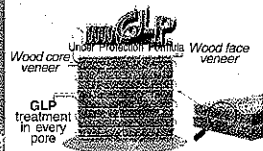


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as they either attended to, or shut off external stimuli. In contrast BK meditators showed increased arousal while attending to and ignoring external stimuli. This suggests that in BK meditation subjects cannot (with ease) involve in external stimuli.

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Prof A Satyanarayana Shastry memorial Vedānta Goṣṭhi, The Concept of Parivrājaka in Kahola Praśna of Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣat

M. Jayaraman - Research Scholar, University of Madras, Chennai.

Our culture, society and country have remained intact for centuries. A major factor for this is the tradition of Parivrājakas. The term Parivrājaka generally denotes a Sannyāsī.

"Paritaḥ varajati it parivrājakaḥ."

One who keeps wandering is a parivrājaka. In his wanderings a Sannyāsī sees the sufferings and misery of worldly life and makes his resolve strong to get liberated.

The Tradition of Parivrājakas

According to the tradition, the first Parivrājaks were the four sons of Lord Brahmā viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata. From then on there appeared very many great Parivrājakas like Śaṅkarācārya, Ramanujācārya, Madhvācārya et al. In recent times we had Swami Vivekānanda, Yogānanda and many more. When we see the lives of these great Parivrājakas or Sannyāsīs we find epitomised the idea of

आत्मनो मोक्षार्थं जगद्धिताय च ।

"Ātmano Mokṣārtham Jagddhitāya ca".

Types of Parivrājakas or Sannyāsīs

Kānvāyana Smṛti classifies Sannyāsīs into four types. They are

1. Kutichaka - He stays near his home and takes bhikṣā from his son while following the Sannyāsa dharma.
2. Bahudaka - He bears all the insignia of a Sannyāsī (Kamaṇḍalu,

saffron robe, bhikṣā pātram etc.). He constantly tours all spots of pilgrimage.

3. Hamsa - He also has all the insignia of a Sannyāsī. He follows Vratas like Kṛcchra cāndrāyaṇa etc.

4. Paramahamsa - He does nothing except rigorous Ātmasādhanā. It is about this Paramahamsa Sannyāsī that we have a detailed description in the Kahola praśna of Brhadārṇyaka.

The Kahola Brāhmaṇa (the Chapter of Kahola)

Kahola, one of the questioners, does not put any new question to Yājñavalkya ṛṣi. He merely repeats the question put forth by Uśasta Cākrayāṇa - (the previous questioner). The question is:

"Yadeva sākṣād aparokṣād brahma ya ātmā sarvantaraḥ tam me vyācakṣva"

Explain to me the Brahman that is directly and immediately perceived the Self that is within all.

As an answer to the earlier question Yājñavalkya explained the separateness of ātman from body, senses and the mind.

Through the present question Yājñavalkya intends to explain that the ātman is supra-mundane i.e, ātman is above the worldly attributes, the knowledge of which leads to Sannyāsa (renunciation).

We can divide the answer of Yājñavalkya into four parts

1. The nature of the ātman
2. Means to attain that ātman
3. Behaviour of an ātmajñānī.

The Nature of the ātman

Yājñavalkya says :

"Yo Aśanāya pipāse śokam moham jarām mṛtyum atyeti"

This is the ātman who is beyond hunger, thirst, misery, delusion, ageing and all worldly characteristics. Knowing this ātman,

Yājñavalkya continues, "Our forefathers, the brāhmaṇās, gave up the desire for sons, the desire for wealth and the desire for the worlds and led the life of mendicants". He further adds that all these desires are not different from each other. This is because all of them are nothing but the offshoots of delusion. So a person who has realized the nature of the ātman naturally shuns all these desires.

Means to attain ātman

Yājñavalkya explains to Kahola the steps to attain ātmajñāna as follows :

1. Pāṇḍityam
 2. Bālyam
 3. Maunam
- These three are nothing but śravaṇam, mananam and nididhyāsanam.

Pāṇḍityam is learning the nature of the ātman from an ācārya while doing service to him.

Bālyam is mananam. Bālyam is not childishness. It is not bālyasya bhāvaḥ (the nature of a child). But it is ^{bālyasya} bālyasya bhāvaḥ (the feeling of strength). One attains this strength by doing

"Yuktito anātmadrṣṭi tiraskāraḥ"

It means logically refuting the attributes perceived erroneously in the ātman which do not belong to it. At this stage, the person is called a muni, because he is in mananam.

Maunam is the third step. It is nididhyāsanam.

"Ahamātmā param brahma na mattoanyadrṣṭi kiñcana"

After refuting erroneously perceived attributes in the ātman, continuous contemplation of the supreme being as one's own Self is maunam. By following this sādhanā a Muni becomes a Brāhmaṇa. Who is a brāhmaṇa? And what is his brāhmaṇya or brahmaṇatva.

Mahāvākyaarthāvagati is brahmaṇya. Realizing the fact that I am not separate from the supreme being is brāhmaṇya.

Behaviour of a realized soul in this world

Kahola puts a question of his own at last saying:

"Sa brāhmaṇaḥ kena syāt?"

How does the knower of Brahman behave?

"Tena syāt yena Idṛṣa eva"

Howsoever he may behave, he is such indeed.

It means that external actions of a Brahmajñāni are immaterial. Whatever be his behaviour he still will be a Brahmajñāni.

In fine, Yājñavalkya convincingly and comprehensively deals with the concept of Parivrājaka through the instrumentality of the questioner, Kahola.

The writer can be contacted at mjayaraman@fastmail.fm

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