

THE VOICE OF ŚAṄKARA

Śāṅkara-bhāratī



Editor:

N. Veezhinathan

एषा शाङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी

*eṣā śāṅkara-bhārati vijayate
nirvāna-sandāyini*

Victorious is the voice of Śaṅkara,
leading, as it does, to liberation.

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RESPECTFUL REMEMBRANCE

Professor T.P. Ramachandran, Former Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, and a regular contributor to *The Voice of Śaṅkara* from its inception passed away on 13th April 2012. He had a distinguished academic career. After his graduation from National College in the year 1950, he went to the University of Travancore for his post-graduation in philosophy. He took his M.A., in philosophy from the University of Travancore in 1952, and then Ph.D., from the University of Madras in 1962 and D.Litt. from the same University in 1981. He started his career in 1952 as a lecturer in philosophy in the National College at Tiruchirapalli. Moving on to the Department of Philosophy in the University of Madras in 1964 when it was upgraded into a Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, he served as a Senior Research Fellow, Lecturer, Reader, and Professor, and retired in 1987. His publications include *The Concept of the Vyāvahārika in Advaita Vedānta*, *The Indian Philosophy of Beauty* (in two parts) and *The Aesthetic Value in Indian Philosophy*. His main interest was in Indian Philosophy with special reference to Values and Metaphilosophy.

For many years, Ramachandran closely studied the writings of M. Hiriyanna, to which he was particularly drawn. It helped him to write a valuable monograph entitled *M. Hiriyanna* published in the Builders of Indian Philosophy Series of which Professor R. Balasubramanian is General Editor. This work of his reveals how closely he studied and admired the writings of Hiriyanna. Every page of this work reflects the greatness of Hiriyanna on the one hand, and the depth of Ramachandran in his studies of Hiriyanna. Though Hiriyanna did not claim anything like a philosophy

of his own, he had a distinctive perception of both the general spirit and the specific concepts and doctrines of Indian Philosophy.

It is necessary to make a brief reference to his work in the Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy of the University of Madras. Professor T.M.P. Mahadevan who was the Director of the Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study entrusted the publication work of the Indian Philosophical Annual. It was Ramachandran who gave a shape and orientation to this Annual, which gained recognition not only in India, but also in other countries. If the Radhakrishnan Institute was recognized as the Centre for the study of Advaita Vedānta and theistic systems, it was because of the silent support he gave to the policy and direction of Professor Mahadevan in the publication works of the Institute. When the Indian Philosophy course was introduced in the department, Mahadevan assigned the teaching work in Dvaita Vedānta to Professor Ramachandran. His publication of a scholarly book on *Dvaita Vedānta* in English was also available in Tamil for the benefit of the students of Indian Philosophy. He dedicated his book on Hiriyanā to His Holiness Jagadguru Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī Śrīcaraṇāḥ of Śrī Kamakoṭi-pīṭha at Kāñcī. His Ph.D. work on *The Concept of the Vyāvahārika in Advaita Vedānta* is unique. There is no other publication on this theme, though there are numerous volumes on the different aspect of Advaita.

Finally, it must be mentioned that he was a good hockey player when he was studying the graduate course in National College. To associate Ramachandran with any sports activity will be a surprise to his colleagues and friends.

We offer our respectful homage to the sacred memory of Prof. Ramachandran.

R. Balasubramaniam.

1

HOMAGE TO ŚAṆKARA

॥ श्रीः ॥

काले शिवः क्रमवशात् कलिदोषदुष्टे
यस्संप्रदायरहितं तदपेक्ष्य भूयः ।
क्षोण्यामवातरदशेषजगद्धितार्थी
श्रीशङ्करख्यममलं गुरुमाश्रये तम् ॥

Lord Śiva who is desirous of the welfare of the entire world, who is keen on maintaining the (Advaitic) tradition which has been lost gradually during the age affected by the defects of Kali, incarnated Himself upon the earth as Śrī Śaṅkara, I resort to that preceptor who is pure.

[*Prapañcasārārthadīpa* - Śrī Nārāyaṇa]

TEACHINGS OF ŚAṄKARA

According to Advaita the criterion of validity of the Veda solely rests on its revelation of something that is unknown and purposeful. It is ritual – act in the ritualistic section, and the Self in the Upaniṣadic section. Thus, the Upaniṣads are valid in respect of the Self.

Kumārila and Prabhākara object to the conclusion of the Advaitin that the Upaniṣads are the *pramāṇa* of the Self. They argue that there is no Self over and above the *jīva*. The latter is known in ordinary experience as the content of the cognition “I”, and as an agent, an experient, and a knower.¹ Therefore, it does not require to be revealed at all. When its nature is set forth in the Upaniṣads, the statements are to be treated as merely re-presenting a well-known fact (*anuvāda*) and not as the *pramāṇa* in respect of it. For, a *pramāṇa* is an instrument of new knowledge.

Śaṅkara answers this objection by saying that the Upaniṣads do not convey the *jīva* which is known in ordinary experience, but rather its essential nature which is the Self.

The following texts of the Upaniṣads make a clear distinction between the jīva as such and its essential nature:

1. *eko devaḥ sarvabhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ
sarvavyāpī sarvabhūtāntarātmā
karmādhyakṣaḥ sarvabhūtādhivāsaḥ
sākṣī cetā kevalo nirguṇaśca.*²

It is the self-luminous principle, existent in every being with its true nature veiled, present everywhere at the same time, the inner Self of all, the revealing principle of the jīva and its actions, the substratum of the entire universe, the one that manifests everything, a non-agent, and free from all attributes.

2. *dvā suparṇā sayujā sākḥāyā
samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariṣasvajāte
tayoh anyah pippalaṁ svādu atti
anaśnannanyaḥ abhicākaśīti.*³

Two beings (viz. the jīva and its essential nature, the Self) co-exist in the same place (i.e. the body). Of these, the one (i.e. the jīva) experiences the fruits of its actions, while the other (i.e. the Self) without experiencing any fruit, directly manifests itself as a mere onlooker (of the jīva and its functions).

3. *samaṁ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
tiṣṭhantaṁ parameśvaram
vinaśyatsu avinaśyantaṁ
yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati.*⁴

He alone realizes the Self who discerns it as selfsame and everlasting in all the bodies which are changeful and transient.

4. *avyakto'yam acintyo'yam avikāryo'yam ucyate.*⁵

The Self is described (in a negative way) as that which does not fall within the range of perception and inference and which is free from any mutation.

On the basis of these and other similar texts, Śaṅkara describes the Self as the revealing spirit of the jīva (*sākṣī*), the inner Self of every being (*sarvabhūta*), selfsame (*sama*), only one (*eka*), and immutable and eternal (*kūṭastha-nitya*).⁶ It is the true nature of the jīva; and it is inaccessible to any *pramāṇa* other than the Upaniṣads.

The Self in its aspect of Īśvara is the cause of the world, and so there is a superimposed identity between the two. Accordingly, in the *mūrtāmūrta* section of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, it is said that "The Self has two forms, corporeal and non-corporeal" (*dve vā va brahmaṇo rūpe, mūrtaṁ ca amūrtameva ca*).⁷ Earth, water, and fire fall under the first category, and air and space, under the second one. The Self is thus described as associated with the world, i.e. as cosmic. The Upaniṣad then goes on to deny of the Self these two forms by stating "Then there is the instruction, 'Not this, not this' " (*atha atah ādeśaḥ neti neti*).⁸ It itself explains the import of this text "Not this, not this" by saying "There is no other instruction apart from this one, viz. 'Not this, not this' " (*na hi etasmāt neti anyat param asti*).⁹ The Upaniṣad thus describes the Self as free from any relation to the world.

In the section entitled *Uṣasta-brāhmaṇa* of the same Upaniṣad, we find the instruction of Yājñavalkya to Uṣasta that the Self is immediate, and is immanent in every being. It is the revealing factor of mental states, and so is beyond sense perception. And it is the essence of the jīva (*eṣa te ātmā sarvāntarah*).¹⁰

Again, in the celebrated dialogue between Janaka and Yājñavalkya in the *jyotirbrāhmaṇa* section of the same Upaniṣad, we notice that Janaka raises the question as to what serves as the light for the man enabling him to function (*kiṃ jyotireva ayam puruṣa iti*). After suggesting outer luminaries like the sun, the moon, fire, and speech, Yājñavalkya affirms that it is the Self that provides the light for the man to act (*ātmaiva asya jyotiḥ bhavati*).¹¹ To the further question of Janaka as to what precisely is the nature of the Self, Yājñavalkya replies that it is consciousness which is immanent in the mind, identified with the intellect, and is in the midst of the sense organs (*yo 'yam vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu hr̥di antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ*).¹²

Śaṅkara, commenting on this passage, states:

The Self is light as it is self-luminous; and through this light — the self-luminous Self, the aggregate of body and organs sits, goes out, works, and returns as if it were sentient, in the same way as a jar shines when illumined by the light of the sun.¹³

We are able to discern from this that, according to the Upaniṣads, the Self is the true nature of the jīva. It is acosmic and self-luminous, and it transcends sense

perception. It cannot be said that the Self of this nature is not presented in the Upaniṣads. Nor can its existence be denied either; for, he who denies the Self, Śaṅkara says, is himself the Self (*ya eva nirākartā tasyaiva ātmatvāt*)¹⁴.

It follows that the contention of Kumārila and Prabhākara that there is no Self over and above the jīva, and so the Upaniṣads are not valid in respect of it is untenable. The Upaniṣads convey not the jīva, but its true nature, i.e. the Self which does not fall within the range of any other *pramāṇa*.

Kumārila has further contended that the knowledge of the ritual-act and of the forbidden one derived from the texts of the ritualistic section of the Veda lead one to perform the former and attain good, and to abstain from the latter and avoid evil. This kind of practical utility we do not find in the case of the knowledge of the Self. And so the Upaniṣads are not to be regarded as its *pramāṇa*.¹⁵ It must be added here that Upavarṣa too is a staunch advocate of this view.¹⁶

Śaṅkara rejects this contention. He says: "We confirm without any reservations that the above kind of practical utility, the knowledge of the Self does not possess."

*yadapi akartavyapradhānam ātmajñānam
hānāya upādānāya vā na bhavati iti, tat tathaiva
iti abhyupagamyate.*¹⁷

But it is definitely useful or serviceable. Its usefulness lies in this that it removes avidyā root and branch. Consequently, the so-called jīva becomes free from worldliness, transcends every obligation to do or not to do something, and abides in

the form of the Self which is the ultimate value and which is beyond good and evil. Śaṅkara says that the knowledge of the Self enables one to remain free from performance or non-performance of something under impulsion on moral or ethical grounds, and this adds glory to us — the knowers of the Truth.

*alaṅkāro hyasmākaṁ, yat brahmātmāvagatau
satyāṁ sarvakartavyatāhāniḥ, kṛtakṛtyatā ca.*¹⁸



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2. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 6.11.
3. *Ibid.*, 4.6.
4. *Bagavad-gītā*, 13.27.
5. *Ibid.*, 2.2.5.
6. *BSB*, p. 227.
7. *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.3.1.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, 2.3.6.
10. *Ibid.*, 3.4.2.
11. *Ibid.*, 4.3.7.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Śaṅkara's bhāṣya on BU*, 4.3.7.
14. *BSB*, p. 227.
15. *Ibid.*, p.154.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, p. 223.



3

THE DATE OF ŚAṄKARA

JAGĀDGURU ŚRĪMACCHANDRAŚEKHARENDRA SARASVATĪ
BHAGAVATPŪJYAPĀDĀḤ

The avatāra of Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda took place on *Vaisākha-śuddha* (same, as *śukla*) *pañcamī*. In one of the books it has been stated that the year in which he was born was *nandana*, and the star was *ārdra*. But in order to determine Ācārya's date we must know which *nandana* year it was. There are many views regarding Ācāryā's date. There is a lapse of a long time between the dates suggested. Some say that he was born in A. D. 800. Some others assign him to the first century A. D. There is a view which considers the date to be the fifth century B.C. Between this date and the others there is a difference of one thousand years. The

(Ādi Śaṅkara : His life and times - Discourses delivered, by His Holiness 68th Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha at Madras. Chennai: 1932. Translated into English by T.M.P. Mahadevan and published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kulapati Munshi Marg, Mumbai 400 007. Third Ed.2000 AD.

late Sir Subrahmanya Aiyar has argued in an issue of the journal "Theosophist" that the *avatāra* must have occurred in the fifth century B.C. As an authority for his view he cites a record preserved in the Dvāraka Maṭha. Some inscriptions belonging to Śṛīgerī Maṭha make us believe that the date was the first century A.D. Some orientalist of the West say that Śaṅkara should be assigned to the seventh or eighth century A. D. They say this after some historical research. There are two traditional views regarding the date: one placing it in the fifth century B. C. and the other in the first century A.D. If we accept the former there are some difficulties. The date of the Buddha is accepted to be B. C. 477. If Ācārya was born in the fifth century B. C. he must have been a contemporary of the Buddha. But this will not fit in with the tradition according to which Buddhism spread in this century and preached against Vedic Dharma and Ācārya was born thereafter in order to resuscitate the path of the Veda.

Kumarila Bhaṭṭa and Ācārya were contemporaries. The former refuted Buddhism and established the path of Vedic karma. Our Ācārya criticised this view and taught that all karmas should be offered to God and that Advaita is the conclusive view. Kumarila Bhaṭṭa wrote a commentary on Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra*. In that commentary a statement of Kālidāsa has been quoted. Therefore Kumarila Bhaṭṭa must have come after Kālidāsa. Kumarila and our Ācārya belong to the same time. So it is necessary for us to determine Kālidāsa's time. Kālidāsa's statement which is quoted by Kumarila Bhaṭṭa in his commentary is the following:

*satām hi sandehapadeṣu vastuṣu
pramāṇam antaḥkaraṇa pravṛttayaḥ-*

[*Abhijñānaśākuntalam*].

Why did Kumarila Bhaṭṭa make this citation? I am reminded of something here. *Dharma* is what is to be performed for our welfare. The fourteen śāstras which are authorities for *dharma* determine what *dharma* is. The instrument for perceiving colour is the sense of sight. The instrument for perceiving words is the sense of hearing. When he was engaged in enquiry as to what *dharma-pramāṇa* is, he had to take into account *dharma-śāstras*.

*vedo'khilo dharmamūlam smṛtiśīle ca tadvidam
ācāraścaiva sādḥūnām ātmanastuṣṭireva ca.*
[*Manusmṛti*]

The root of all *dharma* is Veda. Next comes *smṛti*. It recalls the teachings of the Veda and serves as a note to it. What serves as the authority for *dharma* after the *smṛti* is the conduct of great people. This is known from the Purāṇās. Next to it is the conduct of those whom we know as cultured. This is referred to as *śiṣṭācāra*. The conduct of any and every person becomes authoritative. A cultured man must have faith in the *śāstras*. He must observe the disciplines mentioned in the *śāstras*. He should not fall a prey to passions such as lust and anger. The conduct of such a person becomes a *pramāṇa*. Next to that is our conscience. When our mind thinks without being sullied it is a *pramāṇa*. Kumarila discussed the nature of this conscience which is mentioned as a *pramāṇa*. When the doubt arose whether what occurs to one's mind can be a *pramāṇa*, Kumarila removed the doubt saying that it also is a *pramāṇa*. This is what he has written in his commentary.

Thus in regard to accepting *pramāṇas* precedence is

to be given to the Veda. Only thereafter comes *dharma-śāstra*. Next to that is the conduct of great ones such as the *ṛṣis*. After all these authorities and as a last resort one must accept conscience as the authority. Now-a-days it has all become topsy-turvy. The first authority one consults is conscience. One looks into the Veda as the last authority. But the correct position is that conscience should be accepted as authoritative only in the absence of other evidences. Why is conscience called *manas-sākṣi* ? It is fit only to give evidence (*sākṣi*). It cannot perform the function of the judge. One who comes to the court as a witness may utter a lie. Therefore one cannot trust the witness of speech. But the mind cannot utter a lie. The mind knows what is true and therefore we can accept the mind as a witness. Now-a-days conscience is put in the place of a judge, but this is wrong. Conscience can say truly what happened but it cannot pass judgement thereon. One should not say 'I shall act according to my conscience'; Even at the start one should not give it the status of a judge. It is only when there is no other alternative that one should address conscience and say 'You have seen everything as the witness.' At no time is it right to assign to it the status of a judge. From the *śāstras* it is known that to consider conscience is a judge is wrong.

Kumarila's citation of Kālidāsa's statement is only for the above purpose. Since Kumarila has quoted from Kālidāsa, Śaṅkara's age must be after Kālidāsa's. Of the texts which relate the life of Ācārya only the *Śiva-rahasya* makes mention of the date. It says that the avatāra occurred atleast two thousand years after the beginning of *Kali-yuga*. If we rely on this evidence Ācārya's date must be placed

between two thousand and three thousand years after the beginning of *Kali-yuga* which would mean that the Master was born before Jesus Christ. According to records of the Kāñcī Maṭha, Dvārakā Maṭha and the Maṭha at Jagannāth Puri we are led to think that the advent of Śaṅkara must have occurred about two thousand five hundred years ago. The reckoning preserved in the Śṛṅgeri Maṭha puts the date as one thousand nine hundred years ago. There is difficulty in accepting the date.

The date of the Buddha is fixed as B. C. four hundred and seventy-seven. Ācārya has criticised Buddhism in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*. Therefore Buddhism should have been popular either at the time of Śaṅkarācārya or earlier. If we are to say that Ācārya and the Buddha were contemporaries from the fact that the former has criticised Buddhism, then we would have to say that the date of the *Brahma-sūtra* and that of the Buddha are the same. But in the *Brahma-sūtra* there is reference to Buddhism. If the date of the *Brahma-sūtra* is the same as that of the Buddha, then the Gīta should also be assigned to the same date. But the Lord in the Gīta refers to the *Brahma-sūtra* in the following verse:

*brahma-sūtra padaiścvaiva hetumadbhirviniścitaiḥ
ṛṣibhir bahudhā gītam chandobhirvividhaiḥ pṛthak*

[*Bhagavad-gītā*, xii, 4].

It would mean then that the Buddha, Vyāsa and Kṛṣṇa were contemporaries. But Kṛṣṇa is assigned to the end of *Dvāpara-yuga* which is the date of the Bhārata war. The date of the Buddha, however, as already mentioned is B.C. four hundred and seventy seven. When we consider all this there is a lot

of confusion. We may resolve this confusion. The Buddhists and the Jainas claim that their respective religions are very old. In the history books used in our schools Gautama Buddha is said to be the son of Śuddhodana. But the Buddhists maintain that Gautama was the twenty-fourth Buddha. They maintain that before Gautama there were many Buddhas and "Our religion is very ancient". In the Rāmāyaṇa too it is stated that Tathāgata should at first be driven out. From this we infer that Buddhism was prevalent during Vālmiki's time also. In the Purāṇas too there are references to the Buddha. Because there were many Buddhas Buddhism in the *Brahma-sūtra* may be intelligible. But it does not seem to be right to say that our Ācārya was a contemporary of the Tathāgata Buddha. It must have taken some time for Buddhism to spread after the Buddha's advent and its criticism by Kumarila.

Many researchers say that the Buddha passed away in B. C. four hundred and seventy-seven. This is confirmed by scholars belonging to other countries. How has this view come to stay? Our children, while at school, are taught history written in this manner. They believe it to be true. This belief is difficult to dislodge. Then they say that the ages, etc. as given in the Purāṇas must be wrong and that the date that they have been taught alone is true. On what ground do they say that the Purāṇas are wrong? On what evidence has the date as they believe to be true been established? It is only after settling these matters that we can come to a conclusion. Blind belief will not do. The modern historians determined the date of the Buddha on one fact, Megasthenes came from Greece to this country at

the time of Chandragupta. The date of Megasthenes is known. From that the historians reckon the date of Chandragupta and of others. What Megasthenes wrote therefore becomes the ground of the historians' conclusion. Chandragupta was the king of Māgadha. The age of the Magadha kings is also mentioned in our books. The historians do not accept this. If it is shown that the ground of the historians' reckoning is wrong then all will change.

What exactly has Megasthenes said? The names he has stated is "Candra Kotus". Historical researchers read this name as Chandragupta. In the royal lineage of Māgadha there was a king by name Samudragupta. Some scholars believe that Megasthenes refers to this king. Many years before Samudragupta there was Chandragupta. Asoka was his son. The Buddha belonged to this age. From this historians calculate the date of the Buddha.

If Megasthenes refers to Samudragupta and not to Chandragupta, then there will be a difference of about one thousand years. I have not got into any details of this type of research. The historians must look into this. If this view were correct, then the reckoning will have to be taken a thousand years earlier. How is the Greek word structured? Why did the historians take this word to mean Chandragupta? Why it should not refer to Samudragupta? These questions must be considered.

The historian, Wilson, was the first to say that Megasthenes speaks about Chandragupta. If his conclusion is wrong he is not at fault. His very discovery is a very great thing, that Megasthenes has mentioned the name 'Candra

Kotus'. What Wilson did was not wrong. But we are at fault in accepting his statement without inquiring about the reason. If some authority makes a historical statement about our history we must ask why that statement should be accepted as true.

Even as the reformers in our day give no importance to the *Dharma-śāstras*, our historians do not at all take into consideration the traditional reckoning of dates. They believe that it is all wrong. The reformers do not ask the question: Is this worldly pleasure enough; is there no need for heavenly happiness? They do not consider that the one aim of the *dharma-śāstras* is to show the way to gain heavenly happiness. The reformers do not understand that this worldly-pleasures alone will not do. For them *Dharma-śāstra* is all wrong. What is stated therein is superstition to be believed in blindly. Therefore they reject *Dharma-śāstras* on account of preconceived notions. If they had faith, knowledge of virtue and sin, and of the customs and traditions of good peoples as also an acquaintance with our ancient texts even from their early childhood days, they would not have come to the hasty conclusion that the *Dharma-śāstra* is all wrong. What is true of *Dharma-śāstra* is true of our history also.

Last year in England there was conference of historians and philosophers. They passed resolution saying that because of reform in India there is great damage to its culture and that the rate of this damage should be lessened. The resolution itself is a revealing wonder to us who have descended so low. If we do not attend properly to our history and *Dharma-śāstras* we will lose the profits that we

can gain from them. Even the Westerners say that our culture should be preserved.

Just as history changes with time the reformers think even scripture (*śruti*), traditional code (*smṛti*) and purāṇas should change. If these were concerned only with social matter they may change. But they have a spiritual purport. That which related to spirituality will never change. If Scriptures, etc. were intended for earthly gains they may get changed but they are texts which have a Self as their primary purport. The reformers without giving proper thought say that what is stated in the texts is false. Looking at Veda from historical standpoint the scholars say it has undergone change with changing time. But what we must look at is *Dharma*. There are many things that are wrong in history. But we take them for gospel truths.

Out of a wrong attitude towards our tradition many laws and acts are passed. All this evil has come through English education. Have responsible people studied the śāstras? Have they tried to shape their lives according to the spiritual injunctions? Is there *ācāra* in them? There is nothing of the sort. But they have no hesitation in saying blindly that all śāstras are wrong. They acquire knowledge that comes from the West and they adopt modes of life that they learn from the West. They take to Western education for making a living. They do not inquire into the truth. They belittle what is great in our culture. Without following this path we must pause and consider what is stated in our scriptures and Dharma-śāstras. If Megasthenes refers to Samudragupta's Candragupta then there will be a great

difference in the reckoning of dates. That would result in accepting our tradition. There the historians must give some thought to this hypothesis.

From the *Śiva-rahasya* and from the tradition of our Maṭha it is learnt that the date of Ācārya should be placed earlier than two thousand years ago. We have already seen that if Kālidāsa's date is known it will facilitate the fixing of Ācārya's age. In an inscription belonging to the age of king Ravikīrti the names of Bhāravi and Kālidāsa are mentioned. That Ravikīrti was a poet, it is stated in that inscription that the king became famous even as Kālidāsa and Bhāravi. The following is a *śloka* where this has been stated.

sa vijayatām ravikīrti kavitaśrita kālidāsabhāravi kīrtiḥ



HOMAGE TO PŪJYA PARAMĀCĀRYA*

S. BALAKRISHNA JOSHI

It is true that in the case of His Holiness Śrī Candraśekharendra Sarasvatī Svāmi who lives in the Eternal now, reposed in the tranquil equipoise of the non-dual Self, Time is an illusion, and phenomena on the physical plane like birthdays are superficial factors that do not touch the spirit. But we celebrate his Jayantī not in the usual way of birthdays for relaxation or entertainment but for the purpose of fortifying our faith in the great ideals that he symbolises and which we all seek to imbibe in our own little lives. That is the philosophy underlying the organisation of the Jayantī Célebrations of Gods and Godmen. We celebrate with fervour Śrī Rāma Navamī, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Aṣṭamī and Śrī Śaṅkara Jayantī so that we may perpetuate and keep alive the eternal principles of life and conduct, associated with the divine personalities. The Jayantī Celebrations also offer us an

Excerpts from the Commemoration Address delivered at the 87th Jayantī Celebrations of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarācārya Svāmi of Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭham at "Ved Bhavan", Calcutta, on the 29th May, 1980.

annual opportunity to concentrate exclusively on the personalities we revere, to meditate upon their glory and to draw fresh inspiration from their mission and message which may sustain us in our arduous pilgrimage to perfection, at least for a year.

Nothing can be farther from truth than to imagine that we may please His Holiness by eulogising him on an occasion like this. In the first place, we do not have the moral calibre and the spiritual temper to feel competent to appraise the magnitude of his spiritual powers. In the second place His Holiness has transcended, as anyone who has known him can see, the limitations of human aspiration. It is common knowledge that six years back quite a large number of ardent devotees felt the need to suitably commemorate the *Śatābhiṣekam* of His Holiness which was indeed in the nature of a significant landmark in the spiritual history of our land. Arrangements were apace for holding an impressive World Conference and for the publication of a sumptuous souvenir to focus attention on the transcendent spiritual personality of His Holiness and the great good that has flowed from him to the world. All this was to be done to give expression to our reverence and gratitude to His Holiness. When his permission was, however, sought for the Celebration, with one simple gesture he said that all that was not necessary and did not meet with his favour. Praise or the opposite of it, emanating from any quarter, does not touch the fringe of his being. He is the same at all times, radiant in the consciousness of the ultimate Reality. He personifies at once the highest aspiration in the realm of spirituality and its noblest fulfilment. The contemplation of

his life and mission therefore at least on the occasion of his Jayantī is in the nature of a truly spiritual *Sādhana* which cleanses the heart, sublimates the spirit and equips us with power and energy to move towards the cherished goal without faltering.

When we celebrate the Jayantī of the Great Ones, what stands foremost in the foreground of our minds is not the string of details relating to them on the physical plane but the imperishable ideals which they projected through their lives and activities. We feel heartened that by their illustrious example they were able to convincingly demonstrate that the highest ideals of life and conduct were not impossible of realisation in the material world but that they could become part and parcel of one's daily life. We are encouraged to make an attempt ourselves to walk the way they did. Thus the memory of their sublime lives and the recapitulation of their message even once annually impart to us tremendous spiritual energy. Yet we have to remember that they all lived in the long past and we approach their study with faith in their historicity.

But here lives one, right in our times in close proximity to us, who embodies great ideals that have nourished our culture for ages and sustained our civilisation through the flight of centuries. His Holiness exemplifies in his life of simplicity and austerity great moral principles and ethical virtues that constitute the backbone of spirituality. He is a living commentary on the truths that are enshrined in the scriptures. His spiritual ministrations for over 70 years now have been nothing short of a marvel. The steady, copious

and uninterrupted influence that has flowed from him has been itself a miracle. It has transformed the life of individuals, institutions and nations. It is not at all an exaggeration to state that it has been a benediction to the human race itself. It is a patent truth that, apart from not seeking any publicity, he positively dislikes limelight. Yet, ardent spirits wend their way in steady streams from distant corners of the world to have his Darshan and seek His Blessings even in the solitude of his secluded dwellings, far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife.

There is nothing dazzling or spectacular about His Holiness superficially. He is the embodiment of naturalness. He is simplicity incarnate. Yet, he is the most sought after in the whole world without exaggeration. People not only from different parts of India but of the universe gravitate to him to have his DARSHAN. Those that behold him for the first time feel enthralled and long to repeat their visit again and again. Everyone has an experience that is unique and feels that he has been the exclusive recipient of a rare blessing. This is due to the all-embracing and all-pervasive influence of His Holiness. He lives, moves and has his being in Godliness. He is a living ocular demonstration of religion in practice. To bask in the glow of his spirituality is to be cleansed in heart and chastened in spirit. To listen to his words of wisdom and act according to them is to accelerate our spiritual progress. In his abundant grace he has been moving about on foot from place to place sanctifying the very soil he treads. Having breathed his benediction on even remote and inaccessible villages in Tamil Nadu, he has been moving out to other States in our country to scatter his

grace in galore. Such an expression of his sacred affection is the outcome not of any narrow affiliation to the land of his birth but an indication of his identity and identification with the entire humanity inhabiting India and the universe. In his exalted state of realisation, the three worlds constitute his homeland. That is how foreigners who follow different faiths feel drawn to him and see in him the fulfilment of their ideal of perfection. He has not physically gone out of India for reasons which may be easily understood. But his influence has permeated the whole world. Nobody dare indulge in any conventional platitude or insincere hyperbole, much less a puny person like me, while contemplating on or describing the glory that is His Holiness. Yet it is a widely-recognised truth to state that no individual or institution has in modern times affected for good the mind of the world and brought about an awakening to the life divine among the different sections of civilised humanity as His Holiness has done. The message of his life has travelled far and wide and has become an element of the spiritual atmosphere of the world. His subtle influence that has flowed out in a consistently copious stream has been the most potent agency in promoting emotional integration and human solidarity on the basis of spiritual homogeneity. Ultimately, it is this fact that is going to save the world which in its mad career of pseudo progress is heading towards civilised savagery and glorified beastliness.

This silent transformation is being brought about, to some extent by the unfoldment of his message, as enshrined in his illuminating discourses, published in foreign languages too, but in a wonderful manner by the radiance of his luminous life which is a witness to the eternal wisdom. The

scriptures to which we naturally repair for guidance dole out truths which look inert. We have to devote considerable efforts to assimilate them and interpret them aright. But in His Holiness we have a *Live* spiritual encyclopedia which floods the minds of ardent spiritual aspirants with revelation, setting at rest doubts and solving problems. He does not preach any new philosophy or perform any ostensible miracle. His very physical presence is the greatest boon. It is not by any mass discourse which has a diffused appeal that he helps devotees that seek his guidance. But it is through direct personal contact which takes into account the peculiar problem of every individual that he actively aids the evolution of each one of the multitudes thronging to him for solace. This is the most inspiring feature of the influence of His Holiness which has no parallel. His gospel has a universal appeal because it does not stem out of any *debonaire* or fanatical ideology of a narrow 'ism'. In fact, the priceless truths which he lisps in the idiom of child-like simplicity, form the essence of '*Sanātana Dharma*' which has eternal validity and which is applicable to all mankind.

In recent years, His Holiness has revealed yet one more brilliant facet of his greatness. In the first phase of His '*Digvijaya*' which commenced in about 1932, he gave instructive discourses to select groups of devotees in different centres on abstruse philosophical ideas that form the kernel of religion. In the course of his next holy peregrination which started in 1958 he brought home to the minds of large concourses of eager devotees in various parts of the country sublime religious truths and their applicability to daily life in an easily assimilable form. The loftiness of the

message was matched only by the simplicity of the expression which gripped the minds of the hearers and wrought a great change in their attitudes and activities. Most of the scintillating discourses have fortunately been preserved and published in the local languages and to some extent in English also. We have in them a treasurehouse of wisdom and they deserve to be studied reverently everyday as part of spiritual *Sādhanā*. In spite of this great legacy to seekers after Truth, a large number of people feel the insatiable thirst to go to His Holiness directly, braving arduous journeys in order to have the blessing of his personal guidance. They do it in the faith they go to God in mortal form to have their difficulties solved and to merit grace. Quite often, as though to teach people the futility of mere speech, His Holiness goes into periods of solemn silence. On such occasions, when he is in perennial communion with the Self and when the physical frame seems to forget even its involuntary movements, all that is vouchsafed to the bands of pilgrims that wend their way to his resort is his *darshan* as that of a personified image in a sacred temple. Such an experience does not, however, diminish in the least the inspiration that radiates from him.

His Holiness with his intuition for essentials has been exhorting us to protect and preserve the Vedas, so that, their intelligent study and enlightened interpretation in the traditional way that has stood the test of time, may contribute to the Dhārmic way of life all round. The impact of alien influences and the outlandish patterns of conduct generated by them, the progressive deterioration of faith in-old world values and the unhealthy complexes that have come to be

engendered in our people by political theories, seem to conspire to stifle the growth of Vedic knowledge and Dhārmic concepts. If allowed to take deep root, this tendency would lead to the total extinction of the pursuit of Vedic knowledge and the practice of Dhārmic life, emanating from it. The scholars who had been preserving the heritage of Vedic knowledge have been diminishing in number. Those that could carry aloft the torch in their own generation, are becoming very few and far between, because in the changed socio-economic set-up and political climate that have emerged in the wake of a new school of thought, they feel their very survival will become a problem. They have, therefore, to abandon their priceless inheritance and take to pursuits, far remote from the ideals of their God-ordained, hereditary vocation. In such a context, His Holiness with his far-sighted vision and his abundant concern for due preservation of our ancient culture, has caused steps to be taken for stopping the rot.

This is not an occasion when we can afford to indulge in conventional exaggeration. It would be a sacrilege to do it. But it is the barest truth to state that in modern times no single individual or institution has done so much as His Holiness has done for the preservation and nourishment of our hoary culture in almost a regal manner with abundant goodwill to all.

His Holiness has shown the way. He has profoundly influenced countless people in all spheres of life that have come into contact with him. More than that, he has drawn up schemes and set up institutions to ensure the continuity

and permanence of the influence for ever and ever. By his example and his precept he has awakened in us a consciousness of the duty we owe to ourselves, our culture and the human race as a whole. It is for us to pay heed to his clarion call and prove ourselves worthy of his blessings.

On this auspicious and sacred occasion, when we feel inspired by the thought that His Holiness has crossed the 87th milestone in his earthly pilgrimage, should we not resolve that we will, like the squirrel in the Rāmāyaṇa, each one in our humble way, offer our moral and material support to the great schemes that he has caused to be drawn up and implemented for our everlasting good?

Therein lies the relevance of the celebration of Gúrudev's Jayantī. We see right in front of us a spiritual luminary, exposed to the same environmental pollution as we are, living the highest religion and teaching the noblest truths more by example than by precept. He is not a mythological personality that lived in the distant past but a historical figure in flesh and blood, aglow with life and afire with divinity. He is so close to us, so easily accessible to us, so tender in his affection for us and so overwhelmingly solicitous about our welfare. We are daily witnesses to his unique glory and we realise that the scriptural truths are possible of being translated into daily life even in the midst of the pursuit of mundane activities. How blessed we are that we have the priceless advantage of his living personal influence persistently. We can turn to him at any time for guidance and draw fresh inspiration from his dynamic influence. He is so often in our thoughts that we feel his

presence even though a long distance may keep his physical frame away from our reverential gaze. We feel encouraged to act in consonance with his instructions and we naturally dread to do things that would cause him uneasiness. The mind grows in the image of its thoughts. As we contemplate on his glorious life and sublime teachings we unconsciously imbibe the ideals he has placed before us for our own good. If such a practice is not possible every day owing to our pursuit of ephemeral shadows, at least on the sacred day of his Jayantī, we turn our thoughts to him in reverence and gratitude. That binds us all in harmony of faith and helps us strive individually and conjointly to be good and do good.

The great lesson that His Holiness irresistibly impresses on us, if only we have the wisdom to understand it, is that what matters in self-evolution is the life we lead. We have to cultivate an abiding faith in God, follow the scriptural injunctions with steadfast devotion, lead a life of simplicity, purity and austerity and do our duties, however humble they may be, in a spirit of dedication, developing cosmic love for all creation. Then God's grace will descend upon us and, we will not only realise Truth but also become centres of inspiration to others. We need not go out into the world to preach or to enlist followers. Our influence will penetrate even through rocks and permeate the whole world and make it a fragment of heaven. Towards such a consummation all of us have to work with faith in the grace of our Gurudev and in the ultimate destiny of mankind. Only that way may we effectively pay our homage to the Jagadguru whose radiant presence is the greatest blessing vouchsafed to us in this age.



ŚAṄKARA AND LALITĀDVAITA*

T.M.P. MAHADEVAN

'Advaita' is the name for the plenary experience, experience that is free from limitation and division, experience that is the non-dual Self. The voice that carries the message of Advaita, most successfully and succulently is that of Śaṅkara, the great Master who came to open a new chapter in the history of mankind – a chapter that promises hope for all, guarantees universal salvation. Consideration of time and space do not in any way limit Advaita. Śaṅkara says in one place that the moderns too can have the experience of non-duality even as the sages like Vāmadeva had in the past. In another place he declares that the great knowers (*mahājanah*) are those who have conclusive knowledge that the supreme Self is one and unoriginated, the same in all; and he includes women too among the great knowers (*stryādayo'pi suniścītāḥ*). The great Master's one aim was to see that

*Text of the speech delivered at Rashtrapati V.V. Giri. Endowment Lecture, 1974.

Courtesy: The South Indian Sanskrit Association, Madras.

the treasure of Advaita was made available to the widest commonalty. In a disclosure in Samskrit, the Sage of Kāñcī says that the Lord Śaṅkara converts even the commonest of men into the supreme Self:

pāmarāmapī paramātmānam karoti bhagavān śaṅkaraḥ

In his Hymn to Śaṅkara, Toṭakācārya addresses the Great Master thus in a verse:

“By Thee the masses have been made happy, O
Thou who hast a noble intellect skilled in the
inquiry into Self-knowledge! Enable me to
understand the wisdom concerning God and the
soul. Be Thou my refuge, O Master Śaṅkara!

*bhavatā janatā suhitā bhavitā
nijabodhavicāraṇa cārumate
kalayēśvarajīvavivekavidam
bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam*

Śaṅkara wrote extensive commentaries on the three foundational texts of Vedānta, viz. the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the *Brahma-sūtra*, in order to show conclusively that their sole purport is non-duality (Advaita). In these commentaries which are characterized by clarity and depth, he demonstrates the untenability of alternative interpretations and also the unacceptability of the pluralistic standpoints such as those of Sāṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika by using dialectics. He proves also how the ritualists (*mīmāṃsakās*) are mistaken in their understanding of the *Veda* as teaching ritual as the means for gaining not only prosperity here and in a hereafter, but also the ultimate human end which is release (*mokṣa*). Śaṅkara's genius finds

perfect harmony in the teaching of the Vedāntic texts: the teaching as expounded by him is that Brahman, the supreme Self, is the sole reality, that the world of plurality is not real, that the so-called individual soul is no other than the non-dual Brahman, that the realization of this truth is release, and that the means to Brahman-realization is knowledge (*jñāna*).

For the benefit of the seekers after the truth, Śaṅkara wrote, besides the *bhāṣyas*, independent manuals like the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, and the *Ātmabodha*. The purpose of these works is to make the understanding of Advaita easy. What impelled the Great Master to compose these manuals was his unbounded compassion for suffering mankind. For those who are afflicted by wandering aimlessly in the burning desert sands of *saṁsāra*, it is the blessed and victorious voice of Śaṅkara that shows that the solace-affording ocean of nectar which is Brahman is within easy reach.

*saṁsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodbhūta-
dāha vyathākhinnānām jalākāṅkṣayā marubhuvi
bhrāntyā paribhrāmyatām*

*atyāsanna-sudhāmbudhim sukhakarām
brahmādvayam darśayatyeṣā śaṅkarabhāratī
vijayate nirvāṇa-saṁdāyinī.*

However easy the mode of teaching Advaita may be made, the aspirant has to possess the necessary competence to receive the light that the teaching imparts. At the commencement of the *Ātmabodha*, Śaṅkara says that this treatise is written for the sake of the seekers after release, whose sins

have been destroyed through austerities, who have gained calmness, and who are free from attachments.

*tapobhiḥ krīṇa-pāpānāṁ śāntānaṁ vītarāgiṇām,
mumukṣūṅāmapekṣyo'yaṁ ātma-bodho
vidhīyate.*

Those who can derive the utmost profit from this salutary teaching are the *sannyasins* who have secured purity of mind through the performance of obligatory duties, who have turned away from the pleasures of the world, who have become quiescent, who have an intense longing for release, and who take a delight in scripture.

*hitam-upadeśam ādriyantaḥ vihita-nirasta-samasta-citta-
doṣaḥ,
bhava-sukha-virataḥ praśānta-cittaḥ śruti-rasika yatayo
mumkṣavo ye.*

For the sake of those who have yet to gain discrimination and dispassion through single-hearted devotion to God, Śaṅkara composed moving hymns replete with *bhakti-rasa*, such as the *Haristuti*, the *Śivānanda-laharī*, and the *Saundarya-laharī*. The very fact that Śaṅkara has sung of the Godhead in its myriad forms shows that, according to Advaita, worship may be offered to the Supreme in any of its modes-as Viṣṇu, Śiva, or Devī, and the same result thereby gained, which is the cleansing and the unification of the devotee's mind and heart. It is to be noted that the end which Śaṅkara has in view in his devotional hymns is to lead the devotee to Advaita realization. A verse in the *Hari-stuti* reads thus:

“I worship that Hari who is called Brahman, who is attained by devotees as the God that is non-

different, all-full, and as resident in the heart, who is unborn, subtle, and indisputable, the Lord whom the Brahman-knowers know through meditating as self-established, and who is the destroyer of the darkness of *samsāra*.”

*yaṁ brahmākhyam devamanyam paripūrṇam
hr̥stham bhaktair-labhyam ajam śūkṣmam atarkyam
dhyātvātmastham brahmavido yaṁ vidurīṣam
tam saṁsārādhvānta-vināśam harimīde.*

In a verse of the *Śivānanda-laharī*, the Master, speaking on our behalf, addresses Śiva thus:

“O The Source of Auspiciousness, O Teacher of the world! Impart to my mind the teaching that leads to happiness!”

śambho loka-guro madīya-manasaḥ saukyopadeśam kuru.

In another verse of the same hymn, the result that is gained by devotion to, and meditation on, Śiva is stated thus:

“O Crescent-crested Lord! through Thy Grace the beginning-less nescience has been removed from the heart, and charming knowledge has been made to take its seat there. Thy lotus-feet, which bring auspiciousness and are the repositories of liberation, I meditate on and adore.”

*ādyāvidyā hr̥dgatā nirgatāsīd-
vidyā hr̥dyā hr̥dgatā tvatprasādāt
seve nityam śrīkaram tvat-pādābjam
bhava mukterbhajanam rājamaule.*

The solicitousness of Godhead as the Devī (World-Mother) in granting to the devotee the realization of identity is so

beautifully extolled in a verse of the *Saundarya-laharī* thus: The devotee earnestly desires to supplicate to the Mother saying "O Bhavāni! mayest Thou cast Thy merciful glance on me, Thy servant." He has uttered only the first two words *bhavāni tvam*. The Mother takes the first word not as one of Her names, but as a verb, and construes the request of the devotee as meaning "May I be Thou!" And, at once She bestows on him the status of identity with Herself-the status that is adored even by Hari, Brahmā, and Indra, who pay obeisance to Her by bowing down with their brilliantly crowned heads:

*bhavāni tvam dāse mayi vitara dr̥ṣṭim sakaruṇām
iti stotum vāñchan-kathayati bhavāni tvamiti yaḥ
tadaiva tvam tasmai diśasi nijasāyujya-padavīm
mukunda-brahmendra-sphuṭa-makuṭa-nīrājita-padām.*

In the worship of Godhead, the recitation of the divine names has the pride of place. There are litanies of a thousand names of Godhead as Viṣṇu, Śiva, Devī, and so on. On the one thousand names of Viṣṇu, Śaṅkara has written a commentary showing how these names reveal Viṣṇu, not as a sectarian God, but as the supreme non-dual Brahman. The *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma* occurs in the *Mahābhārata*. The litany of one thousand names of the World-Mother as Lalitā belongs to the *Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa*. In the same *Purāṇa* there is a shorter litany consisting of three hundred names, *Lalitā-triśatī*, and on this hymn Śaṅkara has written a beautiful commentary. Here, he shows how Devī Lalitā is the same as Brahman, the non-dual reality; and the teaching of Advaita imparted in this commentary is so easy to

comprehend that it would not be inappropriate to describe it as *Lalitādvaita*.

In the course of his explanation of the three hundred names of Lalitā, the World-Mother, Śaṅkara covers the entire range of spiritual disciplines from the worship of the Mother in womanly form to the contemplation of, and meditation on, the attributeless non-dual Brahman resulting in realization which is release. He supports his explanation of the names with a profusion of citations from the Upaniṣads, *Bhagavad-gītā*, and other Vedāntic texts, thus demonstrating how *Śrī-vidyā*, the worship of the Mother, is in complete conformity with Vedānta; and how this discipline leads the devotee to the ultimate goal in a way that is easy as well as sure.

The *Śrī-vidyā* worship of the supreme Deity in the female form, especially in the form of the universal Mother is supremely significant. Godhead, as such, has no gender. And so, any gender may be applied to it. A Tāntrika text says:

“This is neither woman nor man, nor what is neuter, nor what is inert.”

neyam yoṣit na ca pumān na ṣaṅdho na jaḍaḥ smṛtaḥ

A hymn addressed to Śakti in the *Mahākāla-saṁhitā* runs thus:

“Thou art neither girl, nor maid, nor old. Indeed, thou art neither female, nor male, nor neuter. Thou art inconceivable, immeasurable power, the Being of all that exists, void of all duality, the

supreme Brahman, attainable in illumination alone.”

As a step to reach the stage where the distinctionless Brahman is realized as beyond designation by the use of genders, the discipline that is taught is that the Deity may be conceived in any form. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, the Supreme is addressed thus:

“Thou art woman; Thou art man; Thou art the youth and also the maiden; Thou as an old man totterest with a stick; being born, Thou stayest facing all directions!”

*tvam strī tvam pumān asi tvam kumāra uta vā
kumāri, tvam jīrṇo daṇḍena vāñchasi tvam
jāto bhavasi sarvato-mukhaḥ.*

After quoting this *mantra* in his commentary on the name *ekākṣarī* (22) Śaṅkara observes that the variety of forms is rendered possible by the conditioning adjuncts (*upādhi*). He also cites in this context a *Smṛti* text which reads thus:

“Think of the Devī as of the form of woman; or as of the form of man; or meditate on Her as without parts and as of the nature of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss.”

*strīrūpaṁ cintayed-devīm puṁrūpaṁ
athaveśvarīm, atha vā niṣkalam dhyāyet
saccidānanda-vigraham.*

Our attention is drawn also to the passage from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* where all the three genders are used with reference to the Self:

seyam̐ devataikṣata tat satyam sa ātmā

“This *devatā* thought...that is *satyam*, that is *ātman*.”

Here, in this passage, *devatā* (deity) is in the feminine gender; *satyam* (truth) is in the neuter gender; and *ātman* is in the masculine gender.

Of all the forms in which Godhead may be worshipped, the form as World-Mother has a unique advantage. If Śiva is the Father, Śivā is the Mother. For facilitating devotion, the supreme Reality splits, as it were, into Śiva and Śivā. But even thus, the truth of non-separateness is unmistakably evident. Śivā or Lalitā is Grace and Beauty personified. She is the Queen-consort of the supreme Brahman (*parabrahmamahiṣī*), the Beloved of Īśvara, the supreme Power of the three aspects of Godhead, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra (*Īśvara-vallabhā*, 50). She is the beloved of Śiva (*hara-priyā*, 104), and is adored by Him (*harārādhyā*, 105). If Śiva is of the nature of existence-consciousness (*satcit*), the Devī is of the nature of bliss (*ānanda*).

saccinmayah śivah sākṣāt tasyānandamayī śivā

And thus, the Devī is said to have for Her body half of Śiva's (*Īśvarārdhāṅga-śarīra*, 52). She is Śiva's Power (*Īśa-śaktiḥ*, 59), and is inseparable from Him.

The womanly form of the Deity is transcendently beautiful. The name Lalitā (62) means 'She who is absolutely beautiful, 'Incomparable beauty' (*atyanta-saundaryavatī-anupama-saundaryā*). She has a form that is most entrancing (*kamra-vigrahā.17: lalitā-rūpā*). Several of the names give a glowing description of the appearance of the Devī. Her

features, Her ornaments, Her qualities- all indicate that She is Beauty incarnate. She is beautiful in every limb (*sarvāṅga-sundarī* 130; *lāvaṇyaśālinī : sarvāvayava-sudhāraṇa-sundarabhāvayati*, 187). Every part of Her body is supremely beautiful (*labdhātiśaya-sarvāṅgasaundaryā*, 273: *sarvamano-hāra-mūrtivati*). In many of the names descriptive of Her form, comparisons are attempted. But in every case what is compared is superior to what is compared with. For instance, in the name *elāsugandhi-cikurā*, (3) the Devī's coiffure is said to have the perfume of cardamom. But, this does not mean, as Śaṅkara points out, that the perfume meant here is physical; and also, the implication is that not only the hair but the entire body of the Devī carries divine perfume. Similarly should one understand the other comparisons. Her looks are like the lotus-petals (*kañja-locanā*, 16); they are like the looks of the deer, directed on all sides (*hariṇekṣaṇā*, 103). Her face is like the moon (*kalānathamukhī*, 149). Her throat is like a conch, marked by three lines (*kambukāṅṭhī*, 157). She has a creeper-like body (*latātanuḥ*, 24). She moves gracefully like the swan (*haṁsa-gatiḥ*, 162). She has a lustre like that of the pomegranate flower, red mixed with white (*lasaddāḍima-pāṭalā*, 66). Her effulgence puts to shame masses of hibiscus flower (*kāntidhūta-japāvali*, 155). Her shining colour is like that of flowing lac (*lākṣārāsa-savarṇābhā*, 189). She is red all over (*sarvāruṇā*, 138). The parts of Her body are replete with brilliant signs of auspiciousness, indication of divinity (*lakṣaṇojjvala-divyāṅgī*, 69). She wears all over ornaments of pearl and other precious gems (*sarvābharāṇa-bhūṣitā*, 140). She has womanly graces like modesty, and motherly

virtues like limitless compassion (*lajjādhyā*, 79; *kāruṇya-vigrahā*, 153). She is *sarvamaṅgalā* (124), the plentitude of auspiciousness, the supreme good.

The worship of, and meditation on, the beautiful form of the Mother will serve to draw the mind of the devotee away from what is ugly, disordant, and untrue. It will ultimately lead to the realization of identity with the Devī, for that is the goal of all worship. There are subtle modes of worship such as contemplating the Deity in the form of a *yantra* or *cakra* consisting of linear designs, and in the form of a *mantra* or sound-formula. The queen of the *cakras* is the *Śrī-cakra*. Interpreting the name *kāmakoti-nilayā* (259), Śaṅkara says that it means that among the ninety-six *pīṭhas* it is the *kāmakoti*, i.e. *Śrī-cakra* that is Her abode (*kāmakotiḥ śrī-cakram ityarthah*).

The supreme *mantra* of the Devī is the *Pañcadaśī* consisting of fifteen letters, in three groups. The first group is *vāgbhava-kūṭa* with five letters; the second is, *kāmarāja-kūṭa* with six letters; and the third is *śakti-kūṭa* with four letters. Each of the three hundred names of the Devī forming the *Lalitā-triśatī* begins with one of the letters of the *Pañcadaśī-mantra*. Each letter constitutes the first letter in twenty names; and thus there is secured equal distribution of all the fifteen letters. The last letter in each of the three groups is *hrīm* which is called the *māyā-bīja*, the most significant seed-letter (*bījākṣara*) for the Devī. As *hrīm* occurs thrice, there are sixty names with this as the first letter. While explaining the significance of these names, Śaṅkara shows how *hrīm* is the most appropriate sound-symbol for the Devī.

Hrīm is a compound letter consisting of four letters: *ha-kāra*, *repha*, *īkāra*, and *anusvāra-ha*, *ra*, *ī*, and *m*. The signification of these four letters is variously explained.

(i) *Ha-kāra* which is the seed-letter for space (*ākāśabīja*) is Śiva. Like space, Śiva is undefiled. *Repha* is the seed-letter for fire (*vahni-bīja*). It expresses Īśvara who is endowed with the power (*śakti*) to manifest the world. Hence, *ha-kāra* combined with *repha* represents the pure consciousness (*śuddha-caitanya*) which is delimited as the cause. *Ī-kāra* is *manmatha-bīja* which represents Viṣṇu who is the cause for the preservation of the world. The *anusvāra* signifies the resolution of the world in that very cause. Thus, *hrīm* indicates the qualification per accidens of Pure Consciousness, which is causality in regard to the organisation, sustentation, and dissolution of the world. The Devī is *hrīmkāra-lakṣaṇā* (86).

(ii) *Hrīm* which is *māyā-bīja* signifies *prakṛti*. *Hrīm-kāra* means white; *repha*, red; and *ī kāra*, black. Three colours stand respectively for *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* which are the constituents of *prakṛti*. As signifying thus, *hrīm* is *māyā* which is the nature of what is unreal, inert, and miserable. Yet, when *māyā* is pierced through and is considered as the ornament of the Devī, it leads to the knowledge of the Deity as pure consciousness. The Devī is *hrīm-vibhūṣaṇā* (89).

(iii) *Hrīm* is derived from the root *hr* 'to take away'. The Devī is *hrīm* because, while being the basis of all ends such as lordly powers, she removes them and is realized as being of the nature of the final goal which is release (*mokṣa*) (99).

Hrīmkāra is indicative of Brahman both as endowed with attributes (*saguṇa*) and as attributeless (*nirguṇa*). Just as *Om* is the sound-symbol for Brahman, so is *hrīm* for the *Devī-hrīm* which is one of the five *praṇavas* (*śrīm*, *hrīm*, *klīm*, *aiṁ*, *sauḥ*). The *Devī* is *hrīmkāra-cintyā*. She is to be contemplated as *hrīm* (98).

In some of the names the glory of *hrīm* is sought to be brought out by the use of appropriate similes. The Divine Mother is the crest-jewel of *hrīm* (*hrīm-śikhāmaṇiḥ*, 204). She is the flame of the sacred fire in the sacrificial altar of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkāra-kunḍāgni-śikhā*, 205). She is the soothing rays of the moon of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkāra-śaśi-candrikā*, 206). She is the radiance of the blazing sun of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkāra-bhāskara-ruciḥ*, 207). She is the dazzling lightning in the rain-bearing cloud of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkārāmbhoda-cañcalā*, 208).

The Divine Mother is variously described as the sprout of the tuber of *hrīm*; as the ultimate goal of *hrīm*; as the swan sporting in the deep well of *hrīm*; as the peahen in the garden of *hrīm*; as the deer in the forest of *hrīm*; as the creeper in the plant-bed of *hrīm*; as the parrot in the cage of *hrīm*; as the lamp in the porch of *hrīm*; as the lioness in the cave of *hrīm*; as the bumble-bee in the lotus of *hrīm*; as the honey in the flower of *hrīm*; as the cluster of blossoms on the tree of *hrīm*.

hrīmkāra-kandaṅkurikā hrīmkāraika-parāyaṇā,
hrīmkāra-dīrghikā-haṁsī hrīmkārodyāna-kekinī
hrīmkārāraṇya-hariṇī hrīmkārāvalavallārī,
hrīmkāra-pañjara-śukī hrīmkārāṅgaṇa-dīpikā.
hrīmkārakandarā-simhī hrīmkārāmbhoja-bhṛṅgikā,

hrīmkāra-sumano-mādhvī hrīmkāra-taru-mañjarī.

In the closing verses of the *Trīsatī*, some more similes are given; and one of the names that occurs in this context is *hrīmkāra-vedopaniṣat* (294), which means that the Devī is the *upaniṣat*, i.e., *brahma-vidyā* of the *Veda* which is *hrīmkāra*.

As we have seen, the supreme Deity (*para-devatā*) is the same as Brahman both as endowed with attributes (*saguṇa*) and as devoid of attributes (*nirguṇa*). Referring to the use of the word *ca* (and) in the *Trīsatī*, Śaṅkara says that the conjunctive signifies that although Brahman is *nirguṇa*, it is also *saguṇa*.

cakāraḥ nirguṇa-brahmaṇo'pi saguṇa-brahma-viśeṣaṇa-sadbhāva-samuccaya-paraḥ sarvatrāpi draṣṭavyaḥ. (22).

The *Upaniṣads* present a two-fold definition of Brahman – definition per accidens (*taṭastha-lakṣaṇa*) and definition of the essence (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*). The definition per accidens is that Brahman is the cause of the origination, sustentation, and dissolution of the world. Brahman or Godhead is not merely the efficient cause; it is also the material cause; it is the whole and sole ground in regard to the world-manifestation (*abhinnanimittopādānakāraṇa*). Brahman, again, does not become the world through transformation or change (*pariṇāma*). It only appears as the world (*vivarta*).

Commenting on the name *eka-prābhava-śālinī* (40), Śaṅkara says that the Devi's unique rulership is like the potency in the banyan-seed which is responsible for the future tree. He also observes that the lordship of the part of

the Pure Consciousness in regard to the world is its qualification per accidens. Thus, the causality attributed to the supreme Deity is unhindered and independent (*niraṅkuśa-svatantra-jagat-kāraṇatva*). Again, while explaining the meaning of the name *īkṣaṇa-śrṣṭāṇḍakoṭiḥ* (49) Śaṅkara says that Brahman, being both the material and the efficient cause, manifests the world out of itself just as a spider produces a web out of its own body. Thus, the Devī who is the Godhead creates the world, preserves it, and destroys it, without any outside help or auxiliary. She is the maker of all (*sarva-kartrī*, 125), sustainer of all (*sarva-bhartrī*, 126), and destroyer of all (*sarvahantrī*, 127). She is the sovereign cause for the disappearance, continued appearance, and re-appearance of the world (*laya-sthityudbhavēśvarī*, 183). She is omnipresent; She is of the nature of all; She is the substrate of all (*sarvagatā*, 136; *sarvātmikā*, 132; *sarvādhārā*, 135).

The essential definition of Brahman is that it is existence-consciousness-bliss (*saccidānanda*). Existence, etc., are not the qualities of Brahman; they constitute its essence. The three terms, *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, do not involve mutual difference so far as their implication is concerned. Existence is not different from consciousness; and consciousness is not different from bliss. But difference arises only in regard to the manifestation of Brahman. In all things and beings, living and non-living, conscient and inconscient, the existence-aspect is manifested. In conscious mental modes, whether pure or impure, the consciousness-aspect is manifested. The bliss-aspect is manifested only in pure mental modes. Godhead as the Devī is identified specially with the bliss-aspect of Brahman. Several names in the

Trīsatī speak of the Devī's nature as bliss. The supreme Deity is Kalyāṇī (2), i.e., pure bliss or happiness (*ānandaika-vigrahavatī*). She remains as a mass of bliss (*kalyāṇa-śaila-nilayā*, 4). She is, to the sages, the supreme form of beauty which is of the nature of bliss solidified as it were (*kamanīyā*, 5). She is of the one consistency of bliss and consciousness (*ekānanda-cid-ākṛtiḥ*, 25). She is faultless (*anavadyā*, 129), because She is existence-consciousness-bliss. She is the essence of happiness that is the same all-through (*sama-rasa*, 222).

Existence, consciousness, and bliss are positive terms. But as applied to Brahman, they should not be interpreted in their ordinary sense. Such terms indicate the nature of Brahman by negating their opposites, as 'not this,' 'not this' (*aṭad-vyāvṛtti-svarūpa-pratipādanena*). The *Veda* does not expound the nature of the Deity as thus and thus (*evamityā-gamābodhyā*, 26). The Upaniṣads convey to us the knowledge of Brahman via negativa.

The Devī is the goal as well as the way, Brahman as well as *brahma-vidyā*. She is the destroyer of ignorance and ignorance-bred defects (*kalmaṣaghñī*, 8). She removes the defilements of Kali (*kalidoṣa-harā*, 15). Kali stands for all that is evil and bad. It is because of the influence of Kali that there are false doctrines spread widely. It is the Devī as *brahma-vidyā* that dispels all untruth and error. It is She that bestows on the devotee the sovereign status of liberation (*ekātapatra-sāmrājyapradā*, 35). She grants *mokṣa* which is desired by all, and which is Her own nature (*īpsitārthapradāyini*, 43). She confers the status of Godhead on the

seeker by dispelling ignorance which is responsible for the notion that God and soul are different (*īśvaratva-vidhāyinī*, 45). She is the import of the *mahāvākya*, 'That thou art' (*tattvam asi*) – *sarva-vedānta-tātparya-bhūmiḥ* (224). She destroys the darkness that is lodged in the heart (*harda-santamasāpahā*, 171). She is the giver of bliss, the supreme felicity (*harṣa-pradā*, 169).

The great Master, Śaṅkara, has given us, through his commentary on the *Lalitā-triśatī*, all that we require to reach the goal of non-duality (*advaita-tattva*). The Advaita as taught by Śaṅkara in the *Triśatī-bhāṣya* is easy and beautiful (*lalita*).



6

INTELLECT AND INTUITION

M.K. VENKATARAMA IYER

Philosophy has been defined as the thinking consideration of things. It makes a thorough analysis of experience with the help of the intellect and seeks to bring to light the ultimate reality which is involved in it. It is well known that our experience presents to us a world characterised by immense variety and perpetual change. Thought refuses to reconcile itself to mere multiplicity and hence it undertakes to reduce it to some kind of intelligible unity. This is reached by successive stages of analysis and classification. Men and things, as they present themselves to our perception, have their unique features as well as common characteristics. We stress the unique features as well as common qualities according to our purpose. If we are interested in identifying the individual things we lay the

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emphasis on the unique features and if our interest is to know the truth behind them we bring the common qualities to the foreground. Practical ends are best served by stressing the individuality of things while theoretical interest and the love of truth are best served by overlooking the peculiar qualities and bringing the universal features into prominence. Thus men have their individualities but they also possess certain common qualities. By stressing the latter we are able to bring all men under one category and speak of Human Being. Similarly the various animals that we see are classified into species such as the equine species, the bovine species, feline species, canine species and so forth. The process of analysis and classification is carried on until we reach the concept of animal. We do the same thing with regard to the world of plants and minerals. The process of analysis does not stop even here. Thought has an inveterate tendency to work towards the unitary conception of truth. Ultimate Truth can be but one and not many. The multiplicity of the world is presented only as a challenge to thought. Variety and change are there only as pointing to unity and permanence. It is the function of the human intellect to reduce the seeming multiplicity to the ultimate truth. Thus human beings, animals and plants are subjected to a further process of analysis and brought under the common conception of organic being. Similarly the world of matter is ultimately reduced to the category of inorganic being. In the history of philosophy we frequently come across these two entities facing each other as rivals. They are spoken of as mind and matter. Descartes reduced all reality to these two conceptions. He spoke of them as *Res cogitans* and *Res extensa*. *Res cogitans* is the

reality which thinks or the mind; *res extensa* is the reality that is extended in space or matter. The Sāṅkhya system, in our own country, looks upon *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* as the two ultimate and irreducible realities. But thought cannot stop here. It cannot reconcile itself to what is relative, for matter and mind are dependent on each other. There is, therefore, a further problem for thought. Some thinkers reduce matter to mind, while others reduce mind to matter. But this kind of cheap monism is not satisfactory. Unity must be sought by transcending both mind and matter and not by reducing either of them to terms of the other. The transcendent unity which holds both matter and mind in synthesis is called spirit. Matter and mind are its manifestations. Spirit goes forth into the forms of finitude and at the first stage it splits itself into the two opposing forms of matter and mind. This is the highest achievement of thought and in Western countries this view of reality is known as Absolute Idealism. It is also known as Spiritualistic Monism. In our country also the schools of Vedānta which look upon *Saguṇa Brahman* as the highest reality have taken us as far as reason can take us. The intellectual analysis of experience cannot take us further. The grandest synthesis of the various categories of experience is to be found in spirit which contains the urge within itself to go forth into the forms of finitude. It is the one which contains within itself the possibility of the many. It is therefore, a One-in-many, an Identity-in-difference.

But a little reflection will show that even this is not a very satisfactory conception. The one cannot be thought of except in relation to the many and similarly the identity is unthinkable except in relation to the difference. Both are,

therefore, relative conceptions and thought, as we have, already observed, cannot rest in the relative. The ultimate truth can only be set forth in negative terms as non-dual. It is Advaita. But to reach this highest truth one must become the Absolute and not simply stand outside as its Knower. One has to realise Brahman and not simply know it. The highest Absolute of the Upaniṣads cannot be known in the way in which other things are known. It cannot be treated as a substance possessing attributes or as the object in relation to the knowing subject. It transcends these relations and can be experienced only by supreme self-surrender. It is supra-relational and, therefore, supra-rational. One can be Brahman but not know it. It is a mystical experience which transcends all relations. It is Absolute Consciousness and not consciousness of the Absolute. It is the Highest Intuition. It is *sākṣāt-kāra*. It is the highest experience recorded in the Upaniṣads. Others who have gone through the discipline laid down in the Upaniṣads have been vouchsafed a similar experience. Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda confesses to such an experience in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* IV. 1.15. There is no doubt that the same experience will come to all who successfully go through the arduous discipline laid down in the Upaniṣads.

The discipline consists in transforming the knowledge that we acquire at the feet of the teacher into an immediate and direct experience. From whatever source knowledge comes, from books or from the teacher, it is always indirect and mediate. But our knowledge of the world, which perception points to a world of diversity and change whereas the Upaniṣads deny both in unmistakable terms. "He goes

from death to death who perceives diversity.” *Neha nānāsti kiñcana*. But the verdict of the Upaniṣads cannot prevail so long as it remains indirect and mediate. Hence it must be transformed into an immediate and direct realisation and this is the meaning of the statement in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* – तमेव धीरो विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* there are several references to this distinction between discursive knowledge and intuitive experience.

The special discipline laid down for such transformation is contained in the statement of Yājñavalkya: – आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः. Addressing his wife he says: “The Ātman, my dear, should be realised—, should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon” *Śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* constitute Vedāntic discipline proper. *Śravaṇa* consists in betaking oneself to the proper teacher and receiving instruction from him in the traditional manner. After receiving formal instruction one has to reflect upon it. He must bring his intellectual powers to bear upon the instruction in order to satisfy himself that it is the right doctrine. Due place is given to the play of intellect and reasoning at this stage. It is, therefore, anything but the truth to say that reasoning has no place in the Vedānta. It is not a system of theology but it is philosophy in the strictest sense. Reason is allowed full scope but its limits are also recognised. Reasoning is never conclusive. There are arguments for a vacuum and there are equally cogent arguments for a plenum. Two opposite positions can both be sustained by arguments. Two can play at this game of reasoning. It can never lead to undisputed conclusions. But such conclusions are very necessary if we are not to miss

the real purpose of life. We have, therefore, to seek for certitude in the region beyond reason. This is intuition and the intuitive findings of the great sages of this country are recorded for us in the Upaniṣads. It is not dogmatic to fall back upon these great utterances. Anyone can verify them in his own experience. After the intellectual satisfaction, there is nothing for an earnest seeker to do but to be constantly dwelling on the Highest Truth taught in the Upaniṣads. This is *nididhyāsana*. It is self-losing contemplation of the Highest. Man gives the whole power of his mind to Brahman and sinks himself entirely therein and lets his whole consciousness be filled with the quiet contemplation of the Highest. He loses himself in it forgets his individuality and continues to exist as the pure subject. His consciousness is filled with the object, so that it is as if the object alone were there without anyone to perceive it. Conscious of the Absolute makes place for Absolute Consciousness. This is the highest *samādhi* known to the great exponents of the Advaita Vedānta. At this stage intellect finds its crown and consummation in integral experience.



ŚAṆKARA ON RĀJA-YOGA*

T.P. RAMACHANDRAN

According to Advaita, mokṣa is not a state to be newly attained, but is the very nature of the self, temporarily forgotten. Its realization consists just in the removal of what hides it, namely avidyā. Avidyā, or ajñāna, can be removed only by vidyā, or jñāna, which is the intuitive knowledge, or the direct experience, of the true nature of the jīva as non-different from Brahman. In this sense, jñāna is the only means to mokṣa. But jñāna cannot dawn without adequate preparation. The steps (*aṅga*) involved in the preparation for jñāna are of two orders—proximate steps (*antaraṅga*) and remote steps (*bahiraṅga*). The steps which are immediately, or directly, connected with jñāna are *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*. They are together called *jñāna-yoga* in the sense of 'means to jñāna,' Other steps do not lead to jñāna directly. They only prepare the ground for *jñāna-yoga*, i.e. for *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*.

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Since they lead to *jñāna* only in this indirect way, they are called *bahirarṅga*. Under this head are recognized the means (*yoga*) known as *karma-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, and *rāja-yoga*. Each of them is a means to results which are conducive to the practice of *jñāna-yoga*. In, this paper an attempt is made to bring out the role of *rāja-yoga* in the scheme of Advaita discipline, as conceived by Śaṅkara.

Since karma and bhakti are relatively natural to man, the enlightened practice of karma and bhakti find a wider circle of votaries than what has come to be called *rāja-yoga*. The essence of *rāja-yoga* consists in the deliberate concentration of the mind, which is no doubt a difficult process. The fickleness of the mind is too well known to be described. For this reason, *rāja-yoga* can be practised only by persons of stronger will than ordinarily found. The concentration of the mind can be secured also through *bhakti-yoga* in an involuntary and indirect and, therefore, less difficult way. The disinterested love of God brings to the devotee in a sweet way the same control and one-pointedness of mind that the *rāja-yogin* secures through deliberate effort. This explains why *rāja-yoga* is not so popular among aspirants as *bhakti-yoga*. However, the usefulness of *rāja-yoga* as a preparation for *jñāna-yoga* is not any the less than that of *bhakti-yoga*.

Jñāna-yoga, as has already been remarked, is a three-fold discipline consisting of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*. *Śravaṇa* stands for the study of the Upaniṣads under a proper *guru* with a view to grasping their true import as embodied in the *mahāvākyas*. The hearing of the *mahāvākyas*

is capable of inducing the direct experience (*sākṣātkāra*) of the non-dual Brahman, provided there are no obstacles thereto in the mind of the student. In such cases, which are very few, the other two steps in *jñāna-yoga*, namely *manana* and *nididhyāsana* are unnecessary. But where there are obstacles to immediate experience, *śravaṇa* by itself is not sufficient. *Manana* and *nididhyāsana* are required to remove the obstacles.

Manana is continued reflection on the Advaita truth learnt from the Upaniṣads with a view to producing the intellectual conviction that non-duality alone is the truth. But it is not enough to be intellectually convinced about non-duality. For, in spite of such conviction, there may now and again be an unconscious re-assertion of old habits of thought (*viparīta-bhāvanā*) associated with the world of diversity. *Nididhyāsana* is meant to overcome this kind of obstacle -

Nididhyāsana consists in long and uninterrupted meditation on the Advaita truth and has to be persisted in until all traces of the old dualistic tendencies have disappeared. The hearing of the *mahāvākyas* again at this stage is bound to produce intuitive knowledge (*samyag-darśana*) of Brahman. *Nididhyāsana*, being meditation on the non-dual reality, the *nirguṇa* Brahman, is the highest form of meditation. Naturally, it presupposes considerable practice in the art of meditation or concentration of thought. It is here that *rāja-yoga* becomes serviceable in the scheme of Advaita discipline. It can function as an invaluable preparation to *nididhyāsana*.

The discipline called, *rāja-yoga* is usually associated with the name of Patañjali, the author of the *Yoga-sutras*. In Patañjali, *rāja-yoga* is a part – the most important part – of a wider scheme of discipline called by the simple name ‘*yoga*’. By ‘*yoga*’ is here meant ‘meditation’. But Patañjali was by no means the inventor of the technique of meditation. Meditation is as old as the Upaniṣads, where it goes by the name ‘*upāsanā*’. The Upaniṣads prescribe a number of meditative exercises on a graded scale for training in the concentration of thought; they also give us the details regarding the objects of meditation and the fruits, objective and subjective, secured by the different *upāsanas*. However, in the Upaniṣads, the methodology of mind-concentration is, though not overlooked, taken for granted. The technique of meditation, or concentration, finds adequate expression only in the later Upaniṣads and the early post-Upaniṣadic literature, including the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which devotes a whole chapter to it. It appears even in a systematic form in some of these works, for example, the *Kūrma-Purāṇa*, where the physiology and practical methods of attaining concentration are elaborately described. The *yoga* technique was thus originally associated with Vedānta and looked upon as an aid to *jñāna*. Later on it came to be assimilated by diverse schools who gave it their own orientation. By the time of Patañjali the technique must have been developed to such detail that he must have thought it necessary to condense the whole science in the form of aphorisms for the use of posterity.

Under Patañjali, *yoga*, came to be grafted to Sāṅkya metaphysics and received a new revision in regard to its aim. To the Vedāntin, *yoga* is a means to union with the

ultimate reality. To, Patañjali, its aim, is to secure separation of the spirit (*puruṣa*) from matter (*prakṛti*). It is union (*yoga*) in the one case and disunion (*vi-yoga*) in the other. But the technique as such formulated by Patañjali is sufficiently broad as to be of immense value to the Advaita Vedāntin. No wonder that Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra has thought it fit to compose a commentary on the *Yoga-sūtras* of Patañjali.

Pātañjala-yoga is also called *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, as it consists of eight limbs (*aṅga*), or accessories, of *yoga*. The first two of these, *yama* and *niyama*, stand for the ethical foundation necessary for meditation. *Yama* consists in the cultivation of five virtues of the nature of self-restraint, namely non injury (*ahimsā*), truthfulness (*satyā*), abstention from stealing (*asteya*), celibacy (*brahmacarya*) and voluntary poverty (*aparigraha*). *Niyama* consists in the cultivation of five virtues of the nature of observance, namely cleanliness (*śauca*), contentment (*santoṣo*), self-discipline, or penance (*tapas*), scriptural recitation (*svādhyāya*), and service of God (*Īśvara-praṇidhāna*).

After the ascetic, or moral, preparation, begins the *yoga* training proper, consisting of the next six items. This *yoga* training may be divided into two stages. The first three of the six items are intended to secure control of the physical frame with a view to facilitating the control of the mind. These are posture (*āsana*), regulation of breath (*prānāyāma*), and withdrawal of the senses. (*pratyāhāra*). On account of the rigour involved in controlling the body in the first instance, this stage of the discipline is called *haṭha-yoga*.

The final stage of the discipline consists of the last three items, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*. It is these three that are directly and specifically concerned with mental concentration. Because of the comparative ease with which it is possible to control the mind for one who has already controlled his body, the stage comprising *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and, *samādhi* is called, by way of compliment, 'rāja-yoga'—suggesting thereby that it is fit to be practised by kings.

Dhāraṇā, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* are successive steps in concentration. They help in getting a gradual mastery over the ever fitful mind. *Dhāraṇā* is fixing the mind on the object of meditation. *Dhyāna*, or meditation, is directing an uninterrupted flow of thought towards the object. As a result of *dhyāna*, the mind gradually penetrates the form of the object and is absorbed in its meaning. This is *samādhi*. *Samādhi* is of two orders, *samprajñāta* and *asamprajñāta*. In the first, the mind, though impervious to all sources of distraction, is conscious of the object of meditation. In the second, the mind ceases to function even with reference to the object of meditation. This is the culmination of *yoga* discipline.

In the initial stages the object of meditation may be anything, as the purpose is only to develop the power of concentration. But a gradation of objects is recommended, so that the aspirant may pass on to the more subtle when he has attained success in contemplating the less. *Dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* are to be repeated with reference to each object chosen for meditation. But what is the final object of meditation? It is on this question that the Advaitin

differs with the followers of Patañjali. To the latter, the final object of meditation is the Sāṅkya-yoga truth, namely the complete dissociation of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*. When the *buddhi*, which is a part of *prakṛti*, ceases to function as the finale of *yoga*, it leaves the spirit in its pure unconditioned state. This is release as conceived by the *Sāṅkya-yoga* school. But in Advaita, *mokṣa* is not isolation from the world of matter, but realization of the non-difference of the soul from the ultimate reality, or Brahman, which is the basis of both souls and the world. Hence, though in the preliminary stages meditation may be on anything short of *nirguṇa* Brahman (provided it is approved by scripture as fit for meditation), the final object of meditation is nothing but *nirguṇa* Brahman. Meditation on *nirguṇa* Brahman is what has been called *nididhyāsana*, or *dhyāna*. Thus, in Advaita, so long as *rāja-yoga* is directed on other objects, it acts as a preparation to *nididhyāsana*, but when finally it is devoted to *nirguṇa* Brahman itself, it gets transformed into *nididhyāsana*. In this final form the various steps in *rāja-yoga* acquire a meaning different from that given to them in Patañjali. To illustrate this point, we may refer to a few select verses occurring in the *Aparokṣānubhūti* of Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda.

Towards the close of this work the *ācārya* has described the process of *nididhyāsana* and its accessories.

There are fifteen steps described here and these include the eight steps of Pātañjala-yoga. The point of special interest here is that each of the eight steps of Pātañjala-yoga has been conceived of by Śaṅkara as having for its goal Brahman. The ideas conveyed are the following.

Yama is defined as the restraint of all the senses by means of knowledge in the form "All this is Brahman":

सर्वं ब्रह्मेति विज्ञानादिन्द्रियग्रामसंयमः ।

यमोऽयमिति संप्रोक्तोऽभ्यसनीयो मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ (104)

Niyama is the continuous flow of only one kind of thought (viz., the thought relating to the identity of the self with Brahman) to the exclusion of all other thoughts:

सजातीयप्रवाहश्च विजातीयतिरस्कृतिः ।

नियमो हि परानन्दो नियमात्क्रियते बुधैः ॥ (105)

Real posture (*āsana*) is that in which the meditation on Brahman flows spontaneously and unceasingly and not any other (such as those that torture the body):

सुखेनैव भवेद्यस्मिन्नजस्रं ब्रह्मचिन्तनम् ।

आसनं तद्विजानीयान्नेतरत्सुखनाशनम् ॥ (112)

Prāṇāyāma is restraint of all modifications of the mind by regarding them as Brahman alone:

चित्तादिसर्वभावेषु ब्रह्मत्वेनैव भावनात् ।

निरोधः सर्ववृत्तीनां प्राणायामः स उच्यते ॥ (118)

Pratyāhāra is the absorption of the mind in the supreme Consciousness by realizing Ātman in all objects:

विषयेष्व्वात्मतां दृष्ट्वा मनसश्चिति मञ्जनम् ।

प्रत्याहारः स विज्ञेयोऽभ्यसनीयो मुमुक्षुभिः ॥ (121)

That *dhāraṇa* is the supreme which is the steadiness of the mind through realization of Brahman, wherever the mind goes:

यत्र यत्र मनो याति ब्रह्मणस्तत्र दर्शनात् ।

मनसो धारणं चैव धारणा सा परा मता ॥ (122)

Dhyāna is remaining independent of everything as a result of continuous thought "I am verily Brahman".

ब्रह्मैवास्मीति सद्वृत्त्या निरालम्बतया स्थितिः ।

ध्यानशब्देन विख्याता परमानन्ददायिनी ॥ (123)

Samādhi, also called *jñāna*, is the complete forgetfulness of all thought by first making it changeless and then identifying it with Brahman:

निर्विकारतया वृत्त्या ब्रह्माकारतया पुनः ।

वृत्तिविस्मरणं संयक्समाधिज्ञानसंज्ञकः ॥ (124)

The distinction between the lower and the higher *samādhi* is indicated in the following manner—the lower *samādhi* is the pure-minded state of awareness of Brahman; in the higher, this state of awareness is merged in Brahman:

अनेनैव प्रकारेण वृत्तिर्ब्रह्मात्मिका भवेत् ।

उदेति शुद्धचित्तानां वृत्तिज्ञानं ततः परम् ॥ (137)

How one who, contemplates Brahman becomes Brahman itself is illustrated by the famous example of the worm

which lives in fear of the wasp becoming the wasp:

भावितं तीव्रवेगेन वस्तु यन्निश्चयात्मना ।
पुमांस्तद्धि भवेच्छीघ्रं ज्ञेयं भ्रमरकीटवत् ॥ (140)



ADHYĀSA

R. BALASUBRAHMANIAN.

Śaṅkara's formulation of the concept of *adhyāsa* as the presupposition of philosophical investigation is worthy of consideration by every philosopher irrespective of the school he or she belongs to. According to him, a philosopher must inquire into the naive and natural mode of thinking and its resultant activity with a view to discover the ultimate principle, viz. the Self or consciousness, which is at the back of our worldly life. The Self or consciousness gets involved in all kinds of activities, cognitive, affective, and conative, through the mind, the senses, and the body, and becomes "enworlded." Philosophical investigation starts with the enworlded subjectivity for the purpose of discovering the real nature of the transcendental Self. *Adhyāsa* is pervasive in everything we know and in everything we do in our daily

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life. In simple language, *adhyāsa* is wrong cognition, cognizing something as something else. It is, as Śaṅkara puts it, *atasmin tadbuddhiḥ*.¹ When we mistake a rope for a snake, or when we view Brahman which is *nirguṇa* as *saguṇa*, there is *adhyāsa*, because we superimpose something alien on the given object in both the cases. So long as our perspective is empirical, we are victims of *adhyāsa* at the epistemological, metaphysical, and ethical levels.

The entire epistemology which works on the basis of subject–object polarity is based on *adhyāsa*. Śaṅkara refers to this polarity as the one between *asmāt* and *yuṣmat*, the “I” and the “thou”. In this context the term “*asmāt*” is used to signify the subject and the term “*yuṣmat*”, to signify the object. The Self is the subject, and the not-Self is the object. The subject can never be the object, and the object can never be the subject; hence the difference between the subject and the object, between the Self and the not-Self, is basic like the difference between light and darkness. In metaphysics we speak of the polarity between the Self and the not-Self instead of the polarity between the subject and the object. Śaṅkara argues that we are guilty of *adhyāsa* when we superimpose the nature, or the attributes, of the one on the other; and we commit this mistake because of our ignorance (*avidyā*) of the nature of the given object. We transact our entire business of life without being sensitive to this basic mistake we commit. According to Advaita, the Self or the subject is real, and anything other than the Self, be it the mind, or the senses, or the body, or the external object, is unreal by virtue of being an object. In every case

of *adhyāsa* there is, in the language of Śaṅkara, the coupling of the real and the unreal.

The Self is pure consciousness; but it is wrongly viewed as a subject in relation to an object. It gets involved in what may be called the knowledge-situation (i.e. waking and dream states) only as a result of its relation with the mind. It becomes an "I" (*aham-padārtha*) through its contact with the mind; and the mind, though insentient, becomes a knower (*jñātā*) due to its relation with the Self which is consciousness. The relation between the Self and the mind arises because of the reflection of the former in the latter. According to Śaṅkara, the relation between them involves mutual superimposition (*itaretara adhyāsa*); and the relation itself is false. While the Self is real, the mind which is a product of avidyā is false; and there cannot be a real relation between what is real and what is false. In the absence of *adhyāsa*, no epistemology involving the subject-object relation is possible.

Adhyāsa plays its part in all our claims and actions, both secular and scriptural. For example, I claim myself to be a male, a Brāhmaṇa, and so on; and this is an instance of *adhyāsa* in the form of a wrong identification of the Self with the body. When I say, "I am blind," "I am deaf," there is *adhyāsa* in the form of a wrong identification of the Self with the sense-organ. There is again *adhyāsa* through a wrong identification of the Self with the mind when I say, "I am happy," "I am miserable," and so on. Though *adhyāsa* is pervasive at all levels of our empirical life, it is not permanent. It can be overcome by right knowledge, because avidyā which is the cause of *adhyāsa* disappears at the rise of

knowledge (*vidyā*). It will be easy to understand at this stage Śaṅkara's statement of the problem of *adhyāsa*.

... it is wrong to superimpose upon the subject—i.e. the Self which is consciousness and which is designated by the notion of “I”—the object (which is designated by “thou”) and its attributes; in the same way (it is wrong) to superimpose the subject and its attributes on the object. In spite of this, it is quite natural to the human being...to superimpose on one object the nature and the attributes of the other object and thus couple the real and the unreal making expressions such as “That I am” and “That is mine.” ...This superimposition is considered to be *avidyā*; and the ascertainment of the true nature of the real entity by separating the superimposed thing from it is called *vidyā*... It is the basis of all practical distinctions in secular and scriptural activities involving the means of knowledge, the objects of knowledge, and all scriptural texts dealing with injunctions, prohibitions, and final release.²

It is necessary at this stage to consider the Upaniṣadic support for the theory of *adhyāsa* in its double form. To Janaka's question, “Which is the Self?” Yāñavalkya's answer is: “This Puruṣa that is identified with the intellect and is in the midst of the organs, the (self-luminous) light within the heart (i.e. the intellect).”³ In his commentary on this text, Śaṅkara says that the question asked by Janaka is unavoidable since we find it difficult to discriminate the Self from the

intellect with which it is identified first. Though the intellect, being insentient, cannot reveal anything, it is able to function as an instrument of cognition borrowing the light from the Self. The expression “*vijñānamaya*” which occurs in the text conveys the idea that the Self is identified with the intellect.

Further, the Self is said to be “in the midst of the organs” (*prāṇeṣu*) in order to show that it is different from them. Also, it is referred to as “the light” (*jyotiḥ*) within the intellect in order to differentiate it from the modifications of the intellect and thereby to show that it is only “through this light, the self-luminous Ātman, the aggregate of body and organs sits, goes out, and works, as if it were sentient, as a jar placed in the sun (shines).”⁴ Thus, the Self, though different from the mind-sense-body complex, is falsely identified with it, as a result of which components of the latter appear to be sentient one after another starting from the intellect. Śaṅkara explains the sequence as follows:

The intellect, being transparent and next to the Self, easily catches the reflection of the consciousness of the Self. So, even wise men happen to identify themselves with it first; next comes the mind, which catches the reflection of the Self through the intellect; then the organs, through contact with the mind; and lastly the body, through the organs. Thus the Self successively illumines with its consciousness the entire aggregate of body and organs. It is, therefore, that all people identify themselves with the body and organs and their

modifications indefinitely according to their discrimination.⁵

The *śruti* text also points out that the act of superimposition is reciprocal, because the Self, assuming the likeness of the intellect, thinks as it were, moves as it were (*dhyāyatīva, lelāyatīva*), though by its very nature it is devoid of action. Summing up the nature of *adhyāsa* in its double form, Śaṅkara says:

The Self cannot be taken apart from anything else like stalk of grass from its sheath, and shown in its self-effulgent form. It is for this reason that the whole world, to its utter delusion, superimposes all activities peculiar to name and form on the Self, and all attributes of this self-effulgent light on name and form.⁶

According to Śaṅkara, the *pramāṇa* theory proceeds on the basis of two presuppositions. The first presupposition is that there is such a thing called the Self or consciousness which is the revealing principle. No *pramāṇa* can function and do its work in the absence of the Self. If the mind and the senses play their role as instruments of cognition generating perceptual knowledge, it is because of the supporting principle behind them, viz. the Self or consciousness. What holds good in the case of perception is true of inference as well. Even though inference is accepted as a separate *pramāṇa*, it requires the help of perception for its genesis. Every *pramāṇa* theorist answers the question about the origin of knowledge in terms of a *pramāṇa* without, however, paying attention to the Self or consciousness which is really the

ultimate source of knowledge. It is only Śaṅkara who brings out the foundational role of consciousness in epistemological inquiry. But the Self or consciousness by itself, though necessary, is not sufficient for *pramāṇa-prameya* inquiry. There is also the need for *adhyāsa* which, according to Śaṅkara, is the second presupposition in the *pramāṇa* theory. Śaṅkara explains in some detail how *adhyāsa* is implicit in the *pramāṇa-prameya-vyavahāra*.⁷ The first entity to be reckoned with in this process is the knowing person (*pramātā*). The concept of *pramātā* requires *adhyāsa*; for, it is possible only when there is the wrong notion that the senses and the body are identical with, or belong to, the Self of the knowing person. Recourse to a *pramāṇa* is not possible in the absence of a *pramātā*. Further, perception and other *pramāṇas* cannot function without the help of the senses. Without the body as their base (*adhiṣṭhāna*), the senses cannot act; and one can act with the body only when the Self is identified with it. In the absence of all these, viz. *adhyāsa*, *pramāṇa-pravṛtti*, *indriya*, and *deha*, the Self which has no relation with anything cannot become a knowing person. Śaṅkara, therefore, concludes that perception and other *pramāṇas* and also the scriptural texts come into operation on the presupposition of *adhyāsa*.

In metaphysics the explanation of the relation between Brahman and the world involves the concept of *adhyāsa*. The Upaniṣad which declares that Brahman-Ātman is the sole reality traces the manifested world to it, and says that it is both the material and efficient cause of the world. It means that there are two perspectives of Brahman in the Upaniṣad. They are called acosmic (*niṣprapañca*) and cosmic

(*saprapañca*) views. The very distinction between acosmic and cosmic conception of Brahman is based on the assumption of the common belief in the existence of the world of plurality. Philosophical inquiry starts with the given and tries to account for the manifested world which is experienced by us. Reflecting the naive and natural attitude of the common man, the Upaniṣad tells us that before creation this manifested world was Being or Brahman alone, one only without a second. Then the latter developed a desire to become many and created one by one the objects of the world. The Upaniṣad classifies the created objects into two categories, gross (*mūrta*) and subtle (*amūrta*), explains them as the two forms of Brahman, and finally declares that Brahman is really formless. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, for example, says: "Brahman has but two forms – gross and subtle, mortal and immortal, limited and unlimited, defined and undefined."⁸ After giving an elaborate explanation of these two forms of Brahman, it describes Brahman as "not this, not this" (*na iti, na iti*) denying everything that has been attributed to it. It goes to the extent of saying that "there is no other and more appropriate description than this 'not this', and names Brahman as the Truth of truth" (*satyasya satyam*).

This kind of narration of the creation of the world is quite common in the Upaniṣad; and implicit in the narration is the methodology of teaching the extraordinary through the ordinary, the trans-empirical through the empirical. Contrasting Brahman with the world, the Upaniṣad says that, while the latter is the empirical truth, the former is the Truth of truth. There is the need to speak of Brahman as acosmic because we start with the cosmic view, making the

non-relational Brahman relational. The terms “acosmic” and “cosmic” are correlative. When the Upaniṣad says that Brahman is the material and efficient cause of the world, it superimposes the category of causality on it. When it speaks of Īśvara, the Creator-God, it superimposes qualities such as omniscience, omnipotence, etc. on it by employing the category of substance and attributes. Commenting on the “*neti neti*” description of Brahman, Śaṅkara observes:

By the elimination of all differences due to limiting adjuncts, the words refer to something that has no distinguishing mark such as name, or form, or action, or heterogeneity, or species, or qualities. Words denote things through one or other of these. But Brahman has none of these distinguishing marks. Hence it cannot be described as “It is such and such” as we can describe a cow by saying, “There moves a white cow with horns.” Brahman is described by means of name, form, and action superimposed on it in such terms as, “knowledge, bliss, Brahman,” ... “When, however, we wish to describe its true nature free from all differences due to limiting adjuncts, then it is an utter impossibility. Then there is only one way left, viz. to describe it as “not this, not this” by eliminating all possible specifications of it that have been known.”⁹

Secular and scriptural activities, the acceptance of bondage and the pursuit of liberation—all these are based on *adhyāsa*. The jīva is the Self-in-the-body. Though the Self by its very

nature is ever-free and never-bound, its identification with the body in the empirical life makes it a finite being subject to desire and aversion and all that results therefrom in embodied existence. All its secular activities which are done in fulfilment of its desire and aversion are based on *adhyāsa*, which is due to avidyā. Not realizing that the Self is the supreme good, we consider the things of the world as good and pursue them. We are happy when we attain them and unhappy when we fail in our attempts. Śaṅkara observes that we are in no way different from animals in our daily activities which are impelled by likes and dislikes. Our scriptural activities are also based on *adhyāsa*. Just as we carry on our daily routine life making distinctions of caste, gender, stage of life, and so on, even so we follow the scriptural injunctions and prohibitions making all kinds of distinctions on the basis of *adhyāsa*. We hold following scripture that what a Kṣatriya is eligible to do, a Brāhmaṇa should not do, and what a householder is permitted to do, a *sannyāsin* should not do; and so one who performs what is enjoined for a Brāhmaṇa or a Kṣatriya should think of himself as a Brāhmaṇa or a Kṣatriya. Such a kind of thinking is based on *adhyāsa*. Even a person who follows the preliminary moral discipline and the final spiritual discipline as prescribed by scripture for attaining liberation has to make such distinctions as the means of knowing and the objects of knowing, and think of himself as one in bondage. The entire discipline presupposes *adhyāsa*. There is, however, an important difference between the pursuit of scriptural rites for worldly prosperity and the practice of moral and spiritual discipline for Brahman-realization.

The message which Śaṅkara wants to convey in his *adhyāsa-bhāṣya* is simple, but profound. A life unreflected is not worth living. We are engaged in the *loka-vyavahāra* without a deeper reflection on the meaning and purpose of life. Śaṅkara expects human beings, who have the special competence for the pursuit of knowledge and the practice of religious duty (*karma-jñāna-adhikāraḥ*), to reflect on their nature, deeds, and destiny. One who fails to understand the problem of *adhyāsa* cannot understand the philosophy of Advaita.



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1. *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*.
2. Ibid.
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (hereafter *BU*), 4.3.7.
4. Śaṅkara on *BU*, 4.3.7.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. *Adyāsa-bhāṣya*.
8. *BU*, 2.3.1.
9. Śaṅkara on *BU*, 2.3.6.



KĀLIDĀSA

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Describing Kālidāsa Aurobindo said, “He is a true son of his age in his dwelling on the artistic, hedonistic, sensuous sides of experience, and pre-eminently a poet of love and beauty and joy of life. He represents it also in his intellectual passion for higher things, culture, the religious idea, the ethical ideal, the greatness of ascetic self-mastery; and these too he makes a part of the beauty and interest of life and sees as admirable elements of its complete and splendid picture”.¹ Further, according to him, Kālidāsa, ‘in creed was a Vedāntist and in ceremony perhaps a Śiva-worshipper’.² The term Vedānta has become identified with Advaita, and thus great intellectuals like Aurobindo have hardly doubted in dubbing Kālidāsa an Advaitin.

Any careful student of the poet will not fail to discern his deeper convictions based on Advaitic thought, though

Courtesy: *Preceptors of Advaita*. Samata Books, Chennai. 2003.

none can dogmatise his having passed through the discipline of a systematised philosophy. Advaita itself was later much developed into an unshakable system by no less a *Draṣṭā* and Master-mind than Śaṅkara. Some of the axiomatic doctrines of Advaita like *brahma satyam, jagan mithyā*, (Absolute is real; World is an illusion); or the process of elimination in arriving at Truth by the method of '*neti, neti*' (Not this, not this), rarely receive any echo in the poet's phraseology or philosophical dissertations. Nevertheless, one cannot escape the conclusion that no other poet of the classical age has so much elevated the spirit in man as of an indivisible part of the One Supreme Reality. The one sovereign thought ever ruling him was that of the immanence of Spirit (*sārvātmabhāva*). Kālidāsa has picturesquely expressed what the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* has proclaimed in no equivocal terms as:

*eṣo'ṇimā aitadātmīyamidaṁ sarvam tat satyam
sa ātmā.*

(The subtle essence, all this is of the nature of That. That is Truth, That is the Self). We find him, in his eulogy of Brahmā, bringing home to us the idea of the All-pervading Spirit as actuating everything of the manifest Universe:

*dravaḥ saṁghāta-kaṭhinaḥ
sthūlaḥ sūkṣmo laghurguruḥ
vyaktāvyaktetaraścāsi
prākāmyaṁ te vibhūtiṣu.³*

(You are in liquid form as well as in the hardest material; you are perceptible to the senses as well as too subtle and beyond perception; you are light as well as heavy; you are

the cause as well as the effect; you are (thus manifest in everything, according to your own pleasure). Nothing in animate and inanimate nature, neither human nor animal, strikes him as of a different origin or existence from an all-powerful Reality. Hence his further elaboration of the same thought when he perceives an unity of spirit in every object and substance:

*tvameva havyaṃ hotā ca bhojyaṃ bhoktā ca śāśvataḥ,
vedyaṃ ca veditā cāsi dhyātā dhyeyaṃ ca yatparam.*⁴

(You are the oblation as well as the sacrificer; you are the food as well as the eternal enjoyer of it; you are the aim of knowledge as well as the knower; you are the supreme object of meditation as well as the meditator) Needless to remind ourselves of a parallel passage in the *Gītā* where the Lord tells Arjuna how the same Supreme Brahman dwells in all:

*brahmārpaṇaṃ brahmahavir-
brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam,
brahmaiva tena gantavyaṃ
brahma-karma-samādhinā.*⁵

(The oblation, the act of offering, the fire, the officiating priest, every work is the same Ātman and tends towards the same goal).

It is not by a process of ratiocination that Kālidāsa reaches the kernel of Advaita. He does not proceed by the established path but ever crosses to his destination by the green meadow of poetry. In the language of simile and metaphor, by imagery and example, he makes us believe in

a higher existence than what meets our eye here below. Again he will not be satisfied with salvation for the individual alone but for the entire universe. Insentient beings like trees and rivers appear to him possessed of the Universal Spirit. Otherwise he would not have drawn so much upon them for enlivening our conception of the beauty of life. To him both Ūrvaśī and a gliding river happen to present the same engrossing content for decorations of his imagination:

*taraṅgabhrūbhaṅgā kṣubhitavihagaśreṇī-raśanā
vikarṣantī phenam vasanamiva samraṁbha-śithilam,
padāviddham yānti skhalitamabhisandhāya bahuśo
nadībhāveneyam dhruvamasahanā sā pariṇatā.⁶*

(The wavelets reminding quivering eye-brows, the flock of white cranes in serried flights appearing like the girdle of pearls round the waist, the foam-embroidered waters flowing back as if the frills of her skirt are withdrawn, the winding zig-zag course reminding her quick steps indicating exasperation at my lapses – all these make me believe Ūrvaśī has assumed the form of the river). Kālidāsa has here represented Purūravas, the hero – as searching for his sweetheart and mistaking the river for his partner. Apart from the beauty of the imagery, one cannot be lost to a sense of sameness in both Ūrvaśī and the river that the king entertains by this comparison. Kālidāsa could feel with as much intensity of sympathy for true lovers in their pangs of separation as he would for the Cakravāka pair lost to each other by the blinding darkness of the night. They only forcibly remind us of the poet's expansive heart ready to embrace the entire life within him. A truer Advaitin in experience is hard to imagine.

One may perhaps dismiss this as pure imagination, beautiful no doubt, but possessing nothing more in it to convey a consciousness of the Unity of Spirit in all life around. Still, one can provide stronger evidences to prove how Kālidāsa unmistakably tries to show that life around is one and the same except that it has assumed different forms and shapes. Everything proves, on ultimate analysis, to be permeated by no less a spirit than what the human beings imagine they exclusively possess. A situation is created by the poet in the play, *Śākuntalam*, when the kokil's voice is chosen in reply to the sage's request by the forest creatures, especially trees, to shower their benediction on the young wife leaving her parental abode for her husband's.

*anumatagamanā śakuntalā
tarubhiriyam vanavāsabandhubhiḥ
parabhṛtavirutaṁ kalam yathā
prativacanīkṛtamebhirīdrśam.*⁷

(Śakuntalā has been permitted to take her leave by these her kins folk of forest-dwelling trees; with the kokil's sweet note, the reply of these trees has been signified). It is worthy of notice that the words used are *vanavāsabandhubhiḥ*, the forest-dwelling trees who are her kin. They certainly convey the normal attitude of the poet towards insentient beings as having very little of a difference so far as their behaviour is concerned, from that of the humans. In this context it may be fruitful to recollect the verse in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata* where Vyāsa while chasing his son Śuka cries 'My son', 'Oh my son', which cry was replied to by the trees, which bespeaks of their identification with the sage Śuka owing to the indwelling spirit being the same:

putreti tanmayatayā taravo'bhineduḥ.

The consciousness of an immanent Spirit in all creatures, dumb as well as vocal, animate as well as inanimate, influenced the poet's outlook so much that whenever an opportunity presented itself for his emphasis of it, he showed no tardiness or indifference to declare it. He did it in his own way, which is the poetic way, singularly refreshing both in its choice of subject and picture of portrayal. To add one more instance how nature and man reciprocate each other and how sympathy in joy and sorrow can be shared with each other, we can take the scene where Aja, at the sight of his queen's sudden passing away, was plunged in the deepest gloom, while the birds in the neighbourhood were affected by his pathetic condition.

*ubhayorapi pārśva-vartinām
tumulenārtaraveṇa vejitāḥ,
vihagāḥ kamalākarālayāḥ
samaduḥkhā iva tatra chukruśuḥ
(Raghuvaṁśa, 8-39)*

(When the attendants about the royal pair raised their wail of pain, the frightened birds dwelling in the nearby lotus-pools expressed by their clamorous sounds their sympathy in his bereavement).

It is Kālidāsa's own inimitable method of comparing the beauty of the human with that of other beings in nature, point by point even, and with a sense of adequacy in having comprehended all life by such a soulful survey. We know that the Yakṣa, pining for his beloved in a distant land, could not but decipher his love's varied charms distributed, as it were, among many objects in nature.

*śyāmāsvaṅgam cakitahariṇīprekṣaṇe dr̥ṣṭipātām
vaktracchāyām śaśini śikhinām barhabhāreṣu keśān,
utpaśyāmi pratanuṣu nadī-vīciṣu bhrūvilāsān
hantaikasmin kvacidapi na te caṇḍi sādṛśyam asti.
(Meghasandēśa)*

(O thou petulant one! Nowhere do I find all the different charms gathered up in a single being as in you; because the tender creepers bear only the delicacy of your figure; the deer share the tremulousness of their eyes alone with yours; the moonlight partakes the glow of your ivory cheeks; the burden of the peacock's plumes reminds your heavy tresses, the ever dancing wavelets have caught the quiver of your brows). Unless one has experienced so great an intensity of life as to feel an absence of completeness without actively mixing in spirit with all, he could not have set a great store by the companionship and sympathy with others, even if they happened to be insentient beings. Sage Kaṇva is represented as one whose power was in no way less than that of a Viśvāmitra, if he wanted to create things. But what happened actually was, the spirits of the forest endowed Śakuntalā with costly silks, fine cosmetics and bright jewels—all because of their eagerness to participate in the parental fondness of Kaṇva for bestowing on his loving daughter, at her departure, the good things of life.

Not satisfied with the gifts of the forest-spirits to the maiden whose parting caused such a wrench in the hearts of the forest dwellers; the poet would move us to the core by the rarer gift of sympathy from the mute world around, when he makes the deer swallow not their mouthfuls of

grass, the peacocks complete not their dances and the creepers restrain not their tears in the falling of leaves on the ground.

udgalita-darbha-kavalā

mṛgyaḥ parityaktanartanā mayūrāḥ,

apasṛta-pāṇḍupatrāḥ

muñcantaśrūṇiva latāḥ.

(*Śākuntalam*, iv-12)

This is Kālidāsa in his fullest measure of comprehension of the one Universal Spirit, pervading all life.

May be an unimagative critic or a stickler for accuracy will require more specific instances to show the poet's unshakable belief in the Advaitic thought. We can satisfy all such doubters by pointing to them the many verses of his where he refers to the One indivisible and inscrutable Ātman, which yet for the sake of apparent manifestation assumes the Trimūrti aspects of creation, protection and annihilation.

namo viśvasṛje pūrvam

viśvaṁ tadanu bibhrate

atha viśvasya saṁhartre

tubhyaṁ tredhā sthitātmane.

(*Raghuvaṁśa*, 10-10)

(You create the world first, then you strive to guard it against danger and finally destroy it—all these are your own triple aspects).

Again he describes the Supreme Spirit in these words:

rasāntarānyekarasam yathā divyam payo'snute

deśe deśe guṇeṣvevaṁ avasthāstvaṁ avikriyaḥ.

(*Raghuvaṁśa*, 10-17).

(Just as the rain, however tasteless, acquires varied tastes by falling on different spots of the earth, so also changeless as you are, you still assume attributes according to your own pleasure). One can perceive that this idea is not far removed from the statement in the *Kāthopanīṣad* (ii, 15):

*yathodakam śuddhe śuddhamāsiktam tādrgeva bhavati
evam muner vijānata ātmā bhavati gautama.*

(O Gautama, as pure water poured on pure water becomes verily the same, so also does become the Self of the man of knowledge who understands).

If Advaita postulates the supreme merit of knowledge as by itself the goal of all life's strivings, then Kālidāsa unerringly suggests such an achievement. When he wrote of Raghu campaigning against the Persians and leading his army by the landroute, he observes:

*pārasīkān tato jetuṃ pratasthe sthalavartmanā
indriyākhyāniva ripūn tattvajñānena saṃyamī.*

(*Raghuvaṃśa*, 4-60).

(Then he set out to conquer the Persians by the land-route even as a disciplined person would seek to conquer his senses by the power of reasoning and deliberation). Mark the word *tattvajñānena* (by knowledge of Truth) used by the poet. No greater indication is required to prove that the path of knowledge (*vicāramārga*) was preferred by the poet. Apart from the knowledge of geography he had, the fact of the existence of perhaps a sea-route also to reach the same place gives the further emphasis of a choice by him of the route which was less risky or more advantageous to travelling.

Captivated by solitude and environmental tranquillity, the poet never tires of taking his kings to the forest for a life of rest and meditation after they had had their fill of worldly enjoyment and material comforts. Moreover fascinated by *yoga* as a sure disciplinary method for the attainment of liberation, he invariably talks of some of the monarchs resorting to the practice of *yoga* for attaining ultimate release from all earthly bonds:

*anapāyīpadopalabdhaye
raghurāptaiḥ samiyāya yogibhiḥ.*

(*Raghuvamśa*, 8-17)

(For securing the timeless life, Raghu sought the company of Yogis of genuine calibre). One can trace a suggestion in the *Pañcadaśī* of Vidyāraṇya, that Yoga may be equated to an *upāsanā* for reaching the *Nirguṇa-Brahman* (Formless One).

*nirguṇabrahmatattvasya
na hyupāsterasambhavaḥ,
saguṇabrahmaṇīvātra
pratyayāvṛttisambhavāt.*

(*Upāsanā* is not impossible because of its application to *nirguṇa-Brahman*. Far, as in the case of *Saguṇa*, *Upāsanā* can be practised, but only by the method of frequent and repeated dwelling upon it.)

For obtaining self-knowledge, Śāstra requires the seeker to attempt first total destruction of all *pūrva-saṁskāras* (past deeds) by the fire of one's own knowledge. Kālidāsa very pertinently points out how Raghu tried to have himself purified in the fire of his own thought.

*itaro dahane svakarmanām
vavṛte jñānamayena vanhinā.*

(Raghuvamśa, 8-20).

(The other [Raghu] attempted to burn out every bit of his accumulated past *saṁskāras* in the fire of his knowledge). One has only to remember the *Gītā* verse in order to be convinced of the accuracy of the poet's observation.

*yasya sarve samārambhāḥ
kāmasaṁkalpavarjitāḥ,
jñānāgnidagdha-karmāṇām
tamāhuḥ paṇḍitaṁ budhāḥ. (4-18).*

(One whose actions have all no personal motives of self-advance and whose past deeds have all been burnt in the fire of knowledge, him alone would the wise call a sage, the best-equipped).

The road to salvation is not a smooth one. It is beset with many a pitfall. The traveller needs poise of mind and a balanced judgement if he has to tread it with safety and sureness of purpose. The mind of a *Sthitaprajña* has been deemed as of utter need if one wants even in this life the satisfaction of Realisation. For that he must strive to be unaffected by both joy and sorrow, gain and loss, pleasure and pain. Kālidāsa has made a *Sthitaprajña* of Raghu by his constant reminder of the idea of gold and mud as of no different consequence to him.

*raghurapyajayat guṇatrayaṁ
prakṛtisthaṁ samaloṣṭhakāñcanaḥ.*

(Raghuvamśa, 8-21).

(Raghu with equal disdain of both gold and a clod of clay, conquered the three *guṇas* by adopting a changeless outlook).

Perhaps it may be said that Kālidāsa felt *sannyāsa-āśrama* as of dire need for a seeker of the Immortal Self. Otherwise he would not have referred to the king's taking to *sannyāsa*:

*sa kilāśramamantyamāśrito
nivasannāvasate purādbahiḥ.*

(*Raghuvarṇśa*, 8-14).

(Having entered upon the last *āśrama* [*sannyāsa*], he began staying away from the city out-skirts).

We are not sure whether Kālidāsa shared the view of some of the Advaitins who have chalked out a course of preparation wherein *Sannyāsa* occupies prominence for attainment of liberation.

*ātmajñāna-śeṣatvācca sannyāsasya
sarvatrātmajñānaprakaraṇe sannyāsasya
vihitatvāt śravaṇādyaṅgatayā ca
ātmajñānaphalatā sannyāsasya siddhā.*

(*Vivaraṇa*, Calcutta Sanskrit Series, p. 694)

(It is affirmed that for Self-realisation in its context the efforts of listening, contemplating, etc., will have their fulfilment only through *sannyāsa*).

One senses even a crowning thought in Kālidāsa towards the state of *Brahma-bhāva*. Speaking of a later monarch of the Raghu line by name Kauśalya, he writes, describing his final resolve to become a *Brahmaniṣṭha* by pursuing meditation and *tapas*.

*yaśobhiḥ ābrahmasabhām prakāśaḥ
sa brahmabhūyam gatimājagāma.*

(Raghuvamśa, 18-28).

(With his fame reaching even the *Brahmaloka*, he followed the path to become actually one with Brahman).

Detachment and selfless action which alone can lead one gradually to the acquisition of the true spirit of Advaita are frequently dwelt upon by this national poet of India. In two epithets he describes Dilīpa, the earliest king of the Raghu line, thus:

*agṛidhnurādade so'rtham
asaktaḥ sukhamanvabhūt.*

(Raghuvamśa, 1-21).

(One who earned wealth without avarice and enjoyed life without attachment). He feels detachment is the only passport to the shining land lit by the eternal sunshine of Ānanda.

Unique as was Kālidāsa's perception of love, his sense of values did not abandon him even in a situation of conflicting ideals. It is evident, from his narration of the love-episode of Śiva and Umā having its summation in a spiritual union, how the moorings of his culture aided him on to prefer purity to the appeal of the flesh, constancy to the lure of passion. At the same time he was not for renunciation and austerity without the necessary preparation of a mature mind. In a verse of his where Vaśiṣṭha counsels Aja to get reconciled to the inevitability of fate's workings, there is an intriguing thought expressed by the poet in the line:

tadalabdhapadam hṛdi śokaghane

pratiyātamivāntikamasya guroḥ.

(His heart crushed under the sorrow did not receive the words of consolation; they [the words of advice] returned, as it were, to the preceptor himself). Evidently Kālidāsa was amused at the sage advice of Vaśiṣṭha without his finding out whether premature consolation would work its way into the heart of the king, lacerated as it was by grief. Further, it is clear that the poet wants to impress on his readers that however wise Vaśiṣṭha might be, he could not really comprehend the depth of true love practised as a *Yoga* by both Aja and Indumatī. Otherwise the poet would not have ended their love episode as having its culmination in their regained union in the halcyon bowers of *svarga*. The purpose of Kālidāsa in presenting the picture of Aja's love may be to remind us that mere austerity and renunciation by themselves will not always take one to any great Understanding. There may be other paths such as that of love which should not be forgotten by those who pin their faith on Knowledge. Tolerance has, according to him, a place in any scheme of striving for the higher life, especially to one imbued with the spirit of Advaita.

Even as Vālmīki and Vyāsa before him had conceived of a greater glory awaiting man treading the straight path of Dharma, Kālidāsa harped on the significance of a full life, which would not discard intense living and yet would care for the watch-word of 'Ripeness is All'. Ānandavardhana, the arch-priest of literary criticism, has not in vain placed Kālidāsa along with the two epic poets. It is true Kālidāsa like Shakespeare lifts his head to the Heaven of heavens and

only “spares the cloudy border of his base to the foiled searching of mortality”.⁸ In appreciating Kālidāsa we cannot forget the culture in which he was born and brought up. Dr. Radhakrishnan recalls the culture that was given to Kālidāsa thus: “This culture is essentially spiritual in quality. We are ordinarily imprisoned in the wheel of time, in historicity, and so are restricted to the narrow limits of existence. Our aim should be to lift ourselves out of our entanglement to an awareness of the real which is behind and beyond all time and history, that which does not become, that which is, absolute, non-historical being itself....The end of man is to become aware by experience of this absolute reality”.⁹

No other poet known to us in Sanskrit had so well benefited by this culture. No other thinker ever has enabled generations after him to ruminate with profit on this superior culture which gave Kālidāsa insight into a world that is seemingly diversified, yet remains One.



NOTES

1. *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 344.
2. *Kālidāsa* by Sri Aurobindo, p. 14.
3. *Kumārasāmbhava*, II, 11.
4. *Ibid*, II, 15.
5. *Bhagavad-gītā*, iv, 24.
6. *Vikramorvaśīya*, IV, 28.
7. *Śākuntalam*, iv, 10.
8. *Shakespeare (Sonnet)*, by Mathew Arnold.
9. Introduction by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan to Susil Kumar De's edition of *Meghasandēśa*, p. 12.



JÑĀNADEVA

A. G. JAVADEKAR

Jñānadeva (1275 A.D. to 1296 A.D.) was one of the greatest geniuses of Mahārāshtra. In him we find a rare combination of first rate poetry, lofty philosophy, deep mystical experience and exalted saintlihood. All this appears to be almost a miracle when we take into consideration that he lived a short span of life of less than twenty two years. He ended his life with a sense of fulfilment of his mission by voluntarily entering into yogic samādhi in the presence of a multitude of relatives, friends, and followers.

Jñānadeva was a contemporary of the king Rāmadevarāya of Yādava dynasty. Devagiri - the present Daulatabad - was Rāmadevarāya's capital, and he ruled from 1271 to 1309 A.D.

Jñānadeva's ancestors were Kulkarnīs of Apegaon (eight miles from Paīthan, a great centre of Sanskrit learning) whose duty was to look after the revenue. The king Rāmadevarāya as well as this family were worshippers of Śrī Viṭṭhal of Paṇḍarpur.

To understand the background of Jñānadeva's birth under unusual social conditions, one must go back to the life of his father Viṭṭhalpant. Viṭṭhal was a well-educated clever boy with ascetic tendencies. While alone on a pilgrimage, he happened to halt at Ālandī thirteen miles from Poona, on the bank of Indrāyaṇī. Sidhopant, the Kulkarnī of the place, seeing this bright chap gave his daughter Rukmiṇī to him in marriage. As the parents of Viṭṭhalpant did not live long, the young couple lived in Ālandī. Viṭṭhalpant was more interested in the life of the spirit than of the household. One day he left the home without his wife's permission, and took Sannyāsa initiated by Rāmāśrama, also known as Śrīpāda, of Benares. He was renamed as Caitanyāśrama. While on pilgrimage to Rāmeśvara this Rāmāśrama visited Ālandī. There he happened to see a pious woman circumambulating an Aśvattha tree. She saw this revered sannyāsin and bowed down to him who, as is customary, blessed her that she would give birth to sons. On hearing this she burst into tears, as she was verily the wife of Viṭṭhalpant, pining for her husband. Rāmāśrama suspected from the enquiries made that the recently initiated sannyāsin was no other than this woman's husband. Instead of proceeding further on his pilgrimage he went back to Benares and ordered Caitanyāśrama to go back to his wife.

Rukmiṇī got her husband back and was naturally overjoyed. But a sannyāsin reverting to household life was never known or heard of before. The couple was excommunicated and they had to live a very wretched life outside the town. They gave birth to three sons Nivṛtti, Jñānadeva, Sopāna, and daughter Muktābāi. They were

indeed spiritual gems each excelling the other in a way, yet the whole family was subjected to great harassment and humiliation. Viṭṭhalpant sought from the Brahmins atonement for his transgressing the traditional stages of life. They advised him to give up life! In the hope of securing happiness for their innocent children, both Viṭṭhalpant and Rukmiṇī obeyed the Brahmins by deserting the children and throwing their own selves in the sacred Ganges.

The plight of the young children, however, did not at all improve. They were asked to bring a certificate of purification from the Paṇḍits at Paṭhan. They undertook the journey only to find themselves ridiculed at their hands. It is said that Jñānadeva made a passing buffalo to recite Vedas, whereafter they were the required certificate without the need of performing the thread ceremony.

While returning from Paṭhan, the children halted at Nevase in the Ahamadnagar district. Jñāneśvarī, a unique Marāṭhi commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, was written here. Writing this at the age of fifteen is the greatest of Jñānadeva's miracles.

Chāṅgadeva, a haṭhayogin came to see Jñānadeva at Ālandī. As the legend goes, while he came riding on a tiger with a serpent as a whip in his hand and uprooting-trees on his way by the yogic powers, these children were enjoying early sunbath sitting on a small wall. In order to humble the pride of the yogin, Jñānadeva is credited with another miracle of making the wall walk. Some other miracles also have been attributed to him.

Jñānadeva met Nāmadeva, a tailor at Paṇḍarpur, a

great devotee of God Viṭṭhal. With Nāmadeva these brethren had great intimacy and all of them travelled upto Benares and visited many holy places. Their other famous contemporary saints from different social positions were Goroba, the potter, Sāmvatā, the gardener, Chokhā Melā the untouchable, and Parisā Bhāgavata, the Brahmin.

Jñānadeva expressed his wish to enter voluntarily into Samādhi, having felt that his mission of life was over. A great festival was arranged at Ālandī. Jñānadeva sat on the Āsana prepared and cleaned by the sons of Nāmadeva. *Jñāneśvarī* placed in front, he closed his eyes, bowed down thrice and was engrossed fully in the Divine love. Nivṛttinātha put the slab on the entrance to the place of Samādhi.

Besides *Jñāneśvarī*, also known as *Bhāvārtha-dīpikā* (a title given by Janābāi, a maidservant of Nāmadeva), Jñānadeva also wrote *Amṛtānubhava*, *Chāṅgadeva-Pāṣaṣṭhī*, *Haripāṭha*, *Namana* and other miscellaneous Abhaṅgas. There are other works regarding which Jñānadeva's authorship is doubtful.

Jñāneśvarī was delivered extempore and taken down by Saccidānanda Bābā. It contains about nine thousand Ovis. This is the first great work in Marāṭhī as yet unexcelled in its felicity of expression, beauty of poetic imagination, grandeur of philosophic thought and extremely enchanting in style. Many languages have their own great works, for reading which, one must learn but those languages. Similarly it is only to read *Jñāneśvarī* one should learn Marāṭhī. The object of *Jñāneśvarī* is to spread divine joy, to annihilate the dearth of discriminative intelligence and to enable the spiritual

aspirant to have a glimpse of the Highest Reality.

Jñānadeva divides the *Gītā* in the following way. The first three chapters deal with the path of action. The fourth to eleventh describe devotion through action. Twelfth to fifteenth are devoted to the path of knowledge. The *Gītā*, proper, according to him, ends here. The 16th Chapter classifies the qualities which help or hinder knowledge. The last two chapters deal with some incidental questions. Of these the eighteenth is regarded as *Kalaśādhyāya* which sums up the whole *Gītā*.

Though Jñānadeva extols each of the paths of Karma, Bhakti, Jñāna and Pātañjala yoga as if it were the path, he is truly himself when he describes Devotion in rapturous terms. *Jñāneśvarī* and *Gāthā* (Abhaṅgās or devotional lyrics) of Tukārāma are the two gospels of lakhs of Wārkarīs who regularly visit Paṇḍarpur.

Unlike *Jñāneśvarī*, which is bound by the teaching of *Gītā*, Jñānadeva's *Amṛtānubhava* forms his independent work written at the initiation of Nivṛttinātha, who was his elder brother as well as Guru in the lineage of the Nātha Sampradāya. It originates with Śiva and passes through Śakti, Matsyendranātha, Gorakhanātha, and Gahinīnātha by whom Nivṛttinātha was initiated at Tryambakeśvara in the mountain of Brahmagiri. Through Nivṛttinātha the influence of Nātha-sampradāya came down to Jñānadeva.

Amṛtānubhava contains over eight hundred ovis. Its original name is *Anubhavāmṛta*. It is an exposition of the Immortal Nectar of Divine experience. It describes the spiritual experience of the realized soul from the Absolutistic standpoint.

Jñānadeva advocates a theory of *Sphūrtivāda* and refutes all Dualism, subjective Idealism, the Buddhistic Nihilism and the Vedāntic Nescience. As a matter of fact, more than one third of the work deals with the refutation of Ignorance. The work concludes with the delineation of the secret of *Akr̥trima Bhakti* or natural or spontaneous devotion.

The work is of such a great philosophical significance that about a dozen commentaries (mostly in Marāṭhi) have been written on it. No other work in Marāṭhi has received such a privilege. The earliest commentary was written by Ekanātha (1533-1599 A.D.) but is not available though some quotations from it are found in Kibe's commentary, *Jyotsnā*.

Śivakalyāṇa's commentary (1635 A.D.) is known as *Nityānandaikya-Dīpikā*. According to him *Amṛtānubhava* goes beyond the viewpoints of *Pariṇāmavāda* and *Vivartavāda*. It could be understood by those who have attained perfect vision. Śivakalyāṇa in interpreting *Amṛtānubhava* takes the standpoint of the great Advaita work - *Samkṣepaśārīraka* of Sarvajñātman.

Pralhādbuvā Badve (died in 1718 A.D.) has written Sanskrit verses on *Amṛtānubhava*, the gist of which is the self-illumination of the Reality which is self-proved and is beyond any Pramaṇas as well as transcending the dualism implicit in knowledge and ignorance.

Vīreśvara Vallabha wrote in 1795 A.D., following Śaṅkara in his interpretation of the *Amṛtānubhava*. Viśvanātha Kibe writing his commentary *Jyotsnā* in 1882 has shown how Jñānadeva differs from Śaṅkara and Vidyāraṇya in not accepting illusion as the cause of the universe.

Harihara's commentary called *Rāṣṭrabhāṣya* (date not known) partly in Sanskrit and partly in Marāṭhi is written from the standpoint of *Brahmavilāsa*.

Nirañjana (1782-1855 A.D.) in his introduction to his commentary says that *Amṛtānubhava* is written for a *Jīvan-mukta*. By this perhaps he means that the work is written from the standpoint of a *Jīvan-mukta* for whom no *upādhis* exist.

Jīvanmuktayati writing a Sanskrit commentary in 1919 A.D. says that Jñānadeva's aim in refuting *Māyāvāda* is to establish *Ajātivāda*. There are other more recent works by Jog, Sakhare, Kene Rajaramabuva Brahmachari, Dasganu, Khasnis, Garde, Panduranga Sharma, Dr. Londhe, Pangarkar, R. D. Ranade, S. V. Dandekar, Dr. Pendse, V. M. Potdar, N. R. Phatak, Chapkhande, Gulabrao Maharaj and others. A recently published work *Divyāmṛtadhāra* by Moreshvar or Babamaharaj Joshi is worth mentioning. That is an excellent commentary on the first nineteen Ovis of the twelfth chapter of the *Jñāneśvarī*.

Of these Pāṇḍuraṅga Sharma thinks that Jñānadeva's philosophy is more in the line of Rāmānuja. According to Ranade *Sphūrtivāda* is Jñānadeva's original contribution to philosophic thought. Londhe labels Jñānadeva's philosophy as dual 'monism' and Dandekar as perfect monism, being more thorough-going than Śaṅkara's. Dr. Pendse opines that Jñānadeva expounds only Śaṅkara's philosophy in a poetic way. Similar is Pangarkar's view. Potdar shows the similarity of Jñānadeva's philosophy with that of *Yogavāsiṣṭha*.

Though from the above brief sketch some idea of Jñānadeva's philosophy can be formed, a summary statement is essential.

Jñānadeva rejects all *pramāṇas* including the *śabda* which for all the Vedāntins is the only efficacious one for the revelation of Reality. He relies on his own exalted experience. The so called valid sources of knowledge derive their illumination from Reality, and not vice versa. Sun enlightens everything and so does the self-luminous Reality. The Absolute does not prove itself by any means of proof, nor allows itself to be disproved. It is self-evident, beyond proof or disproof. It is therefore groundless to believe that the word can gain greatness by enabling the Ātman to experience itself. (*Amṛtānubhava*, VI, 93-95).

If it be said that word is necessary to remove Nescience which covers Reality, Jñānadeva says that as the very name *avidyā* declares, it is not *vidyamāna*, i.e. existent. Therefore to destroy a thing which does not exist is like breaking the hare's horn or plucking the sky-flowers. The word is futile bothways. It can destroy neither the non-existent nescience nor can reveal the self-luminous Reality. It is comparable to a lamp lit up at daytime.

The designation of the Ultimate Reality as *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*, though true so far as it goes, cannot be regarded as metaphysically adequate. These are human modes of apprehension, not the thing-in-itself. The three terms stand for the same reality, but they indicate more what Reality is not than what it is. The dualism of *Sat* and *Asat*, *Cit* and *Acit*, *Ānanda* and *Duhkḥa* are alike transcended in the

Absolute. This Absolute is not, therefore, to be regarded as void as the *Mādhyamika* holds. Criticising *Śūnyavāda*, Jñānadeva says:

if the extinguisher of the lamp is extinguished along with the lamp, who will understand that the lamp is extinguished? A man sound asleep in a lonely forest is neither perceived by others nor by himself, but he still exists. Absolute is the foundational pure self-consciousness beyond the relative dualism of knowledge and ignorance, subject and object, being and nothing.

The self-luminous Reality and its self-awareness form as it were a twin designated by Jñānadeva as God (Śiva) and Goddess (Śakti) who give birth to the whole universe, *without undergoing limitation (Nirūpādhika)*. As the ocean assuming the form of garlands of waves, enjoys itself, so Reality naturally manifests itself in the two forms and enjoys itself. Knowing oneself or enjoying oneself requires only an epistemological dualism which does not violate the ontological unity of consciousness or Reality. The reference to God and Goddess which are two names for the same Reality are not to be identified with the Sāṅkhya *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, nor the Vedāntic Brahman and *Māyā*.

The lover himself has become the Beloved. Though they appear as two, there is only one Divinity, just as the word is one though the lips are two, or the fragrance is one though the flowers may be two, or sound is one though the sticks are two, or the sight is the same though the eyes are two. Śiva is eternally accompanied by Śakti because they are not two but one.

The one Reality manifests itself in the triad of the knower, the known and the knowledge. That is the origin of the universe. While for Śaṅkara this differentiation is due to nescience and is illusory, for Jñānadeva that is the natural expression of Reality.

Refutation of Ignorance is almost of central importance in his philosophy. Śaṅkara's doctrines of *Māyā* and *Adhyāsa* and *Vivarta* which reduce God, man and the world to phenomenal status have raised severe reactions among the Vedāntic schools.

Jñānadeva has taken great pains to criticise *Ajñāna*. For him knowledge and ignorance are relative terms and hence there cannot be a prior ignorance to be later on destroyed by knowledge. The very description of ignorance depends upon knowledge. The existence of ignorance is illusory like the light of a glow-worm. It is incapable of enlightening either in light or in darkness. Knowledge which is said to be destroying ignorance is but a reappearance of ignorance in another form. Both are fictions of the mind.

The further points in the refutation of *Ajñāna* are as follows: Ignorance has no foundation, is unknowable and ineffective. It can neither co-exist with knowledge nor can be independent. It cannot be proved by any *pramāṇa*. It cannot dwell in pure Ātman. It cannot be inferred from the experience of the objective world. If ignorance has power of presentation, it is futile to call it ignorance. The word *Ajñāna* is constituted by prefixing "A" to *jñāna*. Thus to understand *Ajñāna* in terms of *jñāna* or vice versa is malapropism. Ignorance cannot be born out of knowledge, but, if it did it

will be a still birth. Śruti declares that the world is illuminated by His light (*tasya bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti*). Ātman cannot meet ignorance even as Sun cannot meet darkness.

Jñānadeva maintains that the world is the sport of Ātman (*cīdvilāsa*). He expands himself and shines forth as the world. The observer, in the guise of the objects comes to visit Himself. The universe including the individual selves is not an enchanting deception of *Avidyā*, but the expression of the Divine Love and Joy. World is not a diminution but a unique expression of the fulfilment of perfection. Jñānadeva says that the diversity found in the world results in the deepening of the unity. The enrichment of gold is through the golden ornaments.

The finiteness of the individual implies that the Reality determines itself in order to realize itself in various forms. So the aim of the individual life is to realize this status of dignity and act up to its real worth. Advocating natural devotion Jñānadeva says that it consists in realizing how God manifests Himself through One's being. It is a culmination of Yoga and Jñāna and transcends them.

Bhakti has an intrinsic or absolute value. What is termed *svasamvitti* by philosophers, and Śakti by the Śaivas is better termed Bhakti for Jñānadeva. Bhakti or love is the very nature of God. The present writer is of the opinion that Jñānadeva's philosophy is a development mainly from the combination of Śaṅkarācārya's Advaitism and Gorakhanātha's *Siddha-siddhānta-paddhati*, though anti-illusionist thinking of others might also have influenced him. Refutation of *ajñāna* is not the same as the refutation of *Māyāvāda*.

Standing on the Absolutistic plane even Śaṅkarācārya would not accept *ajñāna*. But a philosopher's task is to explain also the every day experience of the common man. It is a difficult task to show logically the consistency between Brahman on the one hand and the world on the other. To the extent that it is an emanation from Brahman it could be regarded as *Cidvilāsa*. But no thinking person will give the world-experience the same value as Brahman. To explain this deficiency in value one intelligent method is that of postulation of a mysterious *māyā*. What is *cidvilāsa* to the transcendentalist is *māyā* to the phenomenalist. They can appreciate each other's truth only by exchange of their standpoints and thus there is no antagonism between the two positions. As a matter of fact these are the two viewpoints within one Absolutistic system.



THE CONCEPT OF TATTVAMASI IN THE KṚTIS OF MUTTUSVĀMI DĪKṢITA

R. ASHA

Tattvamasi

Advaita Vedānta holds that Upaniṣadic texts like 'that thou art' (*tattvamasi*), 'I am Brahman' (*aham brahmāsmi*) etc., convey the identity of Brahman-reality and the individual soul (*jīva*). Hence they are called 'the great-texts' (*mahāvākyas*). The analysis of the identity-texts runs along the following lines.

Words in Advaita theory of meaning convey their senses in three ways, (i) primary signification (*mukhya-vṛtti*), (ii) secondary implication (*lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*) and (iii) signification based upon the similarity of qualities (*gauṇī-vṛtti*). When a word conveys a sense through either a genus (*jāti*), or quality (*guṇa*), activity (*kriyā*) or relation (*sambandha*), it is called *mukhya-vṛtti*. When the literal meaning is contextually incompatible and some other sense connected with it is conveyed, it is called *lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*. *Gauṇī-vṛtti* is signification based upon the similarity of

qualities. *Lakṣaṇā-vṛtti* again is of three kinds, *jahallakṣaṇā* (exclusive secondary implication), *ajahallakṣaṇā* (non-exclusive secondary implication) and *jahad-ajahad-lakṣaṇā* (exclusive-non-exclusive secondary implication). In the first case, the literal (primary) sense is totally abandoned and some other sense connected with it is conveyed. For eg. in the sentence 'The hamlet is on the Ganges', – the word 'ganges' cannot convey the river proper which is its primary meaning but secondarily signifies its bank. Obviously a hamlet cannot be meant to stand on the waters. In the second case, the literal sense is retained and some other related sense is conveyed. For eg. the sentence 'The red runs'. By the word 'red' here is conveyed the quality of redness, its primary meaning. But 'red' cannot run. So it means the horse which is red in colour. The third kind of *lakṣaṇā*, is one where a word excluding only a part of its primary sense, conveys a meaning retaining the other part. A classic eg. is the sentence, 'This is that *Devadatta*'. The word 'this' conveys *Devadatta* as seen in front at the present time here and now. The word 'that' conveys the same *Devadatta* as known in the past and in a different place. The two primary meanings are obviously contradictory. So, the word 'this' and 'that' abandon a part of their primary sense, namely, being associated with a particular time and place and convey the person *Devadatta* who is one and the same.

It is this *lakṣaṇā* which is made use of to explain the meanings of the texts like *tat-tvam-asi* (that thou art). The primary sense of the word 'that' (*tat*) is God (*Īśvara*), the creator of the universe, who is possessed of a personality and attributes like Omniscience (*sarvajñatva*) etc. The

secondary sense of this word is pure Consciousness (Brahman), which is attributeless and unconditioned with no world in it. The word 'thou' (*tvam*) primarily conveys the soul (*jīva*) associated with intellect and who is ignorant, finite and known here and now in the world directly. It secondarily conveys the pure Consciousness as transcending the experiential conditions and which is witness to all of them. The word 'art' (*asi*) posits essential identity between the two. This cannot be done without abandoning parts of the literal senses of the words 'that' and 'thou'. Obviously, 'God' and 'soul' cannot be identical being possessed of contradictory attributes. So the essential nature of God and the soul is retained. This nature is pure Consciousness (Brahman), which is one and the same in God and the soul. Thus, they are identical with one another.

Dīkṣita has these concepts of meaning in mind when he uses the phrases, *tattvaṁ-padārtha-śodhana-śeṣita-tatpada-lakṣyārtha-svarūpiṇo* (the essential reality remains as the basis of all when one analyses the words 'that' and 'thou' in the identity-texts of the Vedānta) in *Tyāgarājādanyam*, *tatpada-lakṣyārtha-svarūpiṇi* (*Tripura-sundari*) etc. In a beautiful expression, he describes the feet of *Devī* as embodying the meanings of the words 'taī' and 'tvam' i.e. *tattvaṁ-padārtha-yugale* (*Sāraṅga-rāga-priye*). And this is done by that kind of secondary implication known as *jahad-ajahad-lakṣaṇā*. Dīkṣita refers to this too as *jahad-ajahallakṣaṇayā jivaikyātmano* (*Guruguhādanyam*). It is easy to infer that Dīkṣita is quite well conversant with every kind of *lakṣaṇā* or secondary implication. This is evident from his use of the technical expressions in the Advaita theory of meaning and hermeneutics.

Liberation

Liberation in Advaita is realising the nature of one's own self as being essentially non-different from the Brahman-reality. As Śaṅkara puts it, it is 'being established in one's true nature', 'being established in one's own true nature as the inmost self,' 'the state of realisation of the Absolute' etc. The Supreme Self being ever existent, liberation too is an already existent fact and is not something to be attained. It is not a state that has to be acquired through any form of action, such as production, transformation, purification or attainment. When one uses the word 'attainment' regarding liberation, it is 'attainment as it were.' What is accomplished however is only the removal of ignorance through knowledge arising from scriptural instruction. When ignorance is removed, the self does not require anything else to manifest itself. Liberation is also of the nature of unalloyed Bliss as it marks the cessation of all sorrows, the culmination of all desires,⁶¹ the accomplishment of the unaccomplished as it were and attainment of the unattained as it were.

In some compositions, Dīkṣita uses brief phrases heavily loaded with meaning backed by intuitive knowledge to convey his personal experience. One instance is *śrī guruguhasya dāsoham, no cet cidguruguha evāham* (*Śrī Guruguhasya*). Here, while he calls himself as the servant of the Lord (*dāsa*), the focus of the song is that he is the same as Brahman. Other egs. are *nityānanda-rūposmi brahmānanda-rūposmi* (*Ānandeśvareṇa*), *kiñcidajñopya-toham sarvajña-evāsmi* (*Śrī Tyāgarājasya*) (devotion is mentioned in the prelude here), and *saccidānanda-paripūrṇa-brahmāsmi* ('I am the Brahman-reality of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss') in *Śrī Kamalāmbikayā*.

Jīvan-mukti and Videha-mukti

Release does not necessarily mean decease of the body. A person who has attained liberation may continue to exist in his body, though not affected by it. Such a person is called *jīvanmukta*. For such a person, the merits (*puṇya*) and demerits (*pāpa*) accumulated in the previous births are annihilated alike by knowledge. Since he is devoid of any attachment to his body, in the present life, further actions and their results do not cling to him.

One point is to be noted here. There are three kinds of *karma*, the *sañcita* (*karma* which has not as yet begun to yield fruit), the *prārabdha* (that which has begun to yield fruit and is the cause of the present body) and the *āgāmi* (actions to be done in future). For a *jīvanmukta*, only the *prārabdha-karma* is operative because what has started operating cannot be stopped. The *sañcita karmas* are however annihilated by knowledge and the *āgāmi karmas* have not as yet arisen. The *prārabdha karma* is not extinguished by knowledge for the above reason and has to be experienced to be exhausted.

Implicit references to these concepts of *mukti*, *karma* can be seen in Dīkṣita. Egs. are *māmaka-videhamukti-sādhanam* (*Raṅganāyakam*), *jīvanmukti-videhamuktidam* (*Śrī Vāñchanātham*), *viraktānām videha-kaivalya-dāna-vicakṣaṇa* (*Māraḷoṭi*), *vikalebara-kaivalya-dānāya* (*Guruguhāya*) etc. In these songs, Dīkṣita is seen to use the technical phraseology fully knowing what they stand for. For eg. 'videha-kaivalya' or 'videha-mukti' (liberation after death), 'jīvan-mukti' (liberation while living in the present body), 'vikalebara' (liberation without the body) etc.

It would be no exaggeration to say that Dīkṣita exemplified the ideas set forth in the following śloka of the *Jīvanmuktānandalaharī* of Śaṅkara.

क्वचिच्छैवैः सार्धं क्वचिदपि च शाक्तैः सह रमन्
 कदा विष्णोर्भक्तैः क्वचिदपि च सौरैः सह वसन् ।
 कदा गाणापत्यैर्गतसकलभेदोऽद्वयतया
 मुनिर्न व्यामोहं भजति गुरुदीक्षाक्षततमाः ॥ 14

निराकारं क्वापि क्वचिदपि च साकारममलं
 निजं शैवं रूपं विविधगुणभेदेन बहुधा ।
 कदाऽऽश्चर्यं पश्यन् किमिदमिति हृष्यन्नपि कदा
 मुनिर्न व्यामोहं भजति गुरुदीक्षाक्षततमाः ॥ 15

कदाऽद्वैतं पश्यन्नखिलमपि सत्यं शिवमयं
 महावाक्यार्थानामवगतिसमभ्यासवशतः ।
 गतद्वैताभासः शिव शिव शिवेत्येव विलपन्
 मुनिर्न व्यामोहं भजति गुरुदीक्षाक्षततमाः ॥ 16

No wonder he is lauded and worshipped as a *yogi* and *kavi* even today.

इमां मुक्तावस्थां परमशिवसंस्थां गुरुकृपा-
 सुधापाङ्गव्याप्यां सहजसुखवाप्यामनुदिनम् ।
 मुहुर्मज्जन्मज्जन्भजति सुकृतैश्चेन्नरवरः
 सदा योगी त्यागी कविरिति वदन्तीह कवयः ॥ 17



T.S. ELIOT'S KATHA-UPANIṢAD

K. SUNDARARAMAN

'There are a certain number of us in Europe for whom the civilization of Europe is no longer enough'

Romain Rolland¹

Thomas Stearns Eliot, one of the great English poets of 20th century whom Nobel Prize citation lauded as a 'trail blazing pioneer of modern poetry' was a student of Vedānta. He flowered as a modernist poet and critic during the period of unprecedented global crisis between the two world wars. The whole human race was hopelessly lacking direction as old cherished values collapsed. Human race was in a fit of dilemma. There was disorder in every domain. The generation was spiritually sterile, chaotic, restless and longed for peace. So Eliot chose to end his master-piece *The Waste Land* by improvising the Vedāntic message in the second *Brāhmaṇa* of the fifth chapter of the *Bṛahadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* as follows:

*Datta, Dayadhvam, Dāmyata
Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ (sic)*

Conrad Aiken who reviewed *The Waste Land* under the title *An Anatomy of Melancholy* says “Why again, *Datta*, *Dayadhvam*, *Dāmyata?* or *Śāntiḥ?* Do they not say a good deal less for us than “Give, Sympathise, Control”. Of course, but Mr. Eliot replies that he wants them not merely to mean those particular things, but also to mean them in a particular way—that is to be remembered in connection with a Upaniṣad”.²

In Harvard, Irving Babbitt, T.S. Eliot's mentor and a humanist exercised a powerful influence on him. It was during 1905-10 Babbitt first directed Eliot to the study of Sanskrit and oriental religions³ “Harvard catalogues indicate that in his courses in Sanskrit he was required to read portions of the Vedas and Upaniṣads, the *Bhagvad-Gītā*, Hértel's *Pañca-Tantra*, and the *Yoga-sūtras* of Patañjali. In his courses in Pāli, he apparently studied the Jātakas (birth tales of Buddha), the Nikāyas (saints' lives and legends), Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, and selections made by Lanman from the dialogues of the Buddha. Anesaki's lectures would have introduced him in a general way to Mahāyāna Buddhism and to selected portions in English translation of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, or *Lotus-Sūtra*. He knew and mentioned with favor the philosophical and psychological commentaries on Patañjali of Vācaspati Miśra and Vijñāna Bhikṣu (“Ācārya”), the epic *Mahābhārata*, and the other major epic of the Indian tradition, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the extensive selections from the Pāli canon of early Buddhist texts in Henry Clarke Warren's *Buddhism in Translations*: He owned Deussen's *The System of the Vedānta* and *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* in German,

with their extensive translations of the Vedāntic philosophy of Śaṅkara and of Upaniṣadic texts.⁴ "Eliot was not to be satisfied with studying Western Philosophy from Aristotle to Bradley. He was attracted to by the Hinduism, by the Vedas, Upaniṣads and above all by the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which he always considered together with the *Divine Comedy*, as the greatest of all philosophical poems. Eliot studied Sanskrit and Pāli in order to gain a deeper understanding of Indian Culture."⁵

After the spring of 1913 he withdrew from the Sanskrit courses. In his Virginia lectures Eliot told "Two years spent in the study of Sanskrit under Charles Lanman and a year in the mazes of Patañjali's metaphysics under the guidance of James Wood, left me in a state of enlightened mystification"⁶. W.B. Yeats tells us that Eliot used Woods' translation of Patañjali *Yoga-sūtras* like a dictionary,⁷ Again in his radio talk in 1945 "On the Unity of European Culture", Eliot confessed: "Long ago I studied the ancient Indian languages, and while I was chiefly interested at that time in philosophy, I read a little poetry too and my own poetry shows the influences of Indian thought and sensibility"⁸.

In 1949 when asked what books from the Indic tradition had influenced him most, Eliot replied: "The Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*."⁹ Eliot, after reading the scriptures of Hinduism and Buddhism, admired their philosophical richness and diversity and wrote: "Their (Indian Philosophers) subtleties make most of the great European philosophers look like school boys"¹⁰.

Eliot certainly made no secret of his debt for the title,

theme and symbolism of his poems. The exalted mystic concepts of the Upaniṣads such as temporal, time, timeless and eternity; asceticism, self-denial, detachment and renunciation, stillness, withdrawal, cyclic nature of creation and existence are drawn upon profusely and used by Eliot in his mature poems only to make his poetry more profoundly exquisite and eloquent.

Kaṭha Upaniṣad is a major *Upaniṣad* and popular among the students of Vedānta. In all the Upaniṣads exalted philosophy is woven into graceful poetry. In *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* one more dimension is added and that is its unique dramatic structure wherein the young and flaming Naciketas goes to the abode of Yama, the God of Death in quest of Truth. This dramatic situation intensifies the philosophic depth more profoundly. Max Muller admires this *Upaniṣad* as "one of the most perfect specimens of the mystic philosophy and poetry of the ancient Hindus".¹¹ The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* narrates a story where a poor and pious Brāhmaṇa, named Vājasravasa, desirous of heaven performed a sacrifice and gave away as presents to the priests, a few old and feeble cows. His son Naciketas perplexed and confounded by the hypocrisy of his father's observance of the sacrifice, earnestly wished to make himself an offering and thus purify his father's sacrifice. When he persisted at his request, his father in rage said, "Unto Yama I give thee". Neither a dutiful son could falsify his father's words nor a brāhmaṇa could go back from his words uttered during a sacrifice. So Naciketas proceeded to the abode of Yama, the Lord of Death. Finding him out, he waited for three days and nights unfed, unslept at his palace

gates. Yama, on his return, offered three boons in recompense for the delay and discomfort caused to Naciketas as such a seeker was rare among the mortals. Naciketas asked for three boons. First was that his father's rage might abate and let him joyfully greet him when he returned. For the second boon he asked Yama to teach him the sacrifice that would secure heaven to men. Yama granted these two boons. As the third and last boon, Naciketas raised a phenomenal doubt and demanded explanation for it. Naciketas asked:

O, Lord of Death, a doubt prevails, when man departs this life, "He is" some say: "He is not" say others. Instructed by you I would like to fathom it. Let this be the third boon I choose

(Paul Deussen 1980:277)¹²

Yama who unhesitatingly granted the first two boons was reluctant to the third one because it deals with the great riddle of the destiny of human soul. To know which survives death is the supreme wisdom which cannot be imparted without testing the credentials of the receiver. Truth could be taught only to a select few. So Yama subjected Naciketas to the acid test of temptations. He tried to dissuade Naciketas by spreading before his eyes all the allurements of the sensual world, properties and prosperities, heavenly damsels who would wait for his commands and many more things which a mortal could never even imagine to obtain; but all in lieu of the third boon. Yama said:

Choose for yourself sons and grandsons, who will have hundred years' life; Choose many herds (of cattle), elephants, gold and horses. Choose

for yourself the great property in land and you yourself live as many autumns as you wish.

If you value it as wish equal in worth, choose for yourself riches and long life. There will be no greater one on earth (than you). I make you the enjoyer of all desires. Such, as would not be attainable to any man, I present them to you, so that they shall wait upon you only; do not enquire, O Naciketas, into what is after death.

(ibidem: 280)

Naciketas remained unperturbed. Material prosperity whether remote or immediate has no attraction for him. He outrightly rejected all the tempting offers of Yama as follows:

All these offered by you are shortlived (*alpam*) Eventually mortals should part with all their material possessions; they sap the senses and exhaust the vigour of the mind. So I choose that and none else, as none is equal to that in worth.

(ibidem:280,281)

Naciketas was firm, steadfast and his resolve was unshakable. He was not to be seduced by the lure of the progeny and vast wealth as all that are possessed have to be dispossessed ultimately. He did not choose the path where many mortals sink. So Yama complimented Naciketas in glowing terms as the chain of wealth has not captivated him. Taught by Yama, Naciketas returned enlightened. A seeker became a saint of immortal fame.

A similar situation arises in Eliot's verse-play *Murder in the Cathedral*. When Eliot accepted the commission to write a play for the Canterbury festival of June 1935 at the request of George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, Eliot chose for his subject-matter the martyrdom of the most famous of the Christian saints, Thomas Becket. Rising from a lowly birth in the Cheapside section of London, largely thanks to the patronage of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, he became both archdeacon of Canterbury in 1154 and The Chancellor of Henry II that carried power next to that of the king. Theobald expected him to defend the prerogative of the church, but instead Becket became fast friend with Henry II partook of a sybaritic life-style and extended the power of the state at the expense of the church. King Henry II believed that by having 'his man' in the top-post of the church, he could easily impose his will upon this powerful religious institution. So Henry II advanced reluctant Becket as Archbishop of Canterbury at the death of Theobald in 1162. King Henry II expected to have a compliant ally running the church but unfortunately Becket proved otherwise. Becket's allegiance shifted from the King's court to the church the moment he became the Archbishop inspiring him to take a stand against the King (to whom he was a trusted lieutenant and advisor as Chancellor). Belying the expectations of Henry II, Becket adopted an ascetic life-style and became a staunch defender of the rights of the church. In those days, the church reserved the right to try felonious clerics in their own religious courts of justice and not in those of the crown. Henry II was determined to increase control of his crown by eliminating these religious

courts and bring clerics and lay men on a par for justice. Fissures occurred between them even on many minor issues between the church and state and matters came to a head when Henry tried exerting the authority of the crown courts to punish the erring clerics who have been convicted by ecclesiastical courts. The king who was anxious to assert the power of royal justice claimed that the 'criminous clerks' should be tried in royal courts. Henry II wants the church to serve the state, but Becket maintained that church is not subservient to state as earthly power and glory cannot overshadow the exalted church. But Henry was determined to rein Becket in on trumped up charges of misappropriating funds when he was chancellor and to put Becket on trial. The feud snowballed and it forced Becket to flee to France to escape; but a sort of truce was arrived at the behest of Pope Alexander III but it did not last. The fugitive Becket returned from France to England on Dec 2, 1170 after seven years of self-imposed exile. Thomas Becket's return to England unmindful of the impending peril for his life is almost a sequel to Naciketas' journey to the abode of Yama, the God of Death. So it is no wonder that the illustrious character of Naciketas and his dialogue with the God of Death who after subjecting Naciketas to severe temptations bestowed on him the ultimate wisdom of 'ātman' might have influenced Eliot. Eliot had a profound and comprehensive sense of comparative perception that fed the springs of his creativity. The inventive genius of Eliot had made use of almost the same kind of temptations as a dramatic technique in his verse-play *Murder in the Cathedral* to purify and effect necessary metamorphosis in the character of Thomas

Becket to evolve a martyr out of an Archbishop. Becket's spiritual struggle against the temptations is the main focus of the play.

Eliot's inventive dramatic insight saw in it something more than a mere political event of a church-state feud. He realized that this historical event of the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket has the potential of a high spiritual theme. The task Eliot undertook was too delicate, subtle and challenging. If the King's men merely killed Becket, it was only a murder and not martyrdom. Becket would have only died as a pious Christian Archbishop. To transform a murder into a martyrdom is not a mean task – a task so challenging for Eliot as “saints are not made by accident.”¹³ In order to transform a murder into martyrdom Eliot adopted exactly the dramatic elements of temptations found in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Eliot exposes Becket to the same kind of temptations to which Yama subjected Naciketas in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*.

The four knights employed by the King Henry II as mercenaries hurled series of temptations on Becket to lure him away from his devotion to church; but Becket's resolve proved superior to temptation and finally the knights brutally murdered Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury on a cold Dec evening of 29 Dec 1170 as he bled and fell on the steps of the altar of Jesus, the savior of mankind.

The First Tempter says to Becket

Be easy man!

The easy man lives to eat the best dinners.

Take a friend's advice. (ibidem: p. 35)

Becket rejected the pleasures of the palate as a

Spring time fancy (ibidem: p. 36)

Then the temptation of power comes.

The Chancellorship that you resigned when
you were made Archbishop – that was a
mistake on your part – still may be regained.
Think, my Lord, Power obtained grows to
glory

.....
Power is present. Holiness hereafter.

(ibidem: p. 37)

The Fourth Tempter complimented Becket for his heroic
rejection as Yama complimented Naciketas.

Well done, Thomas, your will is hard to bend.

(ibidem: p. 44)

Then again Fourth Tempter enticed him with the glory of
martyrdom as follows

When king is dead, there's another king,
And one more king is another reign,
King is forgotten, when another shall come:
Saint and Martyr rule from the tomb.

(ibidem: p. 47)

.....
What can compare with glory of saints
Dwelling forever in the presence of God
.....

Seek the way of martyrdom, make yourself
the lowest On earth, to be high in heaven

(ibidem: p. 48)

Thomas Becket rejected this last temptation of spiritual glory too because

The last temptation is the greatest treason:
To do the right deed for the wrong reason.

(ibidem: p. 52)

To give up life in the Lord's work is good but to give it up to gain the glory of sainthood is spiritual treason. A saint with the spiritual pride is a sinner:

“for the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, and who no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of being a martyr”

(ibidem:p.57)

Eliot's Fourth Tempter in “*The Murder in the Cathedral*” echoes the concept of māya in crystal clear terms.

“Man's life is a cheat and a disappointment;
All things are unreal,
Unreal or disappointing:
The Catherine wheel, the pantomime cat,
The prizes given at the children's party,
The prizes awarded for the English Essay,
The scholar's degree, the statesman's decoration.
All things become less real, man passes
From unreality to unreality.

This man is obstinate, blind, intent
 On self-destruction,
 Passing from deception to deception,
 From grandeur to grandeur to final illusion”

“Mr. Eliot is here writing in the tradition of those mystics who followed the negative way. It is a tradition that goes back beyond Christianity to the Neo-platonists, who turned what had been a method of knowing – the dialectical method of arriving at truth by negations of the false – into a method of arriving at experience of the One”.¹⁴

Becket triumphantly vanquished even the last temptation and emerged victorious. His epic struggle with temptations is in no way less to that of Naciketas. Yama's acid-test of temptations on Naciketas are necessary for Eliot's Becket to make him fit to receive the highest gift of Christian-martyrdom. Naciketas sought for wisdom for the sake of wisdom but not for the glory of sage-hood. But Becket seemed to have aspired initially for martyrdom for the sake of sainthood but ultimately he rejected this temptation as a treason by resigning his will in the will of God. The psychological technique of temptations thus helped Eliot to purge off the spiritual pride and purify the character of Becket. *Murder in the Cathedral* is thus Eliot's *KatĪha Upaniṣad*.



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ŚAIVISM IN INDIAN LITERATURE

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Śaivism in Indian Literature is discussed in three parts:

1. Antiquity of Śaivism based on literature
2. Śaivite literature in general and
3. Śaivism in a few languages.

1) Antiquity :

Śaivism is a religion accepting Śiva as God-head. It had been in vogue almost all over the world. The Māyā civilization of Central America and the remnants of the temples of Java, Bali and other islands in the Far East stand witness to this. According to Sir John Marshall "Śaivism is the most ancient living faith in the world."¹ In India we have continued the worship of Śiva uninterruptedly. It was, and still is, a Pan-Indian religion. The twelve Jyotirlingās situated at different centres from Kāśmīr to Rāmeśvaram stand to

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prove its wide-spread existence.² The Telugu region, presently called Andhra Pradesh, was mentioned in earlier times, as “Trilinga deśa”, after the three liṅgās established in three points of the region Śrīśailam in the north, Dākṣārāmam (Bhīmeśvaram) in the east and Kālahasti in the south. All other States, too, have their own centres of Śaivism. South India is known for its towering temples. People from South trekking to the Himālayās to visit the Kedārnāth temple at Kedārnāth and pilgrims from the North visiting South India for the glimpse of Rāmanātha at Rameśvaram speak volumes of the faith and distribution of the cult throughout the length and breadth of our country.

Śaivism thus widely spread all over the subcontinent developed its own name and form regionwise. The Śaivism of Kāśmīr developed a philosophical system “*pratyabhijñā darśanam*” by name, popularly known as Kāśmīr Śaivism. In the West the sect evolved as Lakulīśa or Nakulīśa Pāśupatam.³ It was very widely followed. The Tamil saint Appar (7th century) mentions it in his *Tevāram*.⁴ In Karṇāṭaka, Śaivism slowly emerged as a new faith with a new name. It was called Vīraśaivism and the followers are Vīraśaivites or Liṅgāyats. The Śaivism of Tamil Nadu is known as “Siddhānta Śaivam”, after the philosophical system it produced. There were other sects too. Saint Tirumūlar of Tamil Nadu (circa 6th cent. A.D.) speaks of four sects of Śaivism, namely Śuddha Śaivam, Aśuddha Śaivam, Mārga Śaivam and Kaḍum Śuddha Śaivam.⁵ He is said to have added to the list the Pāśupata, Mahāvrata, Kāpālika, Vāma, Bhairava and Śaiva.⁶ Ānandagiri in his *Śaṅkara-Vijaya* makes

a mention of six types of Śaiva cult, named Śaiva, Rudra, Ugra, Bhaṭṭa, Jaṅgama and Pāśupata.⁷ Mādhavācārya (14th cent. A.D.) mentions about the Nakulīśa Pāśupata cult in his *Sarva darśana saṅgraha*.⁸ Rāmānuja in his *Śrī Bhāṣya* (II 2.37) mentions four-fold schools of the Kāpālikas, the Kālāmukhas, the Pāśupatas and Śaivas.⁹ Vācaspati Miśra in his *Bhāmatī*, an explanatory treatise of the Śaṅkara Bhāṣya on the *Brahmasūtra* (1.2.37), says that the system known as Śaiva, Pāśupata, Karuṇika, Siddhāntin and Kāpālika are known as the four-fold Maheśvaras.¹⁰ Prof. S.N. Dasgupta to stress the antiquity (of Śaivism) says that Bādārāyaṇa was aware of a few schools of Śaivism.¹¹

Apart from being the faith of the common man, the cult of Śiva was a practising religion of the philosophers of India also. Rājaśekhara (14th cent. A.D.) in his *Ṣaḍdarśana Samuccaya* calls the Naiyāyikas the Śaivites and the Vaiśeṣikas the Pāśupatas.¹² The inscriptions of Imperial Colas of Tamil Nadu speak in detail of the Kālāmukhas and the grants they received from the Cola kings.

So far we have been looking at the religious history of Śaivism in India of yore. The religion and philosophy did have an impact on the men of letters also. They should have practised one or the other religion and the tenets of it would have entered their writings, with or without their being aware of it. We know at least about Kālidāsa, who is acclaimed as a Śaivite. The *śloka* in his *Raghuvamśa*, “*Vāgarthāviva samprktau*” is very well-known and it speaks so very beautifully the “*tādātmya sambandha*” (inseparable bond) of Śiva and Pārvatī. The simile he used, the word and its

meaning, has brought out the divine concept very convincingly. I would like to point out here an interesting thing as to how literature and religious writing interact and react. *Amarakośa* by Amarasimha, a follower of Jainism, lists the names of Śiva in the first chapter. This was more or less literally adopted by the author of *Śivastotram*. This point can be argued differently also by saying that Amarasimha, as a lexicographer, had studied all the literatures, religious or otherwise, and equipped himself before writing his *Kośam*.

2) ¹ Saivite literature in general:

Indian literature is taken up for study under two sections, namely A) Sanskrit literature and B) the literature of other Indian Languages.

Sanskrit literature:

The Vedic literature: I would like to include a cursory glance at the Vedic literature. *Ṛg Veda* divided into either ten *maṇḍalas* or eight *aṣṭakams* does not use Śiva as a proper noun. It is often applied to many gods of the Pantheon in the sense of 'propitious' and once indeed to Rudra himself (X.92.9) meaning paradoxically that the God of wrath is the very apotheosis of propitiousness.¹³ The scholars are of the opinion that Rudra was the prototype of Śiva.¹⁴ Many interpretations have been made of the Vedic text and particularly about Rudra-Śiva. It seems that there is a tradition of Vedic interpretation with particular reference to Rudra-Śiva which definitely seems to be very old and which has not been reduced to writing.¹⁵ Fortunately we get a ray of hope from Haradatta Śivācārya, one of the greatest Śaivite teachers of Tamil Nadu. His major work is *Śruti Sūkti Mālā*. Other works are *Pañcaratna Mālikā*, *Harihara-tāratamya* and *Caturveda Tātparya Saṅgraha*.

The *Śruti Sūkti Mālā* has an excellent commentary in Sanskrit by one Śiva Liṅga Bhūpati (circa. 14th cent.A.D.). He is supposed to have belonged to Koṇḍavīṭi Reddy dynasty. The text has 151 ślokas directly addressed to Lord Śiva. So many Gods are spoken of in the *Ṛg Veda*. So also there has been an undercurrent indicating the Supreme God or the Godhead.¹⁶ The search for Supreme God was on. By the time the *Yajur Veda* was compiled Rudra-Śiva gained importance and prominence. This is evident from the fact that *Śatarudrīya* occupies a prominent place in that Veda.¹⁷ The *Atharva Veda* speaks of Rudra in glorious terms and provides a list of names like Śarva, Bhava, Ugra, Mahādeva, etc.¹⁸ There is a possibility of this tradition for the whole gamut of the *Vedas*. I would like to venture to call this tradition the Śaivite interpretation of Vedic hymns. I believe that this interpretation continued for long and it is revealed in the writings of Haradatta and Śiva Liṅga Bhūpati. Saint Appar in one of his *Tevāram* hymns says '*podu nīkkit tanai ninaya vallōrukku enrum perum tuṇai*' (*Koil periya tiruttāṇḍakam.6.1.5*) meaning 'He is a great support to those who think of Him excluding other Gods.' Perhaps he had '*matvām rudra cukradhāma*' in his mind.¹⁹ *Śruti Sūkti Mālā* (verse 22) interprets this to say that the sage of this hymn in order to pacify Rudra says that 'O Rudra! Be not angry with me for grouping you in a general manner'.

In the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (2-17) there is a *Ṛk* starting '*yasmai namastacchiro....*' The term '*yasmai namaha*' means 'to whom the salutations are due'. This term is not used with reference to any other God of the Vedic age and it is used only to denote Rudra-Śiva.

As though to emphasise this Haradatta begins his work with 'yasmai namobhavati' (śloka-1)

The Āgamic literature. The *Āgamas* are divided into two categories, namely *Śaivāgamas* and *Vaiṣṇavāgamas*, again *Śaivāgamas* are classified under *Śaivāgamas*, *Rudrāgamas* and *Śāktāgamas*. The *Āgamas* coming under the *Śākta* group are called 'tantras' also. There is one *Kumāra tantra*, which is claimed by *Kaumāra* system of religion.

The *Śaivites*, whatever their sect or school may be, accept that the *Āgamas* are the words of Śiva. The *Śaiva Siddhānta* of Tamil Nadu brings in the difference between the *Vedas* and the *Āgamas*. It considers both of them to be the gift of Śiva to the mankind, with the difference that the *Vedas* are general in nature and *Āgamas* are specific.²⁰

The *Āgamas* are 28 in number.²¹ Generally they, speak of *caryā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. These are the *Upāyas*. The structure of the temple, worship of the temple, the services one can do in the temple, the *upacārās* to be observed in the temple, etc., are discussed in the first two sections. The rest are the advanced spiritual paths. Many of the *Āgamas* are not extant.

Purāṇas. Of the 18 *purāṇas* 10 are grouped as *Śaiva purāṇas*. They speak of the glory of Śiva. There are 18 *upapurāṇas*, a section of which speaks of Śiva. *Purāṇa* literature is too well-known to be detailed here.

Itihāsas. Vālmīki in his *Rāmāyaṇa* mentions clearly that Rāma worshipped Śiva at Rāmeśvaram before launching war on Rāvaṇa. He makes use of the term Mahādevaḥ to

indicate Śiva. And Ravaṇa was a very staunch devotee of Śiva.

The *Mahābhārata* has spoken in detail at many places the worship of Śiva and His greatness. Two episodes can be mentioned here. One is, Arjuna on the advice of Kṛṣṇa, commences his penance, meditating on Śiva in order to receive from Him the *Pāśupatāstra*. Another is : Kṛṣṇa declaring that sage Upamanyu had initiated him into Śiva-dikṣā, and he was a regular worshipper of Śiva. We also come to know from this book that Bhīma too was a great devotee of Śiva.

Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava* is an elaboration of a story of the *Skanda Purāṇa*. Though this is on the birth of Kumāra, the glory of Śiva is the main thing.

Kirātārjunīya of Bhāravi, is a story from *Mahābhārata*. Arjuna's penance for *Pāśupatāstra* is elaborated and the devotion of Arjuna and the compassion of Śiva are detailed.

The places where Śiva is enshrined are glorified and they have their own place in literature. *Kāśīkhaṇḍam*, though claimed to be a part of a *purāṇa*, speaks of the greatness of Kāśī, and calls it Ānandavana, Mahāśmaśāna, etc. The entire book is dedicated for the city of Banaras. Another of this kind is *Hālāsya mātmya*. It is of very late origin. It speaks of Madurai in the south, the Śiva rājadhāni, as the Tamil Śaivites call it. There is a possibility that it was a Sanskrit translation of a Tamil work of that nature.

Apart from these texts we do not have literature on Śaivism in epic or other form in Sanskrit. The philosophical

treatises are not considered as pieces of literature. We come across many portions both in *purāṇas* and the *itihāsās*. They are narrative and they hail the glory of Śiva with hundred or thousands of names. Later they were taken out and are used as *aṣṭottaras* and *sahaśranāmas*. Basing himself on this pattern, Puṣpadanta came out with his *Śiva Mahimna Stotra*. As its name suggests, it is but the glory of Śiva. I would like to state here that Puṣpadanta was a trendsetter. Hundreds of *stotras* were composed, following the *Śiva Mahimna Stotra*. Śaṅkara is the one author who has outnumbered all the other writers of *stotras*, *daṇḍakas*, *aṣṭakas* and *pañcakas*. I shall not deal with this type of literature here. but, I would like to add here the Śivādvaita school of Śrīkaṇṭha Śivācārya. He is also known as Nīlakaṇṭha Śivācārya. His commentary on *Brahma-sūtra* is called *Śrīkaṇṭha Bhāṣya* or *Śrīkara Bhāṣya*. Appayya Dīkṣita of Tamil Nadu (c. 17th cent. A.D.) provided a gloss on the above *Śrīkara Bhāṣya*. *Śivārkamaṇi dīpikā* is the name of the gloss. Appayya Dīkṣita has authored about 20 works. One of them deserves a mention here. It is *Unmatta Pañcāsat*. The story behind this is interesting. Dīkṣita was once disturbed as to whether he would remember the name of the Lord Śiva in the last moments of his life. He wanted to satisfy himself about this. He asked his disciples to record whatever he uttered while under drug. He took the thorn-apple, which would make one go mad, once it is eaten. Poetry flowed out of Dīkṣita all the time he was afflicted with the effects of the thorn-apple. It was this *Unmatta pañcāsat* which hails the glory of Śiva.

Other Indian Languages:

When we take up other Indian languages the approach is entirely different. For, all the languages have got Sanskrit literature translated into them wholly or partly. As we have discussed, under the Sanskrit literature all the works connected with Śiva or Śaivism, we need not take up their translations into other-languages into consideration. Though the Sanskrit literature, whether it be an epic or some other genre, was translated into other Indian languages, the *stotra* literature was not translated out accepted in original by all. *Stotra* literature continues to be the prayer books (*pārāyaṇa granthās*) for the people of these languages : except a few languages like Tamil and Kannada, all the other languages use Sanskrit for their prayer and worship. So, on this basis I would like to proceed discussing Śaivism as available in Indian literature.

We take up *pārāyaṇa granthas* as the basis for the classification of the religious and non-religious literature. In Hindi *Rāmacarita Mānas* and *Hanumān cālīsā* serve the purpose of the *Pārāyaṇa granthas*, but they do not serve our purpose, as we are discussing Śaivism alone.

The varkari and darkari movements in Maharashtra did pave way for religious literature in Marathi. It is Vaiṣṇavite in nature and so does not serve our purpose. So also in Gujarati religious literature sprang up following Vallabhācārya, Nimbārka and others. Again they do not come under our consideration.

3. ¹ Śaivism in a few languages:

I would like to repeat and stress here, that I treat the writings on Śiva and Śaivism as the basis for my consideration

and also independent writings in Indian languages on Śaivism including the *prārthana granthas*. I do not mention anything about other languages here. Now I take up Telugu, Kannada and Tamil and would like to treat their literature on the basis of the paradigm mentioned above.

Telugu literature: As far as I know, Telugu is the only language that has grouped the poets under Śaiva classification and their age is called *Śiva kavi yugamu*. The Śiva kavis are Nannecoda Deva, Śrī Pati Paṇḍita, Śivaleṅka Mañcana and Mallikārjuna Paṇḍitārādhyā (the last three are called Paṇḍita traya and are praised by Pāḷkuriki Sōmana to have established *Śiva bhakti sāmrajya*) and Pāḷkuriki Somanātha. Mallikārjuna Paṇḍitārādhyā in his *Śivatattvasāra* discusses the religion and philosophy of Śaivism. He mentions a few *Āgamas*, the mārḡas like bhakti and jñāna and the glory of Śiva. Pāḷkuriki Somanātha is of a special significance. His *Paṇḍitārādhyā caritra* and *Basava Purāṇamu* are original (in the sense not a translation of any Sanskrit work) and deal with the lives of Mallikārjuna Paṇḍita and Basavaṇṇa (of Karnataka) respectively. Another speciality with his writing is that the greatness of the devotees of Śiva (some of them being from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka) is extolled. Perhaps this is the first writing in Telugu to speak of the devotees of Śiva and glorify them. His other works numbering around 30 are books of prayer on Śiva, employing different metres and also introducing new genres. It will not be an exaggeration to say that his poems glorifying the Śrīśaila Mountain paved way for later poets to write on it, either as an independent work or as a part of a major work. *Nayana Ragada* is an independent work and the *Kalāpūrṇodayamu* by Piṅgali

Sūrana is an example for the second. *Nayana Ragada* as the name suggests, is a poem in *Ragada* metre speaking on the eyes. It is an autobiographical work. The story runs like this – the author Cakrapāṇi Raṅganātha had to cross the Śrīśaila Mountain on his way. He did not want to look at the mountain and so he closed his eyes. After having crossed the area, he opened his eyes but the sight was lost. In praise of the mountain which is considered truly as Śiva himself he composed this poem and regained his sight. Piṅgali Sūrana in his magnum opus *Kalāpūrṇodayamu* makes one of his characters praise the Śrīśaila mountain with devotion and express his longing for visiting it and finally fulfils his dream by worshipping Mallikārjuna there.

Śrīnātha's contribution to Telugu literature is great. His *Hara Vilāsamu* speaks of the stories connected with Śiva and the lives of a few devotees drawn from different sources. *Bhīmeśvara Purāṇamu* book of a *sthala purāṇa* type, speaks of the holy place Dākṣārāma; the story is woven as though sages Vyāsa and Agastya discuss between themselves the greatness of Bhīmeśvara and Dākṣārāma, equating this town with Vāraṇāsi. *Śivarātri Māhātmyamu* is a contribution to the religion of Śaivism as it speaks of the auspicious day connected with Śiva and the things one has to do on that day.

Dhurjati, an inimitable poet of 16th century has written on Kālahasti one of the three centres, which have lent their names to Āndhra. His *Kālahasti Māhātmyamu* is of *sthala purāṇa* type and speaks of the greatness and the importance of the holy place. The other book *Kālahastīśvara Śatakamu*

a book of *śataka* genre, is yet another expressing the greatness of Kālahasti.

Ārādhyā Śaivam is a sect unique to Āndhra Pradesh. In a way it is an admixture of the vedic religion and the concepts and reforms of Basavaṅṅa. 12 people have been named as the forerunners of this sect. *Paṇḍitārādhyā caritra* and *Udbhaṭārādhyā caritra* are the two works available depicting the lives of two Ārādhyā Śaivācāryas.

The influence of Basavaṅṅa on the people of Āndhra was deep and we are able to find 121 books written by the followers of Vīraśaivism, which may be collectively called the Vīra śaiva literature.

Kannada literature: In the 12th cent. Karṇāṭaka saw a new constellation coming up on the horizon. Allamā Prabhu, Basaveśvara and other *vacanakārās* formed this group of literary luminaries. *Vacana* as a form of expression attained its maturity with all the variety and wealth of which it was capable. Allamā Prabhu was the leader for the *śaraṅas* and presided over the institution known as Anubhava Maṅṭapa. His *vacanas* are full of descriptions and sayings and are known as riddles, for it is difficult to understand the peculiar symbolism of the poems. Basaveśvara was a great devotee of God and was called Bhakti Bhaṅḍāri. In his *vacanas* there is an intense agony of longing, a kind of self-condemnation. A few lines from his *vacanas* will help us understand this better. One of them says, 'the nectar of your name has filled my speech, your image has filled my sight, your thoughts have filled my mind and your renown has filled my ears. Lord Kūḍala Saṅgamadeva, I am but a bee in the lotus of

your feet'. This *vacana* is enriched by a pun on the word 'Tumbi'. Devotion had made him fearless. So he says 'whatever is to happen today let it happen now, at this moment. He says 'love is the basis of all the religions'; in another; is that a religion if that is without compassion'.

Akkamādevi is one of the lady poets of this sect. Just like other *Śaraṇas*, she also came out with *vacanas* full of her experience and devotion. She describes her spiritual marriage and her long penance to win God Śiva for her husband, 'O Lord! I did penance for numberless years to win you as my consort'. It is called *adhyātma śṛṅgāra* (spiritualized sentiment of love). With the boldness provided by her devotion she wants to stand up and say 'why be afraid of wild beasts, when you have made your home on the top of the mountain',

Cenna Basveśvara analyzed and expounded the philosophic content of Vīraśaiva faith. His *vacanas* are bright literary pieces. We can come across so many *vacanakāras* engaged in different professions to show that 'the work itself is God's abode', (*kāyakave kailāsa*). About 200 names of the *vacanakāras* have come down to us. *Vacana* is a sort of poetic prose and this form of poetry was employed only by the Vīraśaiva poets. Here I would like to mention that some of the *vacanas* are recited at the time of worship.

The dawn of the 13th cent. saw another luminary emerging. It was Harihara. He was a great poet of devotion to God Śiva and worshipped *vacanakāras*. *Pampā Śataka*, *Rakṣā Śataka*, *Muligeya Aṣṭaka* are, his devotional poems. *Girijā Kalyāṇa* and *Śivagaṇada Ragalegalu* are his literary

pieces. He made it a point 'to praise and adore God Śiva only day and night'. Thus he set up a new tradition in Kannada poetry and gave it a new orientation. *Śivagaṇada Ragalegalu* - deals with the lives of Śaiva saints. They are about 120 in number. Ragale is a metrical composition with liting couplets, unrestricted in their number. His work deals with the biographies of Śaiva saints of Tamil Nadu also. Like Pāḷkuriki Sōmanātha of Telugu, Harihara was the first poet in Kannada to sing the glory of the devotees of Śiva.

Raghavāṅka was the beloved disciple of Harihara. He employed *ṣaṭpadi* form and his works are *Sōmanātha Carite*, *Vīrēśa Carite*, *Siddharāma Caritra* and *Hariscandra Kāvya*. *Sōmanātha Carite* contains the story of Ādayya of Saurāṣṭra, who installed the image of Sōmanātha and performed miracles.

Following Harihara so many poets later on started writing on the lives of Śaiva saints. Among them Cāmarasa is one and his *Prabhulinga Līlā* is easily the most outstanding work. This work is the biography of Allamā Prabhu, who was the prince among Śaivite saints.

Bhīma Kavi translated *Basava Purāṇa* from Telugu. Virūpākṣa Paṇḍita wrote *Canna Basava Purāṇa*. Nijagaṇa Śivayogi and Sarvajña are the poets of merit. It can be said here that Vīra Śaivism has its origin in Karnāṭaka and developed its own literature. They were not translations from Sanskrit. The *vacanas* are used as prayers too.

Tamil literature: Now when we turn to Tamil language, we come across a great treasure house of devotional poetry on Śiva. Right from the Saṅgam classics we have references

to Śiva worship proving thus the antiquity of that religion in Tamil Nadu. Down the ages up to the seventh century we have the continuous recorded evidences of the existence of Śiva temples and regular worship in them.

The Bhakti Movement started in the 7th cent. And it caused a revival in the faith. The literature that flowed was collected and classified and was called the canonical literature. Saint Tirujñāna-sambandar, Saint Appar, Saint Sundaramūrti and Saint Māṇikkavācakar are the four masters of religion (*samayācāryās*). Their works formed the major part of the canonical literature. It was divided into 12 books and each one is called, numerically as the First book (*Mudal Tirumurai*), Second book (*Iraṇḍām Tirumurai*), etc. Writings of the first three *ācāryās* are collectively called *Tevāram*. They form the first seven *Tirumurais*. The *ācāryās* toured a lot and visited most of the temples and sang in praise of them. They stressed the path of devotion and that the devotees of Śiva are to be considered as Śiva Himself. The Eighth book is *Tiruvācakam* of the fourth *ācārya* (Māṇikkavācakar). It is full of divine experience, longing for the same and realizing the greatness of Śiva and simultaneously the smallness of the soul. G.U. Pope called it 'the Bible of Śaivites'.

9th and 11th *Tirumurais* are anthologies. All these speak of the glory of Śiva. *Tiru Mandiram* is the Tenth *Tirumurai*, which speaks of both devotion and spiritual life and ethics. *Periya Purāṇam* which is counted as the Twelfth *Tirumurai* is a hagiography dealing with the lives of Saints of Śaivism. It is the first complete work in Tamil on the lives of the Saints. This is the first work in the epic form extolling

Śaiva faith. Apart from the saints, nine groups of devotees are also mentioned. It will in no way be an exaggeration to say that *Periya Purāṇam* is the concretization of Śaivism, for the word pictures of the devotees painted in the *Periya Purāṇam* became the ideal of the Śaiva Siddhānta system. This Siddhānta system is explained in Siddhānta Śāstras. (14 in numbers).

Tirumuṛais are called *Stotra* literature and the philosophical treatises the *Śāstras*. The Śaivism in Tamil Nadu has made these *Stotra* works a part of worship, whether personal or public. *Pañca Purāṇam* is the name of this sanction thus made; that is five poems are to be recited at the time of Śiva pūjā. It should be one from *Tevāram*, one from *Tiruvācakam*, two from Ninth *Tirumurai* (one from *Tiruvicaippā* section and the other from *Tiruppallāṇḍu* section) and the last one from the *Periya Purāṇam*. Thus it has been ensured that the Tamil hymns can be and in fact are recited at the time of worship.

I have come across persons who have made it a regular practice of reciting each *Tirumurai* a month by that completing the recitation of the entire collection of twelve *Tirumuṛais* in the course of 12 months.

Stressing the unique position that the Tamil language has in the field of Śaivism I would like to conclude here.

To recapitulate what has been said. I would like to mention that Śiva worship has been historically traced. Mention of Śiva and devotion to Śiva in Indian literature in general and then in detail in some of the individual languages have been explained. Sanskrit as a classical language was

examined in the light of Śaivism. Keeping in view the influence of Sanskrit on all the Indian languages, Śaivism in other literature was assessed. Further the three Dravidian languages were treated for their special status in having literature on Śaivism, besides translations from Sanskrit. For this, the Pārāyaṇa granthas formed the paradigm.



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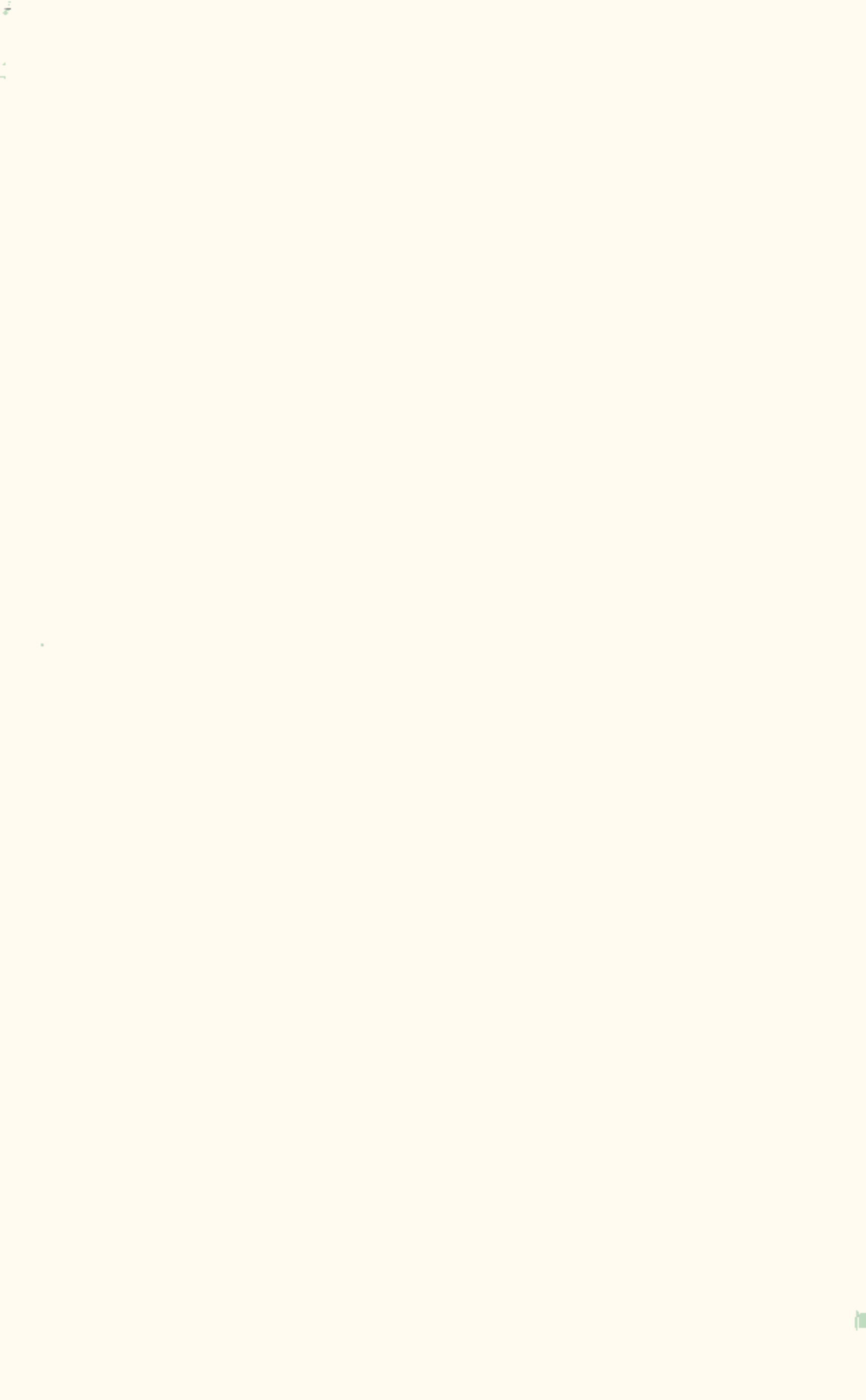
NOTES

1. Among the many revelations that Mohanjadaro and Harappa have had in store for us, none perhaps is more remarkable than this discovery that Śaivism has a history going back to the Chalcolithic Age or perhaps even further still, and that it thus takes place as the most ancient living faith in the world – Sir John Marshall, *Mohanjadaro and Indus Civilization*. Vol. I. preface, VII, 1911.
2. *Saurāṣṭre somanātham ca śrīśaile mallikārjunam, ujjayinyām mahākālam omkāre ca amaleśvaram, paralyām vaidyanātham ca ḍākinyām bhīmaśaṅkaram, setubandhe tu rāmeśam nāgeśam dārukāvane, vārāṇasyām tu viśveśam trayāmbakam gautamītaṭe, himālaye tu kedāram ghusmeśam ca śivālaye, etāni jyotirlingāni sāyamprātaḥ paṭhen-naraḥ, saptajanmakṛtaṁ pāpaṁ smaraṇena vinaśyati.*
3. Mahendra Varma Pallava (7th cent. A.D.) lampoons the Kāpālikas and the Pāśupatas in his *Mattavilāsa Prahasanam*.
4. He names the Mahāvratas, Śaivites, Pāśupatas and Kāpālikas as the people who roamed in the streets of Tiruvarur.
5. Thirumandiram, verses 1394-1411.
6. Dr M.Rajamanikkam, *Śaiva samaya valarcci*, p.83, 1948.
7. S.N. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. V., p.14., 1962.

8. Ibid, p.5.
9. Ibid, p.70.
10. Ibid, pp.69-70.
11. Ibid, P.66, "Śaṅkara's testimony shows that sort of Śaiva philosophy that he expounded was pretty well-known to Bādarāyaṇa, so that he included it as a rival system for refutation in the *Brahma-sūtra*. This shows that great antiquity of the Śaiva system of thought..."
12. Ibid., p.9.
13. Nilakantha Sastri, K.A., *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, p.64., Calcutta, 1956.
14. — *Development of Religion in South India*, p.18, YMCA, 1963.
15. "The fact is now clear to us that both *Nirukta* and *Bṛhad Devatā* testify to the existence of the tradition that the *Vedas* have an inner meaning, though unfortunately even in their times it was only a tradition and memory of a past, but not a working faith that was in currency among the learned classes." - Kapali Sastri, T.V., *Collected Works*, Vol. I., p.8, 1977.
16. 'We shall present here in general way the fact as emerging from the RKs themselves that the Gods of *Veda* are not mere names but are different powers, have different functions, distinctive signs that mark them out featuring their personalities, yet not absolutely separate from but closely allied to one another, not apart from the sole supreme Truth, the Godhead, but

- definite manifestations of That indefinable - *ibid*, p.64.
17. There is another version of *Śatarudrīya* in the *Atharva Veda*.
18. Whitney, *Atharva Veda*, 278-9 as quoted by C.V. Narayana Iyer in his *Origin and History of Śaivism in South India*, p.16., 1936.
19. “*Matvāṁ rudra cukradhāma namobhirma duṣṭuni vṛṣabha saḥuni unno vīra arpaya bheṣajebhirbhiṣaktam tva bhiṣajāṁ sṛṇomi*”.
20. Tirumūlar, *Tirumandiram*, 2358. Also “*āraṇa nūl podu śaivam arum ciṛappu nūlām*” “*Sivajñāna Siddhiyār (Supakkam)*, verse 267.
21. The 28 *Āgamas* are:
- (1) *Kāmikam* (2) *Yogajam* (3) *Acintyam* (4) *Kāraṇam* (5) *Tvajitam* (6) *Dīptam* (7) *Sūkṣmam* (8) *Sahajam* (9) *Amśumat* (10) *Suprabhedam* (11) *Vijayam* (12) *Niśvāsam* (13) *Svāyambhuvam* (14) *Athanalām* (15) *Vīram* (16) *Rauravam* (17) *Makuṭam* (18) *Vimalam* (19) *Candrajñānam* (20) *Bimbam* (21) *Prodgītam* (22) *Lalitam* (23) *Siddha* (24) *Santana* (25) *Sarvoktam* (26) *Pārameśvaram* (27) *Kiraṇam* (28) *Vātulam*.





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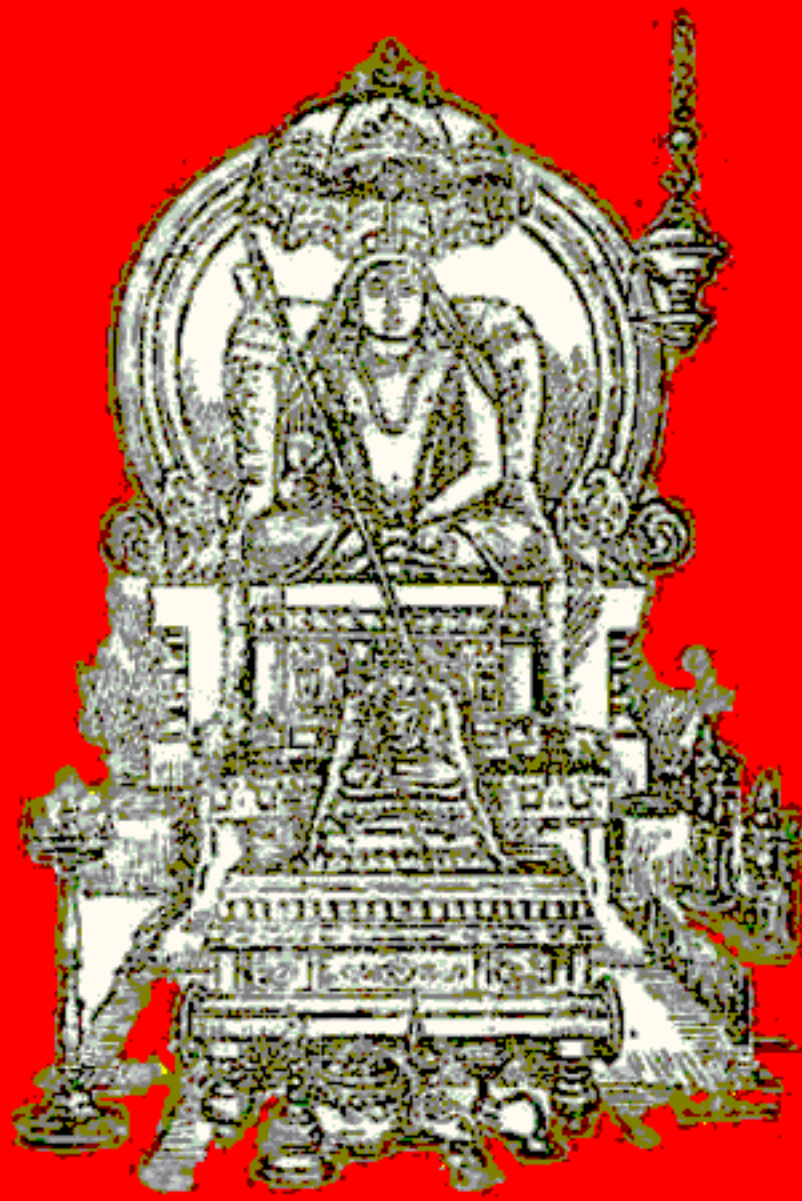
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संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्भूतदाहव्यथा-
 खिन्नानां जलकाङ्क्षया मरुभुवि भ्रान्त्या परिभ्राम्यताम् ।
 अत्यासन्नसुधाम्बुधिं सुखकरं ब्रह्माद्वयं दर्शय-
 न्त्येषा शाङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी ॥

*saṁsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhūṭadāhavyathā-
 khinnānām jalakāṅksayā marubhuvi bhrāntyā paribhrāmyatām
 atyāsannasudhāmbudhiṁ sukhakaram brahmādvayam darśaya-
 ntyeṣā śāṅkara-bhārati vijayate nirvāṇa-sandāyini.*

To those who are afflicted, in the way of the world, by the burning pain given rise to by the scorching sun-shafts of misery, and who through delusion wander about in the desert (of worldliness) seeking water — showing the felicitous ocean of nectar, which is very near, the non-dual Brahman, this—The Voice of Śaṅkara—is victorious, leading, as it does, to liberation.