YOGA EDUCATION

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HARITA—A SAMKYA-TEACHER

Harita, a Samkhya teacher, is credited with very interesting views on akhinsā, klešas like kāma, krodha etc., dhāraṇā, sannyāsa etc.

In the list of the Sāṁkhya teachers as given in the Yuktidipikā and the Māthara vṛtti on Śaṅk. Kā. 71 we find the name of Harita. He is not mentioned in any other work on Sāṁkhya-yoga.

Only a very few references to the Sāṁkhya-yogin Harita are found in the Īśāśa-Puruṣa literature. The form Harita with a short i is sometimes found in this literature. Ancient works speak of two more Haritas—one was the author of a recension of the Yajurveda, and the other was the author of a treatise on Ayurveda. Whether the Sāṁkhya teacher Harita is or is not identical with any one of these Haritas is difficult to ascertain. Though it is not impossible to compose a treatise on Ayurveda or a Sākhā of a Veda by a Sāṁkhya teacher, yet we find no evidence to establish the identity.

There was a Dharmasūtra by one Harita. Some of its statements have been quoted by later writers. We are fortunate that the MS. of this work is in existence (vide History of Dharmasāstra Vol. I, Sec. 11). Most probably this Harita is the same as the Sāṁkhya teacher Harita. There is no logical fault if we hold that like the Sāṁkhya teacher Devala who composed a Dharmasūtra (as stated by Śaṅkaraçārya; vide his bhāṣya on Brahmasūtra 1.4.28) the Sāṁkhya teacher Harita also composed a work of similar kind.

Many statements of this Dharmasūtra are found to be quoted in some Nibandha works (e.g. Kṛtyakalpataru) and commentaries (e.g. Aparārka on the Yājñavalkyasmṛti). Some of his views on sannyāsa, vānapraśtha are to be found in the Mokṣakāṇḍa of Kṛtyakalpataru (p. 22, 42, 52, 53, 81, 82, 174). He defines akhinsā as सवर्णस्मृतः (वद्यान्त:); (Cp. Vyāsabhadṛṣṭya 2.30: अशित्व सवर्णः सवर्णधृतं लम्बायति); He says that the essence of kāma is ichchā and it springs from saṁkalpa. It is of the nature of fire and asaṁkalpa is the means of restricting it. According to him tama is predominant in krodha (wrath) which may be checked through kṣamā (forbearance). Dhāraṇā is defined as the fixation of the mind on the heart, etc. which is not disturbed by any undesired thought.

In the Śānti-parvan (Ch. 277) Harita’s views on sannyāsa have been stated by Bhūṣma. A sannyāsin is required to abstain from injury from all beings; not to behave with unfriendliness; to disregard approbrious speeches; to utter agreeable speeches even to his enemies; to abstain from returning an injury; to content himself with only as much as is barely necessary for keeping body and soul; not to be elated when success is achieved; not to earn either merit or demerit by means of his acts; to control the impulse of words, mind, wrath, envy, hunger and lust; to behave with neutrality with all creatures and to regard praise and blame as equal. All these means are collectively called mokṣayāna by Harita (277.21).

Harita speaks of two kinds of women, namely brahmavādāni (who are entitled to put on sacred thread, to study the Vedas and to keep the Vedic fire and sadyovadā (married women) (view quoted in Śaṅcitandrīkā I, p. 24).

A versified form of the views of Harita (i.e. of Harita’s Dharmasūtra) is found in the Narasimhapuruṣa (57.10.61.16) in the interlocution of Harita and the sages (57.10). These chapters deal with the duties of the varṇas and the āśramas. These chapters have a few verses on prāṇāyāma, japa and tapas which fall under the Yogāgas, Ch. 61 deals exclusively with Yoga. Harita seems to be an advocate of the doctrine of jñāna-karma-samuccaya. He holds that the linga-deha will continue to exist till the emancipation is attained. He says that the vital air, the organs and the mind are to be put under control by means of prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra and dhāraṇā respectively. The self-effulgent and most subtle ātman should be meditated upon always. The deity who is present in the hearts of all is to be contemplated as ‘I am he’.

Many of the verses in these chapters are found in the printed Hārtasamhitā (Vangavāti ed.) and in the Laghu-
hāritisṛti edited by Jivānanda Vidyāsāgara. It appears that these works are directly or indirectly based on the Dharmaśāstra of Hārīta. Hārīta's work was deemed so useful that many recensions of the original work were composed in different times, namely Laghuḥārīta, Vṛddhahārīta, Bhadhahārīta and Svalpahārīta.

RAM SHANKER BHATTACHARYA

WEEKLY YOGA HEALTH CAMPS

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THE SIVA SAKTI LEGEND

Summary of a recently published work by a highly qualified medical man who believes that one just needs the eyes to see the far reaching hold that “Siva Sakti” culture has on us in this country.

Siva Sakti are both masters of Yoga and Tantra. Events come and go. Sorrows and pleasures come and go. Sakti is Nature and both are interdependent.

Siva Sakti are Vedic gods. Siva without Sakti is dead. Sakti helps Siva in His duties.

In a symbolic reference to the marriage of Siva and Sakti, we are told of the need to control the mind as depicted in the events that led to the marriage. A strong and steady mind will concentrate in any situation, takes right decision, sheds unnecessary fear. Such a mind is good for meditation.

Help is sought in disciplining the mind through various sources—prāṇāyāma, prayer, mantras etc. However certain aids are available in nature itself.

It is thus that we see connections between meditation and piṭhas. In Narmada we have such piṭhas for meditation. For example it is said Narmada is born from Siva’s blue throat after drinking of ‘Halā Halā’ poison. There are so many association with Siva here. In the river bed, small pebbles of various colours are found and considered sacred. In Hindi, there is a saying, “Narmadā kaṅkara, Siva Saṅkara”. It is said Adiṣṭhakara, obtained ‘siddhi’ in early age, meditating in a cave near the river banks. In praise of the sacred river, a poet composed a song, known as, ‘Narmadā strotram Ganga Mātā’. What is true of Narmadā is true of other rivers. It is true of large gatherings, festivals, sacred places, etc.

Rishis devised ways to hold various parts of India together, observing cultural traditional religious ceremonies.

It is said in Purāṇa, after churning the sea, Indra got Airāvat elephant, Viṣṇu got Lakṣmi, for the welfare of humanity, Siva had to drink ‘Halā Halā’ the poison, and for