The Metaphor of the Mind as a Horse: A Yogic Interpretation of Shishunala Sharif's "Entha Mojina Kudure"

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Abstract
Shishunala Sharif, a mystic poet from Karnataka, stands out in Kannada literature for bridging India's spiritual and folk traditions. His poetry "Entha Mojina Kudure" (What a Delightful Horse) is a metaphor-filled masterpiece portraying the human mind as a horse needing guidance, discipline, and devotion. Sharif uses simple, relatable imagery to capture deep spiritual experiences, drawing on yogic and tantric philosophies. This study examines the poem's philosophical and historical context, emphasizing its spiritual teachings, yogic symbolism, and societal relevance.

Keywords: Esoteric Practices, Mysticism, Shakta Tantric Practices, Kundalini Awakening

Introduction

Sant Shishunala Sharif (1819–1889) is widely revered as a "people's poet-philosopher," whose works resonate with the deep spiritual undercurrents of Indian mysticism while remaining rooted in the lived experiences of ordinary people. He is an iconic figure in Karnataka's literary and cultural history, remembered not only for his poetic genius but for his role in bridging diverse traditions—Islamic Sufism, Shakta Tantra, Hindu Bhakti, and regional folk spirituality—into a unified experiential mysticism (Budalu 22). Sharif's unique spiritual worldview was profoundly shaped by his guru, Govindabhatta, a practitioner of Tantramarga, who initiated him into esoteric yogic disciplines, including the study of Kundalini energy, chakras, and tantric symbolism which influenced his poetic oeuvre (Chikkanna 47). "Entha Mojina Kudure" exhibits this synthesis by employing a horse metaphor to explore the mind's potential for both disorder and transcendence.

Sharif's work is part of the Tatvapada tradition, which includes Kannada metaphysical poetry by mystic saints such as Kanakadasa, Nijaguna Shivayogi, and Akka Mahadevi. However, his unique

contribution is his ability to translate esoteric teachings into practical wisdom. Tatvapada Bhajan groups in Karnataka continue to sing his verses, sustaining an oral tradition that combines philosophical depth and communal devotion (Chikkanna 29). The Tatvapada Sampadane project, which chronicles over 11,500 pages of poetry, highlights Sharif's significant contribution to cultural tradition (Budalu 7).

Sharif's Tatvapadas (metaphysical songs) combines yogic wisdom with folk idioms, making them accessible to the general public while conveying great philosophical depth. Unlike more abstract metaphysical poetry, Sharif's works are deeply embodied in cultural, oral, and agrarian realities yet retain the transcendent quality of mystical expression. His compositions reflect the principles of Shakta Tantra, particularly the idea that divine energy (Shakti) resides within the human body and can be awakened through disciplined spiritual practice (Avalon 38). This spiritual potential, however, can be accessed only through guru-shishya (teacher-disciple) lineage, a relationship Sharif himself modelled with reverence and surrender.

One of Sharif's most iconic compositions, "Entha Mojina Kudure" ("What a Delightful Horse"), exemplifies this synthesis of yogic philosophy and folk metaphor. The poem depicts the image of a horse—a creature of strength, agility, and unpredictable behaviour—as a symbol of the human mind. When left untamed, the horse (mind) can lead one astray, but when fostered and disciplined under the guidance of a great Guru, it becomes a powerful vehicle for spiritual elevation. The poem mentions yogic techniques like chakra alignment, moral discipline (yama and niyama), frequent spiritual feeding (sadhana), and Kundalini awakening, albeit through rural images.

By embedding Tantric and yogic symbolism within folk structures, Sharif democratized mysticism. In an era when access to divine knowledge was frequently restricted by caste, class, or literacy, Sharif's poetry served as a medium for spiritual democratization. His use of Kannada vernacular, everyday metaphors, and cultural references enabled him to reach audiences who had never encountered formal yogic or tantric texts, thereby contributing to what can be referred to as a people's metaphysics—a metaphysical understanding based on everyday language and experience.

Entha Mojina Kudure is more than merely a spiritual endeavour. Sharif uses this artefact to teach timeless lessons on mind control, self-realization, ethics, and spiritual connection. Sharif's unique and lasting contribution to Kannada literature and Indian spirituality stems from his poetry expression of inner mysticism and exterior ethics.

Objective

This study analyses Shishunala Sharif's poem Entha Mojina Kudure as a literary and philosophical work that incorporates yogic, tantric, and mystical concepts. The study explores how Sharif uses folk metaphors to explain complicated metaphysical concepts like Kundalini awakening, chakra activation, Guru-shishya relations, ethical living, and societal responsibility. The study examines the poem's relevance in contemporary discussions about spirituality, ethics, and social cohesion discourse.

Problem Statement

Shishunala Sharif is a well-known mystic poet and cultural figure in Karnataka, although his writings have received little academic attention, particularly through the perspective of yogic symbolism and tantric metaphysics. Sharif's poetry has been hailed for its folk appeal and devout lyrics, but its deeper intellectual and esoteric aspects are often overlooked or misinterpreted. This study aims to provide critical analysis linking his poetic metaphors to traditional yoga practices and ethical-spiritual pedagogy.

Research Question

- How does Shishunala Sharif employ metaphors in Entha Mojina Kudure to communicate yogic and tantric philosophies?
- In what ways does the poem reflect the integration of personal spirituality with social ethics?
- How can the spiritual symbolism in Sharif's poetry be interpreted through the framework of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and the Kundalini tradition?

Literature Review

Existing literature on Shishunala Sharif primarily focuses on his contributions to Bhakti poetry, folk mysticism, and interfaith harmony (Budalu, 2024; Chikkanna, 2024). Scholars like Rahmat Tarikere and K. Marulasiddappa have emphasised Sharif's inclusiveness and critique of organised religion, while cultural experts have studied the oral and musical traditions of Tatvapadas. Few studies directly link Sharif's poetic language to Kundalini, Tantra, or Ashtanga Yoga traditions.

Avalon's The Serpent Power (1919) and Feuerstein's The Yoga Tradition (2001) provide thorough descriptions of chakra and Nadi systems, providing a theoretical context for understanding Sharif's esoteric references. Edwin F. Bryant's annotated translation of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (2009) explains yama, niyama, and abhyasa, which serve as the ethical foundation in Sharif's verses. Sri Aurobindo's The Life Divine (1940) provides an idealistic interpretation of ascending consciousness, similar to Sharif's "upper levels" and inner elevation metaphors.

Research Gap

While significant work has been done on the Bhakti and folk dimensions of Shishunala Sharif's poetry, a notable gap exists in interpreting his metaphors using the frameworks of Kundalini Yoga, Tantric symbolism, and yogic ethics. Most interpretations overlook the esoteric undercurrents that elevate his poetry beyond devotional lyricism. There is also minimal academic literature that positions Entha Mojina Kudure as a pedagogic text offering a blueprint for spiritual practice and ethical living.

Discussion

The Horse as a Metaphor for the Mind

In Entha Mojina Kudure ("What a Joyous Horse to Ride"), Shishunala Sharif employs the image of a horse as a central metaphor for the human mind. The chorus—"Entha mojina kudure / Hattida mele tiruguvudu hannondhu peri" (What a joyous horse to ride, once mounted, it takes eleven rounds)—is a lyrical and philosophical device. The horse metaphor is not just ornamental but also an allegorical depiction of the mind, particularly within the framework of yogic philosophy.

In yogic traditions, particularly those aligned with Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the mind is considered a dynamic, often unruly entity requiring disciplined practice (sadhana). Yogic mind control enables practitioners to achieve deeper spiritual states and psychic powers (siddhis). Sharif's "eleven rounds" (Kannada: ಹನ್ನೊಂದು ಪೇರೆ) represent the dasha indriyas (ten senses—five sensory and five motor organs) and manas (mind), totaling eleven faculties that a yogi must master. When the aspirant "mounts" the mind—meaning takes conscious control through yogic practices—this disciplined "ride" leads to spiritual fulfillment and a metaphysical journey across existential realms (Patanjali 1.2–1.3).

The horse metaphor also echoes the ancient Vedic and Upanishadic symbolism in which the chariot and the horses often represent the senses, as seen in the Katha Upanishad: "Know the self as the rider in a chariot, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind as the reins" (Katha Upanishad, I.3.3–4). Sharif appears to localize creatively and folk-embed this archetype, making it accessible to the common Kannadiga.

Furthermore, the mention of "eleven rounds" resonates with the concept of passing through spiritual dimensions or lokas, which is frequently cited in yogic and tantric systems as journeys enabled by mastery over one's subtle body energies and chakras (Aurobindo 301). When the mind is metaphorically transformed into a horse imbued with yogic power, it becomes a vehicle for transcendental movement—capable of leading the practitioner toward kaivalya (liberation). Sharif employs folk metaphors for lyrical effect and mapping sophisticated yogic psychology into poetic language understandable by lay audiences.

Sharif makes an implicit yet profound case for the necessity of spiritual discipline by aligning the horse's behavior with the tendencies of the human mind—unpredictable, powerful, and needing training—. His folk expression captures a more profound truth: only when the mind is bridled with awareness, ethical values, and devotion can one begin the journey toward spiritual realization.

The Role of the Guru

In Entha Mojina Kudure, Shishunala Sharif articulates the pivotal role of the Satya Sadguru—the true Guru—in a seeker's spiritual journey. He writes:

"Sāri nānu hēḷtēni saṭiyalla ī mātu / Satyasadguruvina pāda gaṭyāgi muṭṭisitu"

("I apologize for speaking so boldly; the truth brought me to the feet of the True Guru") (Sharif, trans.).

This verse reflects a core tenet of Indian spiritual philosophy: that self-realization and liberation (moksha) are attainable only through the grace and guidance of a realized teacher. In yogic traditions, especially within the frameworks of Tantra and Kundalini Yoga, the Guru is not just a mentor but a spiritual conduit who awakens dormant energies and safely guides the aspirant through the inner journey of transformation. The Guru's presence is so essential that even sacred texts such as the Guru Gita declare, "Without the Guru, there is no knowledge; without knowledge, there is no liberation" (Guru Gita, verse 17).

Sharif's poetic surrender to the Guru sincerely acknowledges this spiritual necessity. His choice of "Satyasadguru" implies a Guru who has realized the ultimate truth (satya) and can lead others toward it. This idea is congruent with yogic scriptures, including Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, which emphasize personal discipline (tapas) and suggest that devotion to Ishvara (the higher consciousness or Guru principle) can accelerate the path to realization. As Patanjali states in Sutra I.23, Īśvara-praṇidhānād vā — "Or [samādhi is attained] by devotion to the Lord" (Patanjali 1.23).

Furthermore, in Kundalini Yoga, the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti—the coiled spiritual energy at the base of the spine—is perilous and unmanageable without the presence of an experienced Guru. Without proper guidance, this energy may not ascend correctly through the chakras, resulting in physical, emotional, or spiritual imbalances (Vasant 81). Thus, the Guru serves as a teacher, protector, and navigator on this esoteric journey.

Sharif's emphasis on Guru-bhakti (devotion to the Guru) also resonates with the Bhakti tradition, where the Guru often replaces institutional religion as the seeker's most intimate and transformative spiritual connection. Saints such as Kabir and Basavanna, who profoundly influenced Sharif, frequently praised the Guru's grace above all religious doctrines. Kabir reportedly said, "If God and Guru both appear before me, to whom should I bow? I bow to the Guru, for he showed me God" (Kabir, qtd. in Vaudeville 114).

Sharif, emerging from the interreligious and mystical milieu of nineteenth-century Karnataka, draws from various traditions—Islamic Sufi, Shaiva, and Shakta—yet his reverence for the Guru transcends doctrinal boundaries. The Guru, in Sharif's vision, is the essential mirror that reveals the divine Self within. Without this mirror, the mind (the horse) would remain untamed and directionless.

Disciplining the Mind – Yogic Practices

In the first verse of Entha Mojina Kudure, Shishunala Sharif poetically illustrates how the mind, metaphorically depicted as a horse, must be sufficiently nourished and disciplined to fulfill its spiritual purpose. The verse reads:

"Hacchanna kaḍḍava hākali bēkō / Nicchala nīru kuḍisali bēkō / Saṃskāra hiḍidu hoḍiyali bēkō / Achyuta meccuvante mai tikkali bēkō"

("Should we feed it fresh grass? Should it be given still water to drink? Should it be whipped with cultured training? Should its body be groomed to please Lord Achyuta?") (Sharif, trans.)

Each image in this verse has profound yogic significance. The "fresh grass" symbolizes the nourishment of the mind through heartfelt devotional practices (bhakti) rather than rote or mechanical rituals. In yogic psychology, this corresponds to the need for intentional and mindful engagement with spiritual practice—what Patanjali refers to as abhyāsa, or sustained, committed effort toward steadiness of mind (Yoga Sutras I.13) (Patanjali 24).

The "still water" alludes to the quality of mental clarity and purity, reflecting the yogic goal of achieving a calm, undisturbed consciousness free from agitation, desire, and delusion. This concept aligns with chitta-prasādana (purification of the mind), which Patanjali suggests can be cultivated through friendliness, compassion, joy, and equanimity (I.33) (Patanjali 29). A mind "fed" with such clarity is like a horse that drinks from clean water—steady, refreshed, and healthy.

The metaphorical "stick of discipline" represents the ethical and moral practices a seeker must adopt to train the mind. These are well stated in Patanjali's eight-limbed path Ashtanga Yoga which includes yamas (moral restraints) and niyamas (personal observances). The yamas include ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (celibacy or moderation), and aparigraha (non-possessiveness). The niyamas include shaucha (cleanliness), santosha (contentment), tapas (discipline), svadhyaya (self-study), and Ishvarapranidhana (surrender to the divine) (Patanjali II.30–II.32) (Bryant 235).

The final line of the verse—"Achyuta meccuvante mai tikkali bēkō" ("Should its body be groomed to please Lord Achyuta?")—indicates not just external ritual purity but internal purification as well. Lord Achyuta, a name for the immutable Divine, is pleased not by outward appearances but by internal alignment with dharma (cosmic order). This echoes the teachings of Sharif's predecessors and contemporaries, such as Basavanna, who emphasized antaranga shuddhi—inner purity—as the essence of spiritual progress (Ramanujan 122).

Thus, Sharif's seemingly simple poetic imagery encapsulates a profound yogic worldview: the mind, like a wild horse, can be transformed into a disciplined and enlightened force only through balanced nourishment, purity, ethical discipline, and divine-centered living. Maintaining such discipline is not punitive but rather transformational, redirecting the energies of the mind toward spiritual realization.

Regular Spiritual Practice

Shishunala Sharif continues the metaphor of the horse in the second verse of Entha Mojina Kudure to emphasize the necessity of daily spiritual discipline. He writes:

"Tappuvudillappa eradu hottina daani / Tinda mele tirugateti melina oni"

("It won't miss, O father, the grain twice a day. After eating, it returns to the upper level.") (Sharif, trans.).

This verse aligns with the yogic concept of regular sādhanā (spiritual practice), which is traditionally recommended twice a day—at dawn and dusk. In most Indian spiritual systems, including Patanjali Yoga, Tantra, and Bhakti, these two times of day are considered spiritually potent due to their natural transitionary energy (sandhyā). These daily "meals" represent feeding the mind and spirit with devotion, meditation, mantra, or self-inquiry.

The "grain twice a day" thus symbolizes the mental and spiritual nourishment required to stabilize the seeker on the path. According to the Yoga Sutras, regular practice (abhyāsa) is essential for quieting the fluctuations of the mind and attaining sustained concentration (Patanjali I.12). Patanjali further adds that such practice must be done for a long period, without interruption, and with devotion (I.14), which underscores the very message Sharif conveys here poetically (Bryant 21).

The second line— "After eating, it returns to the upper level"—deepens this idea by linking regular practice to spiritual ascent. The "upper level" (melina oni) is not merely a physical location but symbolizes a higher consciousness, attainable only through disciplined engagement in spiritual practices. This concept strongly resonates with Sri Aurobindo's metaphysical philosophy, especially his concept of the "supramental mind."

In The Life Divine, Aurobindo explains that beyond the intellect lies the supramental consciousness—a state of divine gnosis in which the being is perfectly aligned with the universal truth (Aurobindo 278–81). The supramental is more than just an advanced mind; it is a level of consciousness free of duality and division. Sharif's metaphor of going to the "upper floor" after sustenance represents the process of spiritual elevation, in which constant practice progressively shifts the aspirant's awareness from mundane to divine realms.

This symbolic "return" to a higher plane represents inner detachment and transcendence. Yoga teaches that everyday feeding, such as japa (mantra repetition), dhyāna (meditation), or bhakti (devotion)—stabilizes the mind and leads to subtle states of awareness, ultimately leading to freedom (kaivalya).

Furthermore, Sharif's contextualisation of this ascension using daily analogies (such as feeding a horse) makes his message both understandable and meaningful. While many spiritual systems use abstract terminology to describe enlightenment, Sharif roots the transforming process in daily, grounded practice, supporting the timeless premise that emancipation is a gradual climb rather than a dramatic leap.

Metaphysical Allegory and Rebirth

In the third stanza of Entha Mojina Kudure, Shishunala Sharif shifts from the yogic metaphor of discipline to a metaphysical allegory based on Indian philosophy of reincarnation, karma, and grace. The verse reads:

"Pāṇḍavara maniyoḷaga pāgādāgittu / Pāgāda gūṭava kittu ōḍi / Hōguvāga Śiśunāḷige bantu / Govinda nōḍida tāne tānātu"

("In the house of the Pandavas, it once dwelled, / It broke free and ran, / While wandering it came to Shishunala, / Seen by Govinda, it realized itself") (Sharif, trans.).

This verse is a spiritual allegory describing the soul's journey (symbolized by the horse) across lifetimes. Its previous residence in the Pandavas' stable—the household of the righteous heroes of the Mahabharata—suggests a past life of dharmic living or spiritual potential. The Pandavas, often symbolic of the five senses and the principle of righteousness (dharma), provide a metaphorical environment for the horse/mind to begin its journey (Radhakrishnan 128). However, the line "it broke free and ran" implies that the mind (or soul) strayed from the path, signifying a fall into materialism, egoism, or worldly distraction, a common theme in Bhakti and Vedantic literature.

The wandering of the horse represents the samsaric cycle—the continuous cycle of birth, death, and rebirth—characterized by suffering and spiritual forgetfulness. This mirrors the Bhagavad Gita's assertion that the soul, bound by karma, transmigrates through various forms until it gains the wisdom to seek liberation (Gita 2.13, 15.8). Sharif, however, offers a moment of transformation: when the horse comes to Shishunala and is "seen by Govinda", it finally "realizes itself."

"Govinda" is the divine Guru (Govindabhatta) and a symbolic representation of the Supreme Consciousness. The phrase "tāne tānātu" (realized itself) captures the essence of self-realization—the moment when the individual soul (jīvatman) recognizes its oneness with the universal Self (paramatman). This idea closely aligns with Advaita Vedanta, where enlightenment (moksha) is understood as the dissolution of the ego and the realization of non-dual truth (Shankara 41).

Furthermore, the horse's journey reflects a Bhakti-infused path to realization. Unlike purely ascetic or philosophical approaches, Sharif's allegory emphasizes divine grace (kripa) as the turning point. The realization comes not from effort alone but from being "seen" by the divine, evoking the darshan tradition, in which to be seen by a realized Guru or deity confers spiritual merit and transformation (Eck 6).

Sharif's poetic telling thus collapses complex layers of Indian spiritual thought—karma, rebirth, samsara, grace, and realization—into a simple folk narrative. The metamorphosis of the mind/horse after meeting Govinda is not simply a metaphor for individual spiritual awakening, but it also depicts Sharif's own life experience as a seeker-turned-saint under the supervision of his Guru, Govindabhatta, a Tantric adept.

Yogic Symbolism – Kundalini and Chakras

Entha Mojina Kudure is a powerful example of folk mysticism combined with yogic and tantric imagery. Beyond the overt metaphor of the horse representing the mind, the song has subtle references to more profound esoteric notions, including Kundalini energy, chakras, and subtle body anatomy, all of which are central to Tantric Yoga traditions.

A particularly telling line in the larger body of Sharif's work, often cited in parallel to Entha Mojina Kudure, is:

"Āru mūru kaṭṭi, mēle hārida"

("Bound the six and three, ascended above") (Sharif, trans.).

This line can be interpreted as a direct reference to the six chakras and the three primary nadis—the subtle energy channels—within the yogic body. In traditional Kundalini Yoga, the human body is understood to house seven main chakras, with the six lower chakras (Muladhara to Ajna) acting as key centers of energy and consciousness. The seventh chakra, Sahasrara, located at the crown of the head, represents the state of ultimate liberation or union with the Divine (Avalon 38).

The "three" in Sharif's line likely refers to the three nadis:

- Ida (the left channel associated with lunar energy),
- Pingala (the right channel associated with solar energy), and
- Sushumna (the central channel that awakened Kundalini Shakti rises) (Feuerstein 182–84).

The phrase "bound the six and three" suggests a yogic practitioner who has mastered the six chakras and harmonized the flow through the three nadis, thereby enabling the ascent of the kundalini—the dormant divine energy believed to lie coiled at the base of the spine (Muladhara chakra). When awakened through intense spiritual practice, this energy travels upward through the chakras, culminating in spiritual awakening at the Sahasrara (Woodroffe 87).

Sharif's mystical language—embedded in folk idioms—thus conceals a sophisticated understanding of esoteric yogic processes. Unlike doctrinal or Sanskrit-heavy texts such as the Hatha Yoga Pradipika or Shiva Samhita, Sharif's verses make these teachings accessible to common people through metaphors drawn from daily life. The rising of the horse (mind) to the "upper level," mentioned in other verses of the same poem, also mirrors the movement of kundalini through the chakras, signifying spiritual elevation.

Moreover, Sharif's connection with his Guru, Govindabhatta, a practitioner of Tantramarga, supports the notion that his compositions reflect authentic tantric insights. Tantric teachings emphasise the integration of body, energy, and awareness in order to transcend duality and recognise oneself as divine. Sharif's mystical poetry, based in Kannada bhakti but exalted by yogic insight, connects public devotionalism with inner yogic practice, demonstrating that folk tradition and spiritual science are inextricably linked rather than mutually exclusive.

Societal Relevance

While Entha Mojina Kudure is firmly steeped in yogic and mystical metaphor, Shishunala Sharif's message encompasses social ethics and communal responsibility. His poetry seamlessly integrates personal spiritual transformation with moral, societal living. This trait distinguishes many of India's Bhakti and mystic poets, including Basavanna, Akka Mahadevi and Kabir.
In a critical line from the extended interpretation of the poem, Sharif warns:

"If elders err, society bears the consequences" (Sharif, trans.).

This brief but powerful remark highlights a moral paradigm in which the behaviour of elders and leaders directly impacts social well-being. In traditional Indian social thinking, the guru, elder, or head of the household serves as both a personal authority figure and a moral anchor for the society. Sharif's critique is, therefore, directed at the erosion of values, suggesting that spiritual practices are incomplete without ethical conduct in everyday life.

Sharif wrote during a period of immense socio-political upheaval, witnessing the colonial transformation of India under British rule. He observed how Western modernity and materialism began to seep into Indian society, often displacing traditional values rooted in simplicity, community, and ethical restraint. Rather than condemn modernity outright, Sharif transformed these experiences into poignant metaphors, urging a return to dharma (moral order), beginning at the individual character level (Budalu 24).

This moral concern resonates with the classical Hindu view found in texts like the Manusmriti, where the conduct of leaders and elders is seen as a model that younger generations emulate. However, unlike rigid orthodoxy, Sharif's inclusive and compassionate vision echoes the Tatvapada tradition of emphasizing universal human values over ritual or religious boundaries (Chikkanna 44). His emphasis on education, example-setting, and spiritual discipline as societal tools is thus practical and deeply visionary.

In modern psychological terms, Sharif's insights parallel social learning theory, as developed by Albert Bandura, which asserts that people—especially children—learn behaviors through observing role models (Bandura 55). In this way, Sharif's statement that "if elders err, society bears the consequences" becomes strikingly contemporary, pointing to a breakdown in intergenerational ethical transmission as a root of societal dysfunction.

Furthermore, by using the metaphor of the horse—which must be daily groomed, fed, and directed—Sharif emphasizes that moral and spiritual growth must be sustained and habitual. Society, like the horse, needs daily nurturing through example and wisdom. The values of self-restraint, truth, and compassion, central to yogic practice, are not limited to isolated ascetics but are the foundation for a healthy, ethical society.

Conclusion

Shishunala Sharif's Entha Mojina Kudure is a wonderful blend of mysticism, yogic discipline, and folk wisdom, serving as both a spiritual guide and a cultural artefact that connects esoteric philosophy to accessible poetry expression. Through the extended metaphor of a horse, Sharif successfully maps the inner terrain of the human mind and the spiritual journey toward self-

realization. His ability to translate complex yogic and tantric concepts—such as Kundalini energy, chakras, nadis, moral discipline, and Guru-shishya tradition—into simple, evocative language demonstrates his poetic genius and pedagogic foresight (Sharif, trans. 2025).

The poet's emphasis on Guru bhakti, a theme echoed in Bhakti literature from Kabir to Basavanna, underscores the indispensable role of the teacher in the aspirant's inner journey. Sharif affirms the necessity of surrender to a Satya Sadguru to tame the mind and direct it toward liberation (Vaudeville 114; Patanjali I.23). His consistent allusions to moral cultivation, ethical living, and daily spiritual practice also place his teachings within the broader framework of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, particularly the importance of yama, niyama, and abhyasa (Bryant 20–25).

Significantly, Sharif does not limit his message to personal enlightenment; he extends it to societal transformation. His assertion that "if elders err, society bears the consequences" speaks to the social implications of spiritual neglect. This aligns his philosophy with the Tatvapada tradition, which blends mystical thought with universal human values such as compassion, justice, and unity, resisting religious and social divisions (Chikkanna 44).

In an era marked by spiritual fragmentation, material excess, and ethical confusion, Sharif's poetry serves as both a balm and a call to action. It reminds us that self-realization is not an isolated pursuit but a lived experience that must reflect in how we think, act, and interact. His use of folk idioms—rooted in Karnataka's agrarian and oral traditions—renders this message timeless and universally relatable.

Ultimately, Entha Mojina Kudure exemplifies how mystical philosophy can be domesticated through metaphor, making it resonate with both the spiritually advanced and the everyday seeker. In this sense, Sharif's legacy is not just literary or religious but deeply humanistic. He invites us to tame the horse of the mind, not through suppression, but through nurture, discipline, insight, and love—guiding us inward toward the unifying potential of self-knowledge and divine grace.

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