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Sacred Feminine: An analytical study of Mother Meera Movement in Contemporary Hinduism

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Abstract

This article deals with the issue of sacred feminine in general and then in contemporary Hinduism specifically. The researchers study this issue by analyzing the ideology and religious ideas of a female spiritual leader of contemporary Hinduism, Mother Meera. Her real name is Kamala Reddy. She belongs to a pure Hindu background and claims to be an avatar of this era. She became famous with the name of Mother Meera among her followers. The research article is an analytical study of her claim of being an avatar and a religious/spiritual leader. The researchers have discussed the issue of defining the phenomenon of sacred feminine at first and then its historical background in Hinduism. It also gives a short life sketch of Mother Meera and further analyzes her claim as an avatar in the light of what is there in traditional teachings of Hinduism and to what extent this movement has applied the traditional concept of avatar. A description of her darshan, the way adopted by her to enlighten her visitors and devotees, is also given in the article. After these explanations, there is a brief critical analysis of Mother Meera's ideology in relation to the phenomena of sacred feminine and some key departures that exist between this ideology and the traditional Hindu perspective.

Key words: sacred feminine, avatar, darshan, Mother Meera, traditional Hinduism

INTRODUCTION

Sacred feminine is a new movement that appeared in recent years in the West that proclaims gender equality in the Being of God. The main precept offered by the propagators of sacred feminine is that Supreme Reality was originally female before the development of the supremacy of a Male God; indeed, supporting the importance of male and female elements both at the same time. Interestingly this phenomenon can be observed in Hinduism both in its traditional and modern social reform movements where Hindu women seem leading as religious personalities, claiming to be the spiritual leaders and even *avatars* on Earth. The focus of this research is to study this phenomenon through analyzing a female led religious movement known as Mother Meera movement of Germany.

Hinduism is one of popular non-revealed religions having a rich mythology about gods and goddesses. This mythology is based on the idea of ‘*avatarva*’ or the belief that gods and goddesses appear in human form with the purpose of saving or guiding humanity at different times. Although Holy Scriptures of Hinduism talk about *avatar*, but a standard list of ten *avatars* of Lord *Vishnu* is given in *Bhadrayanka Upanishad* only. The gender of these *avatars* is not discussed anywhere in the text. That is why according to the modern interpretations these *avatars* can be males as well as females and can appear any time and at any place to help the mankind occasionally. Some Hindu scholars believe that the chain of *avatars* is never ending.

Hinduism has always been criticized regarding its teachings about women and how they are treated in a traditional Hindu society. Traditionally women were painted as a disgraced creature and a subordinate of men throughout their lives, while on the other hand belief in feminine nature of

God also existed. Several goddesses are there along with gods. They are not only worshipped independently of their male counterparts, but their companionship is considered as something necessary as male gods are not able to accomplish their tasks successfully without their female partners. As independent deities they have their separate temples and many attributes of creation, nourishment, beginner, sustainer, luck, success, wealth, and beauty are usually associated to female gods. During the contemporary times, the socio-religious status of women in Hindu perspective has remained in limelight and the dichotomy of 'disgraced' and 'Sacred' Feminine has prevailed.

Several new religious and spiritual movements have been observed to appear in Hinduism in the name of revivalism and reformation in contemporary times. Some of them are unique in a sense that they are being led by female religious leaders also claiming to be an *avatar* for today's world. Some of these movements have established their centers in Western countries as well after India. The movement of Mother Meera is also one of such new religious movements that appeared in India in 20th century and then shifted to the West and established its headquarter in Germany. Mother Meera claims to be an *avatar* of *Shakti*, descended on earth to restore peace, harmony, satisfaction, and love for everyone in the world beyond the boundaries of race, color, gender, nationality and even religion. She emphasizes upon an active participation of women in social, spiritual, and religious activities along with presenting religion in a new practical form. She is known by her followers as a spiritual leader and have several followers inside and outside of Hindu faith. Mother Meera and other women like her are the examples of the advent of the phenomena of sacred feminine in contemporary Hinduism.

Research Methodology

The study is a qualitative research focusing on a Hindu movement of Mother Meera as a symbol of sacred feminine in contemporary Hinduism. It is a case study of a movement that centered on the idea of sacred feminine. The researchers delve in definition, description and history of the movement in descriptive and analytical manner. As the movement is contemporary a lot of data and analysis is done through their online materials as well as the writings of the leader mother Meera herself are studied to explore that how this Hindu movement is closer to the Western movement of sacred feminine or it is an attempt at the revival of the centuries old idea of feminine as sacred in Hinduism.

Defining Sacred Feminine

As mentioned in the introduction, the term “Sacred Feminine” along with its meanings developed in the West in recent years but its promoters claim that the concept is not something new. Early historical records and archeological findings of pre-historic era carry the concept of a Supreme Mother Goddess, who is above and beyond all. But as the human societies developed, the element of supremacy was shifted to masculine instead of feminine. These adherents of the idea of sacred feminine are not able to provide any agreed upon definition of the phenomenon up till now. Researchers have given several different opinions regarding the issue of defining Sacred Feminine as a term. Below is provided a passage from *Voices of the Sacred Feminine* by Amy Peck:

“Sacred Feminine is a concept that recognizes that God ultimately is neither anthropomorphically male or female but a Divine Essence (Goddessence) beyond form and duality-an essence that is in balance and

unification of masculine and feminine principles—a dynamic interdependent “Immanence” that pervades all life”.¹

While answering to the question: What is Sacred Feminine? The same author says:

“The Sacred Feminine is a paradigm of universal motherhood. It is a principle that embraces concepts of the Holy Mother, the goddesses of ancient mythologies, the Divine self within, mother earth doctrines and lore of indigenous peoples. It is a spiritual model that weaves concepts of wisdom, compassion and unconditional love, plus other metaphysical, shamanic, and magical practices. The Sacred Feminine ideology does not seek to supplant patriarchal belief systems but to augment and reinstate equality, wholeness, and equilibrium.”²

Mere Cromwell tried to define Sacred Feminine by declaring it a challenging task in any human language. She describes it by following the idea written by Andrew Harvey in his book, *The Return of the Mother*. He defines Sacred feminine in the light of some attributes and qualities such as: Subtlety and flexibility, extraordinary ruthless, radical powers of dissolving all structures and dogmas, all prisons in which we have sought so passionately to imprison ourselves.³

A look at these sayings, it becomes clear that the scholars are trying to describe Sacred Feminine in different ways. Some have described it by talking about its concept, meanings, and objectives, while some others focus on deriving the relationship between female attributes and the nature created. What is clear from all these sayings is that Sacred Feminine does not aim to prove women superior to men or supporting worship of female goddesses only and declaring male gods inferior to them, but a demand to

give equal status to female essence present in the Being of God and in the nature created by this God.

Sacred Feminine in Hinduism:

It is not possible to study sacred feminism in Hinduism without having a brief historical introduction of female/goddess worship in Hindu religion. The phenomena of sacred feminine is obvious in Hinduism as it has a long and deep history of female gods in traditional religion as well as earliest religious scriptures. *Usha, Prithvi, Aditi, Vac* and *Sarsvati* are the famous goddesses of *Rig Veda*. The religion has many examples of female gurus/religious leaders throughout its history. A famous Indian historian, Arthur Basham writes that Indian society was matriarchal before the migration of Aryan tribes who came with a male dominance culture. The Indus valley civilization worshipped a mother goddess.⁴ Thus, Sacred feminine is something considered to be related to *Shakti* worship; and it is understood that *Shakti* is associated to female being or a goddess who is known with her male counterpart. Thus, these two poles or the gendered ideas about God are interdependent and have relatively equal status in terms of the divineness.⁵

This concept was always there in worship of every goddess as *Shakti* is taken as an energy necessary for creation and sustenance in the world. This idea remained intact in every period of history and was recorded in later *Upanishads*⁶ as well. The concept of a Great Supreme Mother is still there in the minds of public which is obvious in terms used in local language like *Dharti Mata* and *Amman* for village deities. According to *Swami Sivananda*, the mother worship had resulted at an early stage because of matriarchal society. Later, when the matriarchal pattern gradually faded out, and when the father became the head of family unit, the one who has

the authority, and who was responsible for guidance and approval. Consequently, the idea of the fatherhood of God was established. According to *Sivananda* “The mother worship however persisted concurrently, as the idea of motherhood of God was psychologically more appealing to the devotees. Thus, a synthetic understanding of God established in Hinduism; where people worshipped *Sita* and *Rama* or *Radha* and *Karishna* together.”⁷

Mother Meera: a biography

Mother Meera’s real name is *Kamala Reddy*. She was born in 1960, in a small village of Southern State of India, *Chandepelle, Andhra Pardesh* on December 26. According to her early childhood record she had a unique personality since childhood. She was reported to experience “lights” when she was just three years old. Although her family was not very much religious but always encouraged their young daughter towards practicing yoga and *Samadhi*.⁸ Her uncle *Belgur Venkat Reddy* and one of her close relatives took her with him to *Sri Aurobindo Ashram* in Pondicherry in 1972 where she spent some time as a spiritual personality and people started attracting towards her. Here she got the name of Mother Meera.⁹ At the age of 14-18 it was believed that she was able to merge and get power from the spirits of ancestors and previous incarnations of Divinity. Her first international tour was to Canada, Germany, and Switzerland with Mr. *Reddy* and one of her female devotees *Adilakshami* claiming to come with special responsibility from *Paramatman*.¹⁰ Mother Meera, married a German in 1982 and got settled in a small village of Germany, *Talheim* near the city of Frankfurt. At that time, she used to give *darshan* four days a week in her house. From 2006 onwards, she started travelling to different countries of the world as well including Europe, America, Australia, and

India. Today she lives in *Schaumburg, Balduinstein* a small village in German countryside. She has established an *ashram* as well in *Mandipelle*, India which is also an orphan house school for children till 16 years of age.

Avatarhood and Mother Meera:

Hinduism believes that Divine appears on Earth in form of human beings, in different times with certain tasks such as helping, enlightening and spiritual guidance of humanity.¹¹ There is no specific gender for *avatars* according to Hindu scriptures and that is why male and female spiritual leaders, and *gurus* are always found in Hinduism known as *avatars*. Mother Meera is also one of such religious leaders about whom her followers believe that she is an *avatar* of the Divine Mother *Shakti* or *Devi*. The book *Answers*, compiled by the devotees of Mother Meera, it is written that *avatars* of Divine mother appear in this world in different situations with different tasks. Sometimes they are known to the world and sometimes fulfill their duty secretly. About Mother Meera it is said:

“In turbulent times such as these, several incarnations of the Divine Mother move among us, each with her particular task of healing or protection or transformation. One of the most widely revered and loved of these avatars of the Divine Mother is Mother Meera”.¹²

When a devotee asked Mother Meera about appearance of *avatars*, she answered that many *avatars* of mother (*Shakti* or The Holy Spirit) have been incarnated till today.¹³ Her own saying about *avatars* is:

“The *avatars* come from God and have the light and power of God. The *avatar* has a human body while God has no form and yet all forms”.

In one of her sayings, she herself claimed to be an *avatar*:

“Some will be known others wish to remain secret. The work of each is different. Each expresses a different aspect of the Divine Mother. My scope is very broad and more integral. I help people at all stages of life.”¹⁴

At another time she said:

“I have no special path, but come to give grace and power to those on all paths.....people from all faiths can receive help from me”.¹⁵

Darshan:

The original term for *Darshan* is *Darshana* derived from its *Sanskrit* background in the meaning of “viewing”. Particularly in Hinduism the term is taken in the meaning of beholding of a deity, revered person, or a sacred object.¹⁶ *Darshan* or *Darshana* also refers to some other meanings such as ‘a book or a scripture’, ‘a perspective, ‘a viewpoint’ or ‘a way to see the eternal or philosophical truth’. The term *Darshana* also refers to ‘a body, system and a school of philosophy’. While taken in these meanings *Darshana* or *Darshan* is also related to the six philosophical systems in Hinduism: *Samkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nayaya*, *Visheshika*, *Mimansa* and *Vedanta*.¹⁷ In Hindu faith *Darshan* is an experience of grace which a devotee receives after having a visual experience of a particular deity or a Holy Being. This is so important in Hinduism that people wait for hours outside *asharams* and temples at the times of *Darshan* of *gurus*. According to Hindu teachings, *Darshan* of deity is important to have spiritual enlightenment. Thus, *Darshan* is not less than a worship as it is more than mere viewing or watching. A devotee reaches to the status of deity when watches Him with pure heart and total commitment and with full concentration. This relationship between god and devotee becomes a source of internal spiritual purification for the devotee. Mother Meera has also adopted this way to enlighten her devotees and visitors. Not only a place, associated to

her residence, has been declared as *ashram* where she gives *Darshan* but also travels to different parts of the world for this purpose. This process is completed in two steps. At first the visitor offers *parnam*¹⁸ to Mother, kneeling in front of her. Then Mother takes his head in her hands and looks into his eyes. Here the process of *Darshan* takes place.¹⁹ Once she herself explained *Darshan* by saying: “I see the difficulties in their lives and the obstacles to their *Sadhana*”

Sadhana here means the Daily spiritual practice or meditation. Similarly answering to a question about this process, she said:

“I am looking into every corner of your being. I am looking at everything within you to see where I can help, where I can give healing and power. At the same time, I am giving light to every part of your being. I am opening every part of yourself to light. When you are open, you will feel and see this clearly.”²⁰

This *Darshan* is given in complete silence. Neither Mother says a single word, nor is any visitor required to recite something when *Darshan* has started. She is not a preacher neither her disciples take her as *guru*. She is not interested in converting the people towards any faith. She is just a Divine Mother for everyone. Explaining the purpose of her Divinely Being: “The whole purpose of my work is in the calling down of the *Paramatman* Light and in helping people. For this I came – to open your hearts to the Light.”²¹

For those who are not able to attend *Darshan* physically, can receive blessings by practicing *Japa*²² (to repeat Mother’s name or certain mantra) of Mother’s name.

An analysis of Mother Meera’s ideology:

Mother Meera's claim of being an *avatar* can be justified through what has been told in scriptural texts of Hinduism and what is commonly believed. But there are a lot of things, which are still to be answered. First, it is asked about Mother Meera, that she claims to be an *avatar* of the Divine but does not talk about any religion which should be followed as the adopted way to reach this Divine. Her blessings are for the followers of every faith. So, the question that arises here whether she is an *avatar* with the task of global religion as she claims? If yes, then she has not mentioned it anywhere in her sayings and writings and if no, then it means that all religions are equal and acceptable in the sight of this Divine who has sent her! Divine is not interested in what ways are adopted by humanity to spend a religious life. Similarly, she does not preach Hinduism but follows many Hindu traditional rituals and norms, e.g.: popular women Hindu dress of *Sari*, following *Parnam* and *Darshan*, applying *Bindi* on her forehead as applied by every married Hindu woman, using the name of *ashram* for her place of *Darshan*, and carrying the concept of *avatar* show clearly that she is practicing Hindu beliefs. It is not difficult to assume from all this that she is a Hindu religious personality like many others before her.

Another important thing is that all Prophets, Divine personalities, or even social reformers followed a natural pattern of focusing upon the deprived communities among the human societies and preferred to live among the poor. There is a need to make it clear that what pattern Mother Meera is following when she claims to be a spiritual leader and reformer who was sent in India among a Hindu family and then shifted to Europe and married a non-Hindu German there?

All Divine persons belong to one faith or another and declared their religion as the correct way to find the Divine. According to the teachings of

Mother Meera, all faiths are the ways to one Supreme Being. It is required here to clarify that which way is the perfect to be followed in contemporary period? She does not say anything about it. Her sayings raise the issue whether religion is necessary or not to have a successful religious life or being spiritual only is enough to attain the eternal bliss.

Another issue which arises in the mind of a modern researcher is that Mother Meera appeared in a specific period, which is known for the advent of feminism in India. Does she have any relation with this new ideology of gender equality, empowering women and introducing them as spiritual leaders in the name of religion? Her work and ideology also seem closer to the phenomena of sacred feminism in the West, whether she has any inspiration with this movement as well? These questions are still to be answered.

The opinions of those who have attended her *Darshan* or spent some time with her as her devotees, are also important to produce a fruitful analysis. For devotees like *Adilakshami* and Mr. *Reddy* there is no doubt that she is an *avatar* but there are many others who fell in a state of total confusion after visiting her such as Cliff Bostock wrote the book *Revisiting Mother Meera*, after receiving four *Darshans* from her. He raised questions about her claim to be a representative of the Divine and concluded that she can be taken as a spiritual personality but not herself a Divine. About his first visit, he says that it was interesting but not that much outstandingly spiritual as he had heard. Although he attended three more *Darshans* afterwards but according to his statement, after every visit he fell into a condition of dissatisfaction and restlessness instead of having a feeling of internal peace and relief. He also talks about the disrespectful behavior of Mother Meera's husband and staff of the *asharam* with him, in one of his visits. In his fourth and last visit, he asked *Adilakshami* about Mother's

opinion, recorded in *Answers II* regarding homosexuality and she answered that she condemned it before but allowed later and wordings were added in the revised edition: “choice is for the individual”.²³

Andrew Harvey is the person whose book *Hidden Journey* made Mother Meera popular in many areas of Europe, but he departed from her due to Mother Meera’s criticism of gay marriages and declaring them as unnatural. In another book which he wrote in 1995, “*Return of the Mother*”, he declared her a homophobic²⁴ person who aims to create a cult whose members threatened him of murder. Same is the case of Martin Goodman, another devotee, who was asked by Mother Meera to write down her biography. He came to India to collect original information about her and concluded that her uncle Venkat Reddy was looking for a lady who could play a role of a Divine Mother for his *ashram*. Her wife and daughter refused, then he adopted a young girl of his family and groomed her as Mother Meera. At this *Adi Lakshami*, personal secretary of Mother Meera, demanded him to destroy all this material. Although he did so but left Mother Meera afterwards and wrote a book in 1998 proving that she is not a Divine personality. Goodman was also a gay and one of the reasons for his departing from Mother Meera was that she condemned homosexuality. Here it is important to note that all these three persons who wrote about Mother Meera were homosexual and when they showed their anger by leaving her, she changed her mind. Homosexuality has become a popular rather lawful practice in European and Western world in the recent years. It appears that when Mother Meera found that she should not go against the popular practice of the public, she adopted a flexible attitude towards it with a fear of losing her devotees one after the other. This again creates doubts regarding her claim of ‘sacred feminine’ because religious leaders

make the people to follow them and do not follow the practices of the public. While in her case it can be observed that she is living in Europe, so to be acceptable in that very society, she cannot go against the will and practices of the people and what has been declared as legal according to the laws of those societies.

Another notable thing about Mother Meera is the belief of her followers that she is an *avatar* of *Shakti*.²⁵ Here it is important to note that although she herself never mentioned the name of any deity, whose incarnation she is, but she did not deny the claim of her devotees as well. Followers of *Shaktism* or *Shaktas* believe in *Shakti* as their primary Divine archetype. There are still 51 centers of *Shakti* worship in the Indian Sub-Continent including India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Tibet and even Pakistan. They are known as *Shakti Peethas*.²⁶ But Mother Meera has constructed separate *ashrams* and never gave them the name of *peethas*. According to Hindu concept about coming of *avatar* such figures are considered to follow the way of that specific Deity with whose name and power one has been incarnated. Maybe because she spent her early religious life in an *ashram* that is why she uses this name for the place of her *Darshans*. There is a saying about recognizing an *avatar*:

“An *Avatar* always learns from God and never has any other *Guru*. Only God can be his *guru*.”²⁷

In the case of Mother Meera, it is clear from her autobiography that she was taken to the Aurobindo ashram by her uncle, at the age of fourteen, where she was given another name and then at the age of seventeen, she started giving *Darshan* for the public. Even the new name ‘Mother Meera’, reflects that she adopted this name as a character who is carrying the legacy of Meera Alfassa³⁰, the partner of Aurobindo in establishing the *ashram*. Maybe she was being trained during these three years as the new female

spiritual leader of the *ashram* after the death of Mother Meera Alfassa, as said by many of her critics. Meera Alfassa also had a practice of *Darshan* in her *ashram* which is carried further by Mother Meera of Germany. Similarly, the name of the books comprising the sayings of both of mothers are also same. A book was published by *Aurobindo ashram* Press Pondicherry consisting of what she said while answering to the questions of her devotees from 1932 to 1968, with the name of *More Answers from the Mother*. Mother Meera of Germany also published two books following the same pattern of questions and answers with the name *Answers I* and *Answers II*. These similarities show that initially this movement started with an idea of carrying the legacy of Meera Alfassa with *Aurobindo Ashram* as its headquarters.

Another notable thing is that *Shakti* is the feminine power of *Shiva*. *Shiva* is not able to complete any of his tasks without help of this essence of *Shakti*. *Sivananda* mentions only three embodiments of *Shakti*: Chidananda says the same as said by *Sivananda* regarding *avatars* of *Shakti* by saying:

“*Shakti* cannot be worshipped in its essential nature, it is worshipped as conceived of in its manifestations *Sarsvati*, *Lakshami* and *Kaali*.”²⁸

In the words of *Devimahatmya*, in the festival of *Navarati*, Goddess *Durga* is worshipped with her seven *Shaktis* including *Durga*, *Kali*, *Lakshami*, *Parvati* and *Sarsvati*.²⁹ After having such texts it seems that there are Hindu scholars who believe that only these are the physical manifestations of Goddess *Shakti*. Here again there is a need to clarify what type of *Shakti Avatar*, Mother Meera is? It seems as if she is the first *Avatar* of *Shakti*, who has appeared with the task of enlightening the humanity with *paramatman* light as claimed by her in her sayings. As mentioned in one of her sayings above, to bring down the Divine Light is the main task of

Mother Meera but again she never mentioned that how this light works to solve the problems and difficulties of human beings.

One of her devotees asked her about incarnation, in her recent visit to Hamburg; she presented a quite new idea by answering that every person's new birth or incarnation depends upon the wish he made at the last moment of his life. If he wants to return to this world, he will have more than one births. One can also make a wish for one last incarnation, or he wants to join the Divine Light or his guru, the decision will be taken regarding to his final wish. Here it is obvious that she believes in incarnation of souls which is a popular Hindu belief. But Hinduism believes in incarnation with the concept of *Karma* and not the last wish.³⁰ It means that a person's next birth does not depend upon his deeds and actions but upon the wish he made at the time of death. Here again, she seems mixing new ideas with already prevailing Hindu beliefs. Religion believes that the success lies in reunion with God but according to the sayings of Mother Meera whether a person wishes to come back in this world or to join with God, both are good. This again creates a confusion in one's mind and raises questions about her ideology. Such are the questions that are put forth by her Hindu and non-Hindu critics, that need to be discussed and answered by Mother Meera herself or those supporting her.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

After all this description given above, it becomes clear that Mother Meera is believed by many of her followers as an *avatar* but because she herself never claimed, to which Hindu Deity she belongs, that is why the narrative that Mother Meera is an *avatar* of *Shakti* raises questions. Another important notion, related to this issue is that she never spoke about God, religion, or any other specific way of life. Such attitude not only declares

so many religions, adopted and followed by millions all over the world as something unnecessary but also creates doubts about the religious legitimacy of such type of *avatar* for her own followers. Another issue raised here is according to the claim of Mother Meera, her task of bringing down the *Paramatman* light. It means that light was already there but Divine needed an agent to enlighten His creation with His light a claim which is not acceptable about an all-powerful God rather raises questions about the Divinity and power of God. In the recent times, to treat mental illness with the help of different lights and colors has become a common practice among psychotherapists. In fact, light therapy, itself is a popular way to treat illness like depression and anxiety. Similarly, spiritual treatment is not something new. It is an ancient practice which is still common in many religious cults.

Thus, researchers conclude that she can be a religious or spiritual leader for those who believe in her and need to have a treatment for their spiritual sickness. While depicting herself as avatar does not fit with her framework as she does not provide any solid proof for being her representative of a particular god or goddess whose light she claims to manifest as is the case with the Hindu idea of avatar. Similarly, she can be known as a social reformer for building an orphan house and a free school for orphan children in India, associated with her *ashram*. She intends to construct more *ashrams* like this in other parts of India and Europe as well. Mother Meera can be a representative of new religious cult or movement in contemporary Hinduism who is trying to present herself in front of the European public as an open minded, spiritual leader whose spirituality or blessings are for everyone. In this way, she can be a representative of a global religion, which is for everyone. Although Mother Meera herself never spoke about the issues like globalization or global religion but her

approach of presenting the God's light for everyone whatever religion he follows, seems promoting this narrative. Mother Meera does not seem having any relation with the movement of feminism because she never talked about women related issues like their rights or status in society, etc. She never spoke that her mission is to promote women as the spiritual and religious leaders. She can be taken as an example of those religious personalities who believe in "Sacred Feminine" in a sense that Mother's love is for everyone and that she is said to be an *avatar* of Goddess *Shakti*. But one can take her as the representative of the movement of "Sacred Feminine" in contemporary Hinduism as her sayings and practices present a clear picture to prove that she is propagating the importance of femininity in the essence of God. More than that she is taking religion as the basis of her ideology. Although few important questions need to be clarified from Mother Meera but what is clear is that Mother movement has become a symbol of the concept of sacred feminine in contemporary Hinduism.

Suggestions

1. Although the phenomena of sacred feminine is studied in the light of the movement of Mother only in this research but many other female led movements are also there that can be taken as a sample and further studies can include any other or more than one in their research.
2. The movement of Mother Meera is not only symbolizing sacred feminine in contemporary Hinduism, but it can also be studied as a new development in Hinduism in contemporary times.
3. Women as religious/spiritual leaders are found in other religions as well thus comparative studies can be conducted by taking female led movements from other faiths.

End Notes:

¹ What Is the Sacred Feminine? An excerpt from voices of the Sacred Feminine: edited by Rev. Dr. Karen Tate.

Writer: Amy Peck. www.spiritualityhealth.com/articles/what-sacred-feminine; Retrieved on August 7, 2017

² WHAT IS THE SACRED FEMININE by AMY PECK.

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³ An Attempt to Define “The Sacred Feminine” by Mere Cromwell <https://marecromwell.wordpress.com/2011/...an-attempt-to-define-sacred-feminine>; Retrieved on August 7, 201

⁴ Basham, Arthur. L., *wonder that was India Revised edition* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1967) p: 313.

Asiasociety.org/education/Shakti-power-feminine; Retrieved on August 10, 2017

⁵ Kinsley, David. R., *Hindu Goddesses: Vision of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) p: 133. Asiasociety.org/education/Shakti-power-feminine; Retrieved on August 10, 2017

⁶ *Devi Upanishad* is important in this respect as *Tantra* and *Shakta* philosophy is described in it.

⁷ Chidananda, Sri Swami; *God as Mother* (Uttar Pradesh India: 1991) The Divine Life Trust Society. World Wide Web edition: 1999. WWW site: <http://www.SivanandaDIshq.org>, ISBN 81-7052-090-8 www.saieditor.com/stars/meera.html. Retrieved on August 15, 2017

⁸ A state of deep meditative contemplation which leads to higher consciousness

⁹ Ross, Christopher., *Experiencing Mother Meera*. P: 1, Cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/article/view/8918.

¹⁰ Highest Self or The Self of the whole universe. The absolute or Supreme soul or spirit who is identical to *Brahma*

¹¹ “I come into Being from age to age” (Bhagvatgita, chapter: 4, verse: 8)

¹² Mother Meera. www.saieditor.com/stars/meera.html. Retrieved on August 17, 2017

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Mother Meera: Darshan in Silence. www.mothermeera.com/quotes/. Retrieved on 21 August 2017.

¹⁵ Mother Meera; Spiritual Stars of the Golden Age.

<http://www.saieditor.com/stars/meera.html>. Retrieved on August 22, 2017

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Mother Meera: Darshan in Silence. www.mothermeera.com/quotes/.

Retrieved on 21 August 2017.

A popular way of respectful greetings in Hindu society in which one puts ¹⁸ his palms together, bows down and often touches the feet of greeted person.

¹⁹ Mother Meera: Darshan in Silence. www.mothermeera.com/quotes/.

Retrieved on 21 August 2017.

Darshan. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/darshan>. Retrieved on ²⁰ August 24, 2017.

²¹ The *Darshanas* or school of philosophy in Hinduism.

www.hinduwebsite.com/hinduism/concepts/darshanas.asp. Retrieved on October 30, 2020

²² Japa is the meditative repetition of a mantra or a Divine name. It may be spoken softly or within the reciter's mind

²³ Bostock Cliff., *Revisiting Mother Meera*:

www.soulworks.net/writings/essays/site_039.html. Retrieved on August 31, 2017

²⁴ A psychological term for those who fear from other Human Beings. Now a days the term is being used by gays, lesbians and transgenders for those who consider them unlawful.

²⁵ According to the Hindu Religion, the word *Shakti* is from *Sanskrit* origin meaning: force, power or energy refers to the active, creative and dynamic feminine principle in the universe that is often personified as a goddess as well as a god's female aspect or consort. In some systems of Hindu thought, *Shakti* may also be worshipped as a Supreme Being and principle of the universe ultimately responsible for the creation of the phenomenal world.

²⁶ Shakti. www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/shakti. Retrieved on September 6, 2017.

²⁷ What is an Avatar. www.adishakti.org/prophecies/what-is-an-Avatar.html. Retrieved on September 6, 2017.

²⁸ Chidananda, Sri Swami; *God as Mother* (Uttar Pradesh India: 1991) The Divine Life Trust Society. World Wide Web edition: 1999. WWW site: <http://www.SivanandaDIshq.org>, ISBN 81-7052-090-8.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Clause, Peter. J, Sarah Diamond, Margaret Ann Mills., *South Asian Folklore: An Encyclopedia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri-Lanka*. <https://books.google.com.pk/books?isbn=0415939194>. P. 255. Retrieved on September 7, 2017.

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