YOGA EDUCATION

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all to the individual to select any preliminary conditioning process he may himself desire according to his own choice. What is essential however is that it should so completely engage his citta that the same becomes steady and remains so.

**Evolving Consciousness**

परमाण्यपरमहत्वालोक्य वसीकारः ।

Paramāṇyam-paramahattvānto Siya vaśīkārah

40. (Then) his (the yogī’s) area (of consciousness) encompasses the minutest atom upto infinity.

What follows as a result of such habitual steadiness of the citta is that the student acquires the special capacity of identifying himself easily with even the minutest atom or with any object upto infinity.

For the purpose of trance-consciousness, steadiness has to be gained first. The would-be-yogin can do this with the aid of various practices described above, only then can the consciousness of the yogin encompass everything from the subtlest to the largest. Here only the normal state of citta is raised to an altered but higher level of habitual steadiness on any given object which sequentially becomes a source of power to catalyze him upward towards the highest state of trance-consciousness (Samādhi). It must however be remembered that these alternatives for Yoga practice cited above are merely means to upgrade levels and quality of consciousness and not the end which is still to follow sequentially in due course.

However, such casual and simple phenomena occurring during the progress in the study of Yoga is often wrongly glorified as occult/mystic, psychic, mystic, spiritual power or miracle. Classic Yoga has disapproved such exhibition and claim of yogic power.

**Pancasikha-a Samkhya-Yogin**

This five locked sannyāsi reached great heights in ancient India, wrote a classical work quoted and requested by Vyāsa and others, and converted great riders to his approach to life.

**Tradition** is unanimous in holding that Pañcāśikha was taught in Sāmkhya by Āsurī, the only disciple of Kapila. Pañcāśikha has been held in high esteem by the authors of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas, vide Sānti-p. 218. 7-9 where he is described as ‘a person possessing a correct knowledge about sannyāsa (renunciation),’ ‘one transcending all pairs of opposites’ ‘the foremost of sages,’ ‘one who has acquired eternal felicity’. His renown may be ascertained from the assertion that he was known by the name of Kapila’ (as stated here). The Bhāgavata regards him as one of the highly perfected persons (6. 17. 14).

It appears that the name Pañcāśikha is based on some characteristic of the teacher. It may be inferred that since the teacher possessed five locks of hair (Śīkha) he was named Pañcāśikha; vide the Brahmavaivarta-purāṇa 1.22.16. This surmise cannot be taken as baseless, for the Baudhāyana Grhyasūtra is found to enjoin keeping one, three or five locks of hair on the head in accordance with the custom of one’s own family (2.4). It is remarkable to note that the word Cūlika (meaning one having cula, hair) was used at the time of referring to Pañcāśikha in the poem Haravaijaya (6.18) by Rājānaka Ratnākara (Vide the comm. by Alaka).

It is interesting to note that the Santiparvan describes this sage by using such epithets as contain the word pātica (five), namely pāṭiṣṭha (knower of five), pāṭiṣṭhiti (doer of five) pāṭicārthā (having five characteristics) (218.12). The import of these words are not quite clear and the explanations given by the commentator Nilakaṇṭha seem to be far-fetched. It is quite likely that on account of possessing certain five characteristics (not known distinctly to us) the sage was called Pañcāśikha. The epithet kavi has also been given to this sage
The names of the parents of Pañcaśīka have not been stated in any of the Puraṇic works. We learn from the Mahābhārata that a Brahmin lady Kapila by name looked after him as a nurse, i.e., she accepted the Child Pañcaśīka as her son who, as expressly stated in the epic, used to suck her breast (Śānti-p. 218. 15-16; 28.6). The epithet cirajīvan used in 218.10 shows that the sage had a long span of life.

Tradition holds that it was Pañcaśīka who composed a treatise called Śaṭṭitantra on the basis of the doctrines originally propounded by the sage Kapila (vide Sāṅkhya-kārikā 70 with the commentaries). It appears that Pañcaśīka gave a formal shape to the views of Kapila and arranged all the categories (discussed by his teacher) into sixty divisions. This is why the work of Pañcaśīka came to be regarded as Śaṭṭitantra though the original teachings of Kapila were called by the name Tantra (vide Pañcaśīka’s statement quoted in the Vyāsabhāṣya 1.25). That there was an actual treatise called Śaṭṭitantra may be proved even from the works on the non-Sāmkhya systems (vide the Uttarādhyayana-sūtra and the Nandisūtra of the Jainas).

It is a pity that this highly authoritative treatise has been lost in toto. Only a few of its statements are found quoted in the Vyāsabhāṣya on the Yogasūtra (1.3; 1.25; 1.36; 2.6; 2.13; 2.15; 2.17; 2.20; 2.22; 2.52; 3.41;) and in other works. Later commentators clearly attributed these statements to Pañcaśīka. Sāṅkhya-sūtra 5.32 shows his view on the nature of invariable concomitance (vyāpti).

The Mahābhārata represents his views in a few places (Śānti-p. 218-219; 319. 4-15). The verses representing the views of Pañcaśīka seem to be directly or indirectly based on the original teachings of this sage. Some of these verses of the Śānti-parvan are found to bear close resemblance with the aphoristic sayings of this sage. The Mahābhārata verses contain discussion on sorrow, delusion, actions and their fruits, existence after death and the life. The wisdom of this sage is known by the term ‘lokottara jāna’ as has been expressly stated by the king Janaka who was instructed in Sāmkhya by the sage (Śānti-p. 320.38). His view on śreyas is found in Agnipurāṇa 382.4.

Pañcaśīka is said to have a large number of disciples. The Yuktidipikā, a commentary on the Śaṅk, Kā (70) informs us that the king Janaka, the sage Vasistha and others were taught by Pañcaśīka. The Śānti-p. speaks of Janadeva Janaka (a king of Mithilā) as a disciple of this sage. It is further stated that the king embraced the path of renunciation as a result of hearing mokṣadharma from this sage (219.51). The king was so influenced that he disregarded the views of his one hundred teachers and followed the path taught by Pañcaśīka.

The epithet bhikṣu (‘beggar’ i.e. a sannyāsin who is entitled to beg alms with a view to maintaining the body) has been used by the author of the Mahābhārata (Śānti-p. 319.3; 320. 24) and it is clearly stated that the sage was a follower of the path of sannyāsa (Śānti-p. 218.7). Śānti-p. 218.6 shows that he was a wandering mendicant. It appears that the sage embraced the path of sannyāsa without entering into the stage of a householder. As he is said to be the ‘tenth kumāra’ (Yuktidipikā on Śaṅk, Kā,) it may be rightly inferred that he was a perpetual celebate (naiṣṭhika brahma-cārin) (the word kumāra meaning an unmarried person). The Sambapuruṣā informs us that the sage entered the orb of the sun (sūryamaṇḍala) with the help of Yoga (2.17).

R. S. BHATTACHARYA

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