays the flute
Dancing Gopis
The Raas-lila of Krishna and the Gopis

Radha spurning Krishna's urgings

Radha punishing Krishna by pinching his ear

Radha back in the service of Krishna
Radha trying hard to persuade an obstinate Krishna

Radha fanning Krishna
Krishna trying to pacify Radha

Romancing in moonlight
Assurances of love from Radha to Krishna

Radha feeding Krishna
An altercation between Radha and Krishna, inevitably bordering on a gesture of love.
Romantic altercation between Radha and Krishna
A momentary misunderstanding between Radha and Krishna which will soon dissolve into love
Radha enchanted by Krishna’s flute
The tippri dance of Gopis
Gopis wandering in search of Krishna

The divine dance of Radha and Krishna
Gopis performing puja and arati
Gopis hypnotised by the sound of Krishna's flute
Gopis eagerly waiting for Krishna
Krishna blocking Gopis proceeding to the Mathura market
Krishna and Balaram stop Gopis proceeding to the Mathura market
Gopis going to Mathura to sell their milk, butter and curds.

If you want to achieve the highest, you must leave everything: a symbolic interpretation of an incident from Krishna’s life.
Krishna surrounded by Gopis pretending to be annoyed with him
Cows bewitched by Krishna’s flute
Cows and Cowherds playing in the Yamuna sands

Radha and Krishna on swings

Frieze showing Radha and Krishna
Now, there is sunshine between the two
‘वर्षणी बघते मी गोपाला’
राघवे केस कृष्ण बिबरीत असताना तिला त्याचे हय
हातातील आरागात बिसते

Krishna combing Radha’s hair as she sees his image in the little mirror she holds
Radha at the lotus feet of Krishna
रामायणातील काही प्रसंग

Incidents from The Ramayana

ह्या मुर्तीच्या माहित्याला धावून गेलेले रामाचे योद्धे

Rama’s warriors in aid of the sages
A victorious Rama is blessed by the sages
Narad, Hanuman and Garuda
रहुड़ आणि पुष्पक विमान

Garuda and the Pushpak Viman
वातर्सेवा

An army of monkeys
Garuda and the Pushpak Viman
An army of monkeys
Samadhi of Shri Shubharay Maharaj
The God Vishnu as seen by Shri Shubharay Maharaj