

## CHAPTER XV

### GĪTĀS, MĀHĀTMYAS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

The borderline between 'hymns', 'eulogies proper', works of instruction and other 'genres' of literature is often hard to define. Poems such as the Bhagavadgītā, though primarily designed to teach religious or philosophical doctrines, often have at the same time the character of devotional hymns. And numerous hymns of praise, known as *stotra* or *stava* which all Indian religions have produced in honour of their deities, teachers or places of worship, often take a didactic or moralistic turn.

Special attention may be drawn to a number of works, half lyric or hymnic, half religious-didactic, which, modelled upon the extremely popular Bhagavadgītā (Mbh. 6, a. 23–40), a sort of Hindu gospel admired not only by Viṣṇuites, came to constitute a genre of literature by itself, viz. the so-called *gītās*<sup>1</sup> (the term may, at least originally, have been applied to texts which were not recited in the ordinary way but more or less 'chanted').<sup>2</sup> The redactors of the Great Epic themselves already wanted to recapitulate, continue, supplement, or rather imitate the poem contained in book VI and produced the Anugītā (Mbh. 14, 16–51) which, while dealing with man's salvation, preaches *jñāna* and a complete abstinence from mundane interests that in places impresses us as verging on *bhakti*. That the Bhagavadgītā was the prototype and served the authors of the later *gītās*—a long neglected chapter of Sanskrit literature—as an example is beyond doubt: titles of chapters and even final passages of the

<sup>1</sup> Publication of texts: The Gītāsamgraha or a collection of the Gītās, published by P. N. PATVARDHAN, Poona 1915. For surveys, observations etc. U. CH. BHATTACHARJEE, Gītā literature and its relation with Brahmavidyā, IHQ 2 (1926), p. 537; 761; A. M. ESNOUL, in BEFEO 48, p. 171; K. BHATTACHARYA, in JA 255, p. 211; J. P. K. SUKUL, De Bhagavadgītā, Thesis Utrecht 1958, p. 93; P. AIYAR, Imitations of the Bhagavadgītā, in C. H. I. II, <sup>2</sup>Calcutta 1962, p. 204; R. HAUSCHILD, Die Aṣṭāvakra-Gītā, Abh. d. sächsischen Akad. d. Wiss., 58, 2, Berlin 1967, p. 5. See also H. VON GLASENAPP, Über vier purānische Nachbildungen der Bhagavadgītā, in Festgabe R. v. Garbe, Erlangen 1927, p. 139; E. R. MOROZZI, An introduction to the Śivagītā, JOR 34–35 (1973), p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. BHATTACHARJEE, op. cit., p. 538. In order to avoid misunderstanding it should be recalled that the term *gītā* was already in the Mahābhārata also associated with the names of legendary teachers who give counsels, for instance, on *dharma* and good government. Thus Mbh. 12, 91f. the Utathya-Gītā and 12, 93ff. the Vāmadeva-Gītā. For a list and a discussion see BHATTACHARJEE, op. cit., p. 537ff. These *gītās* constitute a group by themselves; most of them are short and deal with brief questions without being interested in the worship of a particular deity.

same are often identical with those of the *Bhagavadgītā*;<sup>3</sup> there are literal reminiscences especially of the culminating point of the famous poem, the chapters X and XI;<sup>4</sup> moreover, several purāṇic passages are in connexion with inserted *gītās* quite explicit on their relation with the *Bhagavadgītā*.<sup>5</sup>

Nor do purpose and outward form of these "songs" belie their origin. They aim at conveying a more or less esoteric lore woven into the narrative background of a discourse between a divine preceptor and a prominent devotee who, being in a serious predicament, seeks help and intervention. As is usual in *purāṇas*, *āgamas* etc. the revelation of the doctrines is said to have taken place in successive stages. Teaching their hearers to find the way to final deliverance they emphasize the personal aspect of the Highest and contain, generally speaking, injunctions to love and serve God, to adore and repeat his name. In doing so most of them give allegiance to one of the well-known Hindu deities, who is often introduced as the teacher of their doctrine, and preach the worship of that particular god or goddess. Since there is a close and clear relation of this literature with the doctrine of the oneness of everything in Brahman as the supreme principle (*brahmavidyā*) of the *upaniṣads*, the authors set themselves to the task to show that the deity of their choice is identical with Brahman. In stating and arguing their case they adopt in the main the same procedure as the *upaniṣads* by which they were influenced and teachings of which they often quote<sup>6</sup> or paraphrase: all the gods are said to be absorbed in Brahman; the whole universe has sprung from Brahman which is the All; certain *yoga* practices can enable the adept to attain Brahman, that is their supreme deity, the *gītās* arguing that this practice has to consist mainly in the worship of their particular god upon which they express themselves at greater length than the author of the *Gītā* par excellence. In their argumentation they are more or less inclined to follow the *Bhagavadgītā*—although some of them, e.g. the *Devī-Gītā*, contain hardly any reminiscences of this prototype—and to change the teachings and expressions of their example in accordance with the cult and doctrines of their particular religion. They approve the path of *bhakti*, but often prefer the method of *jñāna* and tend to embrace various religious and philosophical doctrines of the post-epic period, deriving their cosmology

<sup>3</sup> On the colophons which like those of the *Bhagavadgītā* contain the term *upaniṣad* see V. RAGHAVAN, in JOR 12 (1940), p. 86, esp. p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> Compare *Ganeśa-Gītā* 4, 1ff.: *BhG.* 5, 1ff.; ch. 8; *Śiva-Gītā*, ch. 7: *BhG.* ch. 11; *ĪśvaraG.* 11, 75ff.: *BhG.* ch. 12; *Devī-Gītā* 8, 22f. is almost identical with *BhG.* 4, 7 etc. Even the mainly Viṣṇuite *avatāra* doctrine is borrowed; cf. e.g. *Devī-Gītā* 8, 22f.: *BhG.* 4, 7.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *Agni-Purāṇa*, ch. 381 (*Yama-Gītā*) and 380 (the substance of the *Bhagavadgītā*): see RAJENDRALĀLA MITRA, *Agni-Purāṇa*, Calcutta 1873-1879, III, p. XXXV.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. e.g. *Śiva-Gītā* 6, 54ff.: *KaivalyaU.* 19ff.; *Devī-Gītā* 3, 32ff.: *KaṭhaU.* 2, 18ff.; 3, 3f.; *Devī-Gītā* ch. 5: *MuṇḍakaU.* 2, ch. 2; see BHATTACHARJEE, op. cit., p. 765.

from the Sāṃkhya and the basis of their practical injunctions—observances, purifications, etc.—from Patañjali's Yoga.

Part of these writings are contained in *purāṇas*. Being similar in form and content the most important of them are the following: Īśvara-Gītā in the Kūrma-Purāṇa, Yama-Gītā in the Agni-Purāṇa; Gaṇeśa-Gītā in the Gaṇeśa-Purāṇa;<sup>7</sup> Śīva-Gītā in the Padma-Purāṇa. Besides, the Sūta-Gītā and Brahma-Gītā belong to the Sūta-Saṃhitā of the Skanda-Purāṇa,<sup>8</sup> the Rāma-Gītā to the Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa.

The main difference between the popular Īśvara-Gītā (KūrmaP., Uttara-vibhāga, ch. 1-11)<sup>9</sup> and its model, of which it is strongly reminiscent,<sup>10</sup> consists in its Śivaite character: it is the Īśvara, Lord Śīva, who explains his path of salvation to Sanatkumāra and eleven other ascetics in the hermitage at Badarikā. Being in the main concerned with mysticism and metaphysics its author combines Śivaite theism, *yoga* (indispensable for those who aspire to union with Śīva), *bhakti* (in order to obtain Śīva's help and grace in performing *yoga*), upaniṣadic doctrines, popular Sāṃkhya philosophy and a number of borrowings from the Bhagavadgītā. Yet, 'knowledge' rather than *bhakti* is the main path to final emancipation.

The Gaṇeśa-Gītā (GaṇeśaP., Uttarakhaṇḍa, ch. 138-148)<sup>11</sup> is another interesting example of how Hinduism was modified and enriched by various currents of thought. In accordance with its title this work regards Gaṇeśa as the supreme deity and all-pervading world-soul or Brahman, and his worship as the way to salvation. As appears from chapter VII this Gaṇeśa worship adopts a method of Tantric *yoga*. Higher knowledge (*jñāna*), preceded by disinterested devotional performance of sacrificial rites, is however an indispensable means of becoming free from worldly desires and finding Brahman. Special emphasis is also laid upon compassion (*karuṇā*), not only on the part of Gaṇeśa but also on that of those who have realized the truth on earth (1, 13; 17).

In the Śīva-Gītā<sup>12</sup>—sixteen chapters of the Uparibhāga of the Padma-Purāṇa—Rāma, having lost Sītā, is in a despondent state; on the advice of Agastya he approaches Śīva who gives him the Pāśupata weapon by which he can defeat Rāvaṇa. There is an epiphany in imitation of Bhagavadgītā ch.

<sup>7</sup> See also SUKUL, op. cit., p. 95.

<sup>8</sup> SūtaS., Yajñavaibhavaḥkhanda, ch. 13-20; and 1-12; see also Yogavāsiṣṭha, Nirv. 2, ch. 173-181.

<sup>9</sup> Text and translation: P. E. DUMONT, L'Īśvaragītā, Baltimore-Paris 1933; English translation by M. L. KANNOO MAL, Lahore 1924.

<sup>10</sup> At 11, 131 it even refers to the Bhagavadgītā. Cf. also a. 7: BhG. 10, 20ff.

<sup>11</sup> This *gītā* has also been edited separately (with the commentary of Nilakaṇṭha): H. N. APTE, Poona 1906; together with the Śīva- and Devi-Gītās in Lakṣmīdās Govardhandās' Brhatstotrasaritsāgara, Bombay 1892; English translation with an introduction and a condensed rendering of the commentary: K. YOROI, Gaṇeśa-gītā, Thesis Utrecht 1968. Cf. also v. GLASENAPP, op. cit., p. 140.

<sup>12</sup> See MOROZZI, op. cit.; a small part of this text was translated into Italian by M. VALLAURI, in La Śīvagītā, Torino (Turin) Acad. 1942.

XI and, being “a scripture of *yoga* and an *upaniṣad* (esoteric teaching)” the text expounds, in the form of a dialogue between Śiva and Rāma, the “knowledge of Brahman” (colophon). Although this work (806 stanzas) is not very large it is of varied contents, comprising, inter alia, embryology, the theory of the elements, bodies and organs, the soul, death and rebirth, Śiva worship, cult and theology.

Date and authorship of the Rāma-Gītā, which constitutes the portion 7, 5, 1–62 of the Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa,<sup>13</sup> are doubtful. The text of this version of the Rāmāyaṇa theme enjoys great prestige and is in daily use as prayer-book by many Rāma worshippers, among whom Rāmakṛṣṇa (1836–1886) and his followers. The recitation of the whole work as well as the Gītā being regarded as extremely salutary, devout Vaiṣṇavas have it recited on Rāma’s birthday. It is possible that the Rāma-Gītā, which has often been handed down and commented upon separately, is older than the whole work (second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century?) and has been included afterwards. As to its contents it may be noticed that this Gītā is very much opposed to the *samuccaya* (“aggregation”) doctrine, according to which the combination of ritual or religious activity and higher knowledge leads to final emancipation; it defends the thesis that the former is only an indispensable means of preparative purification, no way to the highest goal, because it contributes to the maintenance of corporeal existence.

Bhāgavata-Purāṇa 3, 22–33 are known as Kāpileya-Upākhyāna or Kapila-Gītā. These chapters are because of their lofty contents held in high esteem in Viṣṇuite circles.<sup>14</sup> The section 11, 13, 18–42 of the same work is called Haṃsa-Itihāsa or Haṃsa-Gītā; it deals with the three constituent elements of everything material (*guṇa*) which belong (also) to man’s mind, not to his ‘soul’ (*ātman*). Kṛṣṇa relates to Uddhava how he imparted, in the form of a goose (*haṃsa*), the contents of this text to the *ṛṣis*.

The Devī-Gītā, Devībhāgavata-Purāṇa 7, 31–40, revealed by the goddess herself, is a Śāktist rather than a Viṣṇuite work, although the Viṣṇuites do not repudiate its authority. It is no doubt comparatively late because its philosophy—e.g. the argumentation in favour of the non-existence of the world—and other sections presuppose knowledge of the fully developed Vedānta doctrines and its ritual passages an unmistakable influence of advanced Tantrist practices.

The Yama-Gītā, emphasizing the path of *bhakti*, occurs even in three *purāṇas*.<sup>15</sup> Yama, the lord of the deceased, is said to admit that he has no power over those who take refuge with Viṣṇu.

<sup>13</sup> Published by GAṆAPAT KṚṢṆAJI, Bombay 1857. See H. VON GLASENAPP, *Zwei philosophische Rāmāyaṇas*, Mainz Acad. 1951, 6, p. 73 (493).

<sup>14</sup> B. G. TILAK, *Gītārāhasya*, Bombay 1933, p. 4 makes mention of a treatise on *hathayoga* etc. of the same name.

<sup>15</sup> ViṣṇuP. 3, 7; AgniP. ch. 381; NṛsimhaP. ch. 8. For a Vaiṣṇava-Gītā see P. POUCHA, in Volume E Śluszkiewicz, Warsaw 1974, p. 181.

As already observed the groups of ascetics called Avadhūtas, who had striking affinities with the Nātha Yogins,<sup>16</sup> produced an Avadhūta-Gītā<sup>17</sup> consisting of seven chapters and 193 stanzas. According to a translator it is intended for advanced ascetics, *yogins*, *saṁnyāsins* and *brahmacārins*, who, having found everything worth knowing in their hearts, keep "in the calm of the Himalayan valleys, on the banks of the holy Ganges", this text in their caves and huts. The small work, which contains some reminiscences of and references to the Bhagavadgītā (st. 28: BhG. 2, 19) and *upanīṣads* (e.g. 129 *tat tvam asi*) as well as traditional Vedāntic imagery (e.g. 29), argues in favour of an advaitic, decidedly Śivaite doctrine of the identity of the Self, i.e. of everybody's changeless and all-pervasive *ātman*, with God i.e. Śiva (e.g. 88), Brahman, the All, the only Reality. Those who are inspired with a disposition to the unity with God are relieved from the great fear of death (1). *Karman* no longer touches them (80); there is no need for them to worship or meditate (169).

The Aṣṭāvakra-Gītā<sup>18</sup>—one of the few *gītās* which are not named after a god—is, especially among Vedāntins, held in high esteem. It is handed down in many manuscripts and among those who admired its contents were Rāma-kṛṣṇa and Vivekānanda (1862–1902).<sup>19</sup> Being 'philosophical' rather than 'religious' it is an independent work which, as far as is known to me, has never been included in a *purāṇa*. Although the author of these 304—originally 'perhaps 292—stanzas never quotes the Bhagavadgītā he must have been very well acquainted with its contents. His subject, the Advaita philosophy or *brahmavidyā*<sup>20</sup>—which he attempts to popularize—is couched in the hymnic style of a wholly convinced preacher and inspired poet rapt in the absorbing task of proclaiming truth and salvation. We grope in the dark about his identity. The association with Aṣṭāvakra who is represented as teaching the contents of the Gītā to Janaka is in all probability secondary. Already in the Mahābhārata<sup>21</sup> this mythical sage is described as having conversations with

<sup>16</sup> See above, p. 221 (also for particulars), and SUKUL, op. cit., p. 93; 100.

<sup>17</sup> Published: Bombay 1872; 1873; with a Bengali commentary, Barisal 1909; in Gītāsamgraha, Poona 1915; Bombay 1933 etc.; English translation in J. CHAMARAJENDRA WADIYAR, Dattatreya, London 1957, p. 151. For other information and the numerous manuscripts: N.C.C. I, p. 415.

<sup>18</sup> C. GIUSSANI, Aṣṭāvakra-gītā, Florence 1868 (Italian translation); English translations: SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA, Almora <sup>2</sup>1953; HARI PRASAD SHASTRI, London 1949; German translation (inadequate): H. ZIMMER, Anbetung Mir. Indische Offenbarungsworte, München-Berlin 1929; text, translation and an exhaustive study: HAUSCHILD, op. cit. (for other editions etc. see p. 19); edition and translation: R. MUKHERJEE, Delhi 1971.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. R.C. MAJUMDAR (editor), Swāmi Vivekānanda centenary memorial volume, Calcutta 1963.

<sup>20</sup> The well-known principle of double (esoteric and exoteric, higher and lower) truth manifests itself e.g. in 4, 2; 12, 3 as compared with 1, 15; 15, 20; see HAUSCHILD, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>21</sup> Mahābhārata 3, a. 132ff.; compare also 13, a. 19ff.; BĀU. 4, 1ff.

Janaka, the well-known king mentioned in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad. Perhaps the name Avadhūtānubhūti “Experience of an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments”, which occurs in the closing stanza (21, 6), was the original—and suitable—title of the successful poem, which preaches, inter alia, the indispensability of complete suppression of any desire and attachment and the discontinuance of ‘ignorance’. As to the date of the composition of this work, we would probably not be far wrong if we followed Hauschild<sup>22</sup> who arrived at the conclusion that it belongs to the century between ± 1380 and ± 1490.

The Uttara-Gītā,<sup>23</sup> likewise Vedāntic in character, is less popular. It is regarded as a continuation of the Bhagavadgītā—Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are here also the partners in the discussion—but actually it is a sort of manual for *yogins*.

The Sūrya-Gītā must belong to the comparatively late works of this genre because it has undergone the influence of Rāmānuja’s Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy.

The Brahma-Gītā that occurs in the Yogavāsiṣṭha 6, 2, 172–182<sup>24</sup> resembles in thought and meaning those upaniṣadic passages which explain the Brahma-vidyā. Interpreting and amplifying these passages it does not preach a particular god, but teach *brahmanvidyā*. While most *gītās* exploited upaniṣadic concepts for propagating a particular form of divine worship, this work seems to have been designed to popularize an upaniṣadic lore and cult.

The Pāṇḍu-Gītā or Pāṇḍava-Gītā, also known as Prapanna-Gītā, is a work on the greatness of Viṣṇu. An Agastya-Gītā appears independently and as Varāha-Purāṇa, a. 51–67. There is a manuscript of a Dattātreyā-Gītā in Madras.<sup>25</sup>

Mention may finally be made of the Vyāsa-Gītā (KūrmaP. 2, ch. 12–30).<sup>26</sup>

The literature on holy places, especially places of pilgrimage (*tīrtha*), and pilgrimages to places which enjoy a certain sanctity is in all probability far more extensive than any other single topic of Dharmaśāstra.<sup>27</sup> Besides the

<sup>22</sup> HAUSCHILD, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> Die Uttaragītā . . . ins Englische übertragen von D.K. LAHERI, deutsche Ausgabe von E.A. KERNWART, Leipzig 1907. There is a commentary, Uttaragītādīpikā, ascribed to Gauḍapāda and edited by T.K. BALASUBRAHMANYAM, Śrīraṅgam 1910.

<sup>24</sup> There is another Brahma-Gītā which is said to belong to the Skanda-Purāṇa; see BHATTACHARJEE, op. cit., p. 766.

<sup>25</sup> H.S. JOSHI, Origin and development of Dattātreyā worship in India, Baroda 1965, p. 211. The Pāṇḍava-Gītā has been printed in the Bṛhatstotraratnākara.

<sup>26</sup> For the possibility of a Buddhist *gītā* see E. LAMOTTE, Notes sur la Bhagavad-Gītā, Paris 1929, p. XII.

<sup>27</sup> KANE, H. Dh. IV, p. 581, according to whom the Mahābhārata and the *purāṇas* contain at least 40 000 stanzas on this subject. I refer to this author, I. cit., and I, p. 554 for many titles and other particulars which need not be repeated in this survey. Viṣṇu-Smṛti, ch. 85, enumerating fifty-two *tīrthas*, is generally held to be a later addition. On holy places: H. VON GLASENAPP, Heilige Stätten Indiens, München 1928; on pilgrimage: J. ENSINK, in Indologica Taurinensia 2 (1974), p. 57.

Great Epic and *purānas* many digests and other works enlarge upon this subject. Among these are the Tirthavivecanakāṇḍa of Lakṣmīdhara's (between 1100–1160) Kalpataru ( $\pm$  1110–1120)<sup>28</sup> which deals mainly with Benares and Prayāga; Vācaspatimiśra's (1450–1480) Tirthacintāmaṇi<sup>29</sup> which, being divided into five chapters (*prakāśa*), informs its readers on Prayāga, Purī, Gaṅgā, Gayā and Vārāṇasī (Benares) and topics such as the purpose and preliminaries of pilgrimages, the various rites to be performed at the holy places and so on;<sup>30</sup> the Tirthasāra—a part of the encyclopaedic Nṛsimhaprasāda "The fruit of the grace of Viṣṇu's man-lion *avatāra*" ( $\pm$  1500)<sup>31</sup>—which is mainly concerned with the *tirthas* of the Deccan and the South; Nārāyaṇa-Bhaṭṭa's Tristhalīsetu "Bridge to the three holy places (Prayāga, Kāśī or Benares, and Gayā)",<sup>32</sup> which, being written about 1550–1580, deals in its first part with rites common to all sacred places and in its second part with the pilgrimages to the three *tirthas* mentioned. Other books specialize on individual holy places, for instance Vidyāpati's (between 1375 and 1450 A. D.) Gaṅgāvākyāvali (on the Ganges, that is on the advantages of visiting and worshipping that river and bathing in it)<sup>33</sup> and Raghunandana's Gayāśrāddhapaddhati on Gayā.

Besides these *dharma* works on holy places<sup>34</sup> and pilgrimages there exist also other treatises on *tirthas*. In the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Ananta-bhaṭṭa wrote, at the request of Mahārāja Anup Singhji of Bikaner, a very voluminous compilation on these holy places (nearly 38000 *granthas*, one *grantha* being 32 syllables); being based on *purānas* etc. this Tirtharatnākara is perhaps the largest work on this subject.<sup>35</sup> I focus special attention on the so-called *tirthamāhātmyas*. They are often composed in Sanskrit<sup>36</sup> and profess to be part of a *purāṇa*<sup>37</sup>—in some cases they were actually included in a work of that genre. Their number is very large<sup>38</sup> because every holy place of some importance possesses such a "glorification" in which the legends and eulogies

<sup>28</sup> Edited by K. V. RANGASWAMI AIYANGAR, Baroda 1942 (Gaekwad Or. Series 98). For particulars see KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 315; J. D. M. DERRETT, Dharmaśāstra, in this History, IV, p. 50.

<sup>29</sup> See KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 400; the work has been edited (Bibl. Indica), Calcutta 1912.

<sup>30</sup> On these points see KANE, H. Dh. IV, p. 552.

<sup>31</sup> See KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 406. The work has been published in the Sarasvati Bhavana series, n° 62, Allahabad 1936.

<sup>32</sup> Published in the Ānandāśrama series, n° 78, Poona 1915; see also KANE, H. Dh. IV, p. 596. There is another work of the same name composed by Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣita, edited by SŪRYA NĀRĀYAṆA ŚUKLA, Allahabad 1936.

<sup>33</sup> On Vidyāpati see KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 739; on the Ganges, IV, p. 585.

<sup>34</sup> Much information on *tirthas* is for instance also given in the Vāmana-Purāṇa.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. K. MADHAVA KRISHNA SARMA, in ALB 10, p. 5; ENSINK, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>36</sup> Nowadays most of them have been translated into, or adapted in, one of the modern languages.

<sup>37</sup> See e.g. WINTERNITZ, G. I. L. I, p. 473. Mbh. 3, a. 81 is a *māhātmya* of Kuru-ṣetra.

<sup>38</sup> One may consult the catalogues of manuscripts.

upon the holiness of the *tīrtha* have been brought together. In accordance with their name these decidedly popular “glorifications of holy places”, mostly compiled<sup>39</sup> by the resident priests, are primarily meant to inform the innumerable pilgrims of the holiness of the *tīrtha* and the rules and customs obtaining there. The journeys of the pilgrims receive comparatively little attention. Most of the authors call special attention to the myths concerning the god worshipped there and to those of his feats which are, or can be, related to that particular place of pilgrimage. That means, that in accordance with a fundamental principle of *bhakti* religion, they propagate the worship of one single deity or one particular *avatāra* or emanation in one particular place.<sup>40</sup> Although the compilers understood very well that the public addressed could best be influenced by legends and mythical tales they have often furthered the dissemination of their views by the insertion of philosophical speculations which—as in the case of the *Cidambaramāhātmya* 15, 18ff.—are to establish the *tīrtha*'s claim to special holiness. There are sound reasons for assuming that *māhātmyas* often served to formulate the aims or to establish the claims of the temple priests and to refute their opponents, among them not only exponents of other religions but also rival priestly groups of their own temple city—the presence of various cults did not fail to evoke tensions—and the political powers of their region. In course of time their views and claims, once they were included in the ‘official’ *māhātmya* of their temple, could easily acquire the reputation of authority.

This genre of literature is not only very useful for deepening our knowledge of the cultural and religious history of India in general but also most valuable for those who want to reconstruct the development of regional history and local cults or to gain a deeper insight into various religious institutions—for instance, the recommendation of pilgrimages to poor people as a substitute for expensive sacrifices—, into beliefs and practices—e.g. “those who bathe here go to heaven and those who die here are not born again”,<sup>41</sup> and in connexion with this conviction, religious suicide and worship of the deceased—, and into the significance of holy places, local variants of myths and legends and so on. They give information on topography, especially of the localities (sub-*tīrthas*) to be visited by pilgrims. Thus a text such as the *Prayāga-Māhātmya*, eulogizing the glory and greatness of the most sacred place at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamunā, which is—in various recensions partly dating from about 850–1250<sup>42</sup>—found in several *purāṇas*<sup>43</sup> expatiates, inter alia, upon the

<sup>39</sup> It has been supposed that only part of the more recent works of this class were written by one single author.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. J. C. PLOTT, *Bhakti at the crossroads*, New York 1971; R. GEIB, *Indradyumna-Legende*, Wiesbaden 1975.

<sup>41</sup> *KūrmaP.* 1, 36, 20.

<sup>42</sup> Compare R. C. HAZRA, *Studies in the purāṇic records on Hindu rites and customs*, Dacca Univ. 1940, p. 177.

<sup>43</sup> In 261 stanzas in *MatsyaP.* ch. 103–112; see S. G. KANTAWALA, *Prayāgamā-*



miraculous virtues of baths taken in this place, on its religious and mystical significance, its superiority to other *tīrthas*, its innumerable holy localities.

There exist several Gayā-Mähātmyas,<sup>44</sup> claiming to be affiliated to different *purāṇas*. The longest and best-known of these is connected with the Vāyu-Purāṇa.<sup>45</sup> Written in easy Sanskrit and a simple style, it deals in about 500 stanzas and eight chapters mainly with the mythical story of the *asura* Gaya which is communicated by Sanatkumāra to Nārada, and the legend of the holy rock, the story of the *asura* Heti who was killed by Viṣṇu's club, adding information on the pilgrimage, holy days and allied subjects such as the mountains and rivers of the region, Viṣṇu's visible and invisible forms, eulogies upon that god, the ceremonies to be performed in honour of deceased relatives (*śrāddha*), stories of miracles, the tour of the holy place to be made by the pilgrims etc. Many legends have one theme in common: when something extraordinary happens Viṣṇu descends, restores order and grants the desires of the one who has disturbed peace and order; the favour accorded consists in the purity and holiness of Gayā and the promise that those who visit it faithfully will be saved. One cannot escape the conviction that a collection of stories and legends was consciously and intentionally given this uniform structure in order to demonstrate the superiority of the god whose cult was not introduced into Gayā before the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century.

There is a *mähātmya* of Utkala (Orissa)<sup>46</sup>—occupying a large part of the Brahma-Purāṇa—, there is a long (4000 stanzas) glorification of the Panjab<sup>47</sup> and there are at least two glorifications of Kāñci in Sanskrit, one Viṣṇuite in thirty-two chapters which is regarded as a part of the Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa<sup>48</sup> and a Śivaite, also known as Kāñci-(Sthala)mähātmya<sup>49</sup> and said to belong to the Skanda-Purāṇa.<sup>50</sup> The other great places of pilgrimage are likewise lauded

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hātmya, in Purāṇa 9 (Varanasi 1967), p. 103; in 121 stanzas in KūrmaP. 1, ch. 36–39; PadmaP. 1, ch. 43–49; SkandaP., Kāśikhanda, ch. 7, 45–65. Compare also Mbh. 3, 83, 69–95; 85, 17ff.; 13, 26, 35ff. and see KANE, H. Dh. IV, p. 597.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. L. P. VIDYARTHI, The sacred complex in Hindu Gayā, London 1961.

<sup>45</sup> Edited: with a Hindi commentary, Benares n. d.; Bombay 1895; with a Hindi commentary and the Gayā-Paddhati, Kalyāṇa 1926; with a French translation, a long introduction etc. by C. JACQUES, Pondicherry 1962. There are many more texts dealing with Gayā.

<sup>46</sup> See K. N. MAHAPATRA, in Orissa Historical Research Journal 11, 1 (Bhubaneswar 1962), p. 21.

<sup>47</sup> Cat. Skt. Mss. Panjab Univ. Library, II, p. 154.

<sup>48</sup> Edited by P. B. ANNANGARACHARIAR, Conjeevaram 1906; (ANANTĀCĀRYA, Kāñci 1907, Śāstramuktāvali n° 26) and with a Kannada translation, Mysore 1945.

<sup>49</sup> A rare edition appeared at Śrīkurveṭinagaram 1889 (Telugu script).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. R. DESSIGANE, P. Z. PATTABRAMIN, J. FILLIOZAT, Les légendes çivaïtes de Kāñcipuram, Pondicherry 1964. For the Tamil Kāñcipurāṇam see K. V. ZVELEBIL, Tamil literature, in this History, X, p. 190. A Kāñci-Mähātmya (50 chapters) belonging to the Skanda-Purāṇa was translated into Tamil, Madras 1910.

in separate texts, the Kāśikhaṇḍa<sup>51</sup> of the Skanda-Purāṇa<sup>52</sup> covering for instance not less than about 15000 stanzas.<sup>53</sup> Holy rivers are—to mention only these—the subject of the Māhātmya on the Narmadā<sup>54</sup> and the Gomatī.<sup>55</sup>

The Cidambara-Māhātmya<sup>56</sup> (compiled between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries) describes in twenty-six chapters and about 1300 stanzas the legendary history of the great Śivaite temple city, the famous centre of the Śiva Naṭarāja worship and residence of many other cults. After the introduction (ch. I–V) the work narrates the journey of the ṛṣi Vyāghrapāda to Cidambaram where he worshipped the *līṅga* on the shore of the holy lake (ch. VI–X). The text proceeds to the description of Śiva's arrival in Cidambaram and his first performance of the Ānanda-Tāṇḍava dance<sup>57</sup> (ch. XI–XVIII). The last chapters deal with the visit of the legendary king Hiranyavarman who in gratitude for his recovery from an illness had three thousand brahmins settle down in the holy place, renovated its temples and founded the great temple festival. The work is interesting in that—as appears from a study of those sections which must, or can, be regarded as interpolated—it throws light on the methods adopted by the priestly compilers in reacting against the popular traditions embodied in the oldest legends—the Tamil folk legends (7<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries) were not included—and in transforming these so as to serve their own interests. One of their aims was to prove that Cidambaram was a Śivaite place of worship from the beginning, another to connect the legendary origin of their sanctuary

<sup>51</sup> For Benares compare J. HERBERT, Benares, Calcutta 1957.

<sup>52</sup> This very extensive work comprises many isolated texts of the *māhātmya* genre, e.g. Aruṇācala-Māhātmya, the Māhātmyas of Venkaṭācala, Puruṣottamakeśetra, Vadarikāśrama etc. See H. UEBACH, Das Nepālamāhātmyam des Skandapurāṇam, München 1970; HAZRA, op. cit., p. 157; 162; Studies in the upapurāṇas, Calcutta 1958–1963, Index. There is also a Vārāṇasī-Māhātmya in the Matsya-Purāṇa, a. 180. For other information on purāṇic *māhātmyas* see WINTERNITZ, G.I.L. I, p. 451.

<sup>53</sup> For other texts and particulars see KANE, H.Dh. IV, p. 623. A Kāñcī-Māhātmya (Brahma-Purāṇa) was published at Conjeeveram 1906.

<sup>54</sup> Matsya-Purāṇa, a. 187 ff.

<sup>55</sup> For a Gomatī-Māhātmya of 1700 stanzas see Catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts in the Panjab Univ. Library II, Lahore 1941, p. 152; for various *māhātmyas* on the Tāmraparṇī, ibidem, p. 152, etc. There are also legendary works on various sacred places such as the Dharmāranya (HARAPRASĀDA SHĀSTRĪ, Descr. Cat. Skt. mss. Asiatic Soc. of Bengal, V, Calcutta 1928, p. 819).

<sup>56</sup> H. KULKE, Cidambaramāhātmya. Eine Untersuchung der religionsgeschichtlichen und historischen Hintergründe für die Entstehung der Tradition einer südindischen Tempelstadt, Wiesbaden 1970. The text has not yet been published; Kulke's study was based on two manuscripts. There also exist *māhātmyas* of this holy place called after its other names Puṇḍarikapura and Vyāghrapura.

<sup>57</sup> Which probably was not introduced before about 1000 A. D. For the Dāruvana story describing the origin of Śiva's dance now see also W. DONTGER O'FLAHERTY, Asceticism and eroticism in the mythology of Śiva, London 1973, p. 172.

and its cult with the great Sanskrit tradition of North India—an endeavour often, and already early, found in the South.<sup>58</sup> This means that they tried to show that the adherents of the ‘heteropractic’ popular Tamil *bhakti* movement could find emancipation—the redeeming unification with Śiva—primarily through pilgrimages to holy places and ‘orthopractic’ cults directed by *śaiva* priests. This Mähātmya moreover allows of conclusions with regard to the relations between the temple clergy and those in political authority. Of special interest is the possibility of viewing the Hiraṇyavarman legend (11<sup>th</sup> century) against the background of historical reality, viz. the life-story of Rājendra II (Kulottuṅga I, ± 1070–1118) which in some respects runs parallel with the legend.<sup>59</sup> That means that the work probably shows that a powerful king could already in his lifetime become a legendary figure; that this figure could then already become part of a famous temple ‘history’, and that one of the purposes this ‘official history’, i.e. the Mähātmya, had to serve was to establish Rājendra’s claims to the throne.<sup>60</sup>

Although it is for the sake of surveyability recommendable to distinguish *bhakti* works, *mähātmyas* proper and so on, classification of these texts is not infrequently difficult. Thus the second of the six books (*saṃhitā*) of the Southern Skanda-(Skānda-)Purāṇa, the Sūta-Saṃhitā,<sup>61</sup> which was perhaps produced in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and impresses us as an independent work—it has indeed been separately commented upon—is an *advaita* treatise with special emphasis on *śaiva bhakti*. Although higher knowledge (*jñāna*) is held to be the only way to final emancipation (which here is realization of Brahman), devotion to Śiva and his grace are both said to be necessary for obtaining *jñāna*. The first thirteen of the fifty chapters are however a long Śiva-Mähātmya. The character of the work—which is no doubt of Southern origin and mentions many South Indian Śiva shrines—accounts for the accretion of a number of *mähātmyas* on sacred places of Śivaism.<sup>62</sup>

The interest of part of this literature centres, indeed, in the figure of a god and the spread of his cult rather than the sanctity of a particular temple city or place of pilgrimage. A well-known instance is the Devī-Mähātmya—also Caṇḍī- or Durgā-Mähātmya, or Saptasatī—, one of the oldest documents of Śāktism, which exists as an independent scripture as well as a section of the

<sup>58</sup> Cf. e.g. K. A. NILAKANTHA SASTRI, History and culture of the Tamils, Calcutta 1963, p. 12.

<sup>59</sup> See H. KULKE, Funktionale Erklärung eines südindischen Mähātmyas, in Saeculum 20 (München 1969), p. 412.

<sup>60</sup> “There is a good chance of finding historical causes for a relatively high number of interpolations and textual alterations” (KULKE, Cidambaramähātmya, Summary, p. 224).

<sup>61</sup> Editions Madras 1916 and Poona (Ānandāśrama 25), both with Mādhavamantrin’s commentary (14<sup>th</sup> century).

<sup>62</sup> For particulars: V. RAGHAVAN, The Sūta-Saṃhitā, in ABORI 22 (1941), p. 236.

Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāna (ch. 81–93).<sup>63</sup> When the demons under Mahiṣa vanquish the gods, Devī is formed as Caṇḍikā out of their special energies combined; in a great battle she destroys the demons including Mahiṣa himself. Thereupon the gods praise her in a hymn and she promises to help them also in the future. Other occasions, for the goddess to render assistance, and for the gods to praise her present themselves. The three hymns contained in the work refer to the theology of Devī's cult. Finally Devī herself, alluding to her worship and annual festival, enlarges upon the merits of this text and the beneficent results of reading it and listening to it. The gods regain their supremacy and Devī is extolled. This work—which existed already in 998, the date of one of its manuscripts, and dates perhaps from about 600—is up to modern times read in the Durgā temples of Bengal and on the occasion of the great Durgā festival<sup>64</sup> delivered with special solemnity.

The *purānas* contain many versions of a Viṣṇu-Māhātmya, a comparative study of which sheds some light on the various aspects of the Viṣṇuite *bhakti* religion.<sup>65</sup> Among the component parts of the Vāyu-Purāna is also a Māhātmya of Maheśvara (Śiva). The Kāraṇa-Māhātmya is associated with the spread of the teachings of Lakuliśa who was regarded as an incarnation of Śiva: according to this text the god, in order to become the teacher and deity of this name, appeared as the son of a brahmin, to whom the Glorification ascribes some miraculous legendary feats.<sup>66</sup> The Hāṭakeśvara-Māhātmya (Skanda-Purāna) and the independent Yāgīśvara-Māhātmya<sup>67</sup> deal with the Śivaite Dāruvana story.<sup>68</sup> There are glorifications of Viṣṇu as for instance lying on the serpent Ananta, on his sacred *tulasi* plant and so on, and so on.<sup>69</sup>

Occasionally, a *māhātmya* gives welcome information on an important historical person. Thus the early life of the philosopher Rāmānuja is dealt with in the Bhūtapurī-Māhātmya, the glorification of his birth-place.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Published in the editions of the Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāna (e. g. by K. M. BANERJEA, Calcutta 1862; Bombay 1910); translated by F. E. PARGITER, The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna, Calcutta 1904, p. 465; SWAMI JAGADISHVARANANDA, Madras 1953; (text, translation, introduction) V. S. AGRAWALA, Devī-Māhātmya, The glorification of the Great Goddess, Varanasi 1963. See also the same, in Purāna 5 (1963), p. 64; 267; D. SHARMA, *ibidem*, p. 90; K. W. BOLLE, in OH 6 (1958), p. 91.

<sup>64</sup> See e. g. S. Ch. BOSE, The Hindoos as they are, London and Calcutta 1881, p. 95.

<sup>65</sup> See e. g. GaruḍaP. 1, a. 230; 244; MatsyaP. a. 244; LiṅgaP. 2, a. 2; VāyuP. 2, a. 35 f. (Viṣṇu-Māhātmya) and S. PIANO, in Indologica Taurinensia, 3. For a Nilakaṇṭha-Stava see VāyuP. 1, a. 54.

<sup>66</sup> See DALAL, Gaṇakārīka, Introduction (Baroda 1920); DASGUPTA, H. I. Ph. V, p. 7; D. R. BHANDARKAR, Lakuliśa, Archeological Survey of India, Annual Report 1906–1907, p. 180.

<sup>67</sup> See W. JAHN, in ZDMG 69, p. 545; 70, p. 310.

<sup>68</sup> See KULKE, Cidambaramāhātmya, p. 46. See above, p. 280, n. 57.

<sup>69</sup> Cat. Skt. Mss. Panjab Univ. Library II, p. 150; 153.

<sup>70</sup> FARQUHAR, R. L. I., p. 246.

Whereas some *purāṇas* comprise parts or résumés of the Bhagavadgītā<sup>71</sup> other works of this class contain portions dedicated to the glorification of that important poem and accordingly known as *mähātmya*. Thus the Padma-Purāṇa, Uttarakhanda, ch. 171–188 is a complete Gītā-Mähātmya, consisting, like the Gītā itself, of eighteen chapters each of which begins with the proclamation of the greatness of that work which is illustrated by means of an appropriate narrative. The same Purāṇa includes also the Bhāgavata-Mähātmya—also added to editions of the great Purāṇa which it eulogizes—which contains an interesting passage on the spread and history of the Bhakti movement and can therefore not be older than the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>72</sup> A certain Āśramasvāmin produced a work entitled Nāma-Mähātmya.<sup>73</sup>

An attempt to survey, within the limits of possibility, all those genres of religious literature which have not yet come up for individual discussion would hardly serve a useful purpose. The number of relevant writings, more or less completely preserved in manuscripts or printed in publications of local or regional circulation is almost endless, their diversity and literary value in most cases small.<sup>74</sup> The following notes may suffice.

A considerable part of the matter treated in the āgamic literature is also made the subject of smaller or larger separate writings, mostly in *ślokas* and sometimes of anonymous, in other cases of well-known or even renowned authors. There are various treatises dealing with the details of divine worship as carried out in temples (entitled, for instance, *Ārāadhanotsavasamgraha*); with the preliminary ceremonies relating to the consecration of divine images either in temples or in houses; with the rules in connexion with the ceremonious sowing of grain as a preliminary rite to ensure the auspicious fulfilment of the acts connected with the temple festival; with the various religious ceremonies to be performed when for instance Śiva's *liṅga* is to be re-consecrated—a subject treated in one of the oldest works of this class extant (a manuscript dates from 1090 A. D.), viz. the *Pratiṣṭhāpaddhati* by a disciple of Kumāraśiva—or when old and dilapidated sanctuaries are to be repaired or the images are to be renewed or replaced (*jīrṇoddhara*); or with the consecration of new images; with consecration and dedication (*pratiṣṭhā*) in general—for instance, a work entitled *Pratiṣṭhātilaka* (10<sup>th</sup> century or earlier) treats, in the form of

<sup>71</sup> E. g. AgniP. 3, ch. 380 (or 381: Gītāsāra); GaruḍaP. 1, a. 242; PadmaP. Utt. 171–188 (Gītā-Mähātmya).

<sup>72</sup> J. FILLIOZAT, in *Indological studies in honor of W. Norman Brown*, New Haven Conn. 1962, p. 74.

<sup>73</sup> This 'Glorification of the Name' was edited by MANGAL DEVA SHASTRI, Benares 1937. For a eulogy on the month Kārtika (from *purāṇas*, Pañcarātrāgama etc. and published at Benares 1925) see N. C. C. IV, p. 3ff.

<sup>74</sup> The interested reader may be referred to the Catalogues of manuscripts of the great Indian libraries, the *New Catalogus Catalogorum* and works of a similar character. There is a good survey in HARAPRASĀDA SHĀSTRĪ, op. cit., V, Calcutta 1925, Preface, p. XXXVII based on Calcutta manuscripts and discussing also some of the works mentioned in the following paragraph.

a discussion between Nārada and Śiva, the consecration of every part of a temple including the gates, flagstaff, water and so on, the procedure of the consecration being Vedic (it is composed for those professing the Mādhyandina branch of the White Yajurveda); another old and authoritative work is the Sarvadevapratiṣṭhāpaddhati by Trivikrama Sūri (probably a Bengali); there are also comparatively modern writings of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries—; with the religious duties of the members of a community to be gone through during the successive periods of the day (*āhnikā, sadācāra, nityakarma*)—among them the Sadācārasmr̥ti by Ānandatīrtha, the founder of the Mādhva school of Vaiṣṇavism (13<sup>th</sup> century), and the Chandogāhnikam on the daily duties of the Sāmavedin brahmins by Śrīdatta of Mithilā (13<sup>th</sup> century), a work on *āhnikā* by Paraśurāma Pāṭhaka (Benares 1795); or in general with *pūjā* and a variety of ritual performances. There are writings setting forth the manifold rules of ritual purity (*āśauca*)—for instance, a short work in *sragdharā* metre on impurity arising from birth or death in the family by Vijñāneśvara (11<sup>th</sup> century) with many commentaries, and some comparatively modern works (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries)—; discussing marriage or *śrāddha* ceremonies—an early work is the Śrāddhadīpikā, attributed to Nārada, a likewise old and comprehensive text written by Gaṇeśvara Mantri, and entitled Sugatisopānam (“Stairs to happiness”) belongs to the Mithilā school (the oldest manuscript dates from 1340), Viśvanātha’s Śrāddharatnāvali describes the funeral and *śrāddha* ceremonies of *saṃnyāsins* and other categories of people—; dealing with atonement and penances (*prāyaścitta*) or propitiation of offended deities (*śānti*): mention must be made of the very systematic and conveniently arranged Adbhutasāgara, the compilation of which was undertaken by the Bengal king Vallāla Sena (1167) (who was probably assisted by a paṇḍit called Śrīnivāsa; when the king left it unfinished it was completed by his son Lakṣmaṇa Sena) and which treats of the propitiation of deities in case of omens and portents,<sup>75</sup> and of works on the propitiation of fever, plague, pestilence, possession by ghosts etc. such as Dinakara Bhaṭṭa’s voluminous Śāntisāra (17<sup>th</sup> century). There exist treatises inculcating the worship of a particular deity, e.g. Kṛṣṇa, as the supreme being, the importance of worshipping cult images (called, e.g., Arcādījyāprabhava), discussing the characteristics of these images and the *mudrās* etc. to be executed in connexion with temple worship, or the sanctifying of rosaries made of beads. Some of these monographs are in our eyes of considerable length, for instance that on how to fix the date of the birthdays of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Edited by PT. MURALI DHARA JHA JYAUTIṢACHARYA, Benares 1905; see also D.J. KOHLBRUGGE, Atharvaveda-Pariśiṣṭa über Omina, Thesis Utrecht 1938, p. 3.

<sup>76</sup> The manuscript 5248 of the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras numbers 92 pages of six lines each.

Among the smaller works which are traditionally—and in all probability rightly—attributed to Rāmānuja is the *Nityagrantha*,<sup>77</sup> a manual for daily worship which is primarily intended for the individual devotee who has performed *prapatti*, worshipping in his home or monastery (not in a temple). It gives detailed instructions for the regular (*nitya*) morning worship, directed either to an image in one's family room or in a monastery chapel; if required, also to a mental image. Neither the images nor the theological significance of the acts are discussed. The text presupposes the doctrines of the author's prose hymns,<sup>78</sup> but does not enlarge upon points of doctrinal interest.

There exist treatises on the characteristics of religiously efficacious gifts (so-called *Dānalakṣaṇa*).<sup>79</sup> There are also manuals for the use of those who undertake a *vrata* (observance) and so-called *kavacas* ("armours")—for instance in the outward form of an interlocution between Bhṛgu and Bharata—considered to protect the reciter from illness or injury. In accordance with its name the Viṣṇuite *Aṣṭākṣaradīpikā* illustrates the sacredness and purificatory efficacy of the eight-syllabled *mantra Om namo nārāyaṇāya*. Another Viṣṇuite work contains a description of the one hundred and eight—a fixed number—ancient and holy shrines in India dedicated to Viṣṇu. There exist collections of memorial stanzas in honour of spiritual preceptors belonging to definite families and so-called *āśīrvādas* containing benedictory sayings pronounced on auspicious occasions. Such a hymn in honour of his deceased guru Gīrvāṇendra Sarasvatī was written by Nilakaṇṭha Dīkṣita (17<sup>th</sup> century): the main theme of this *Gurutattvamalikāstotra*<sup>80</sup> is the author's *bhakti* towards that spiritual guide, although an allusion to asceticism is not absent.

Among these works are anthologies composed for religious purposes. The *Parāṅkuśavaibhavam*, for instance, is a collection of authoritative opinions, extracted from Pāñcarātra *āgamas* and other works, on the greatness of the Tamil poet Parāṅkuśa (Nammālvār Śaṭhakopa) and his famous poem *Tiruvāymoḷi*. Other collections deal with, for instance, texts from *purānas* and *dharma* works on the behaviour of the faithful, inter alia on the outward signs to be put on the forehead.

Part of these writings are of a more theoretical nature. For instance, in a work entitled *Puruṣakāramīmāṃsā*<sup>81</sup> a discussion is held of the problem as to whether Lakṣmī has a hand in the salvation of the world or not, the author himself being of the opinion that Viṣṇu is reached only through the mediation of his spouse. Other treatises, among them a *Pañcarātrāgamaprāmānyam* ("On the authenticity of the traditional doctrines or scriptures of the Pāñcarātra school") composed by Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī-Vedottama<sup>82</sup> assert the authoritativeness

<sup>77</sup> Published in Śrī-Bhagavad-Rāmānuja-Granthamālā (Complete works in Sanskrit), Kāñcīpuram 1956. See CARMAN, op. cit., p. 63; 213; 230.

<sup>78</sup> See above, p. 257. <sup>79</sup> E.g. Gov. Or. Mss. Library Madras, 5166.

<sup>80</sup> See P. FILLIOZAT, in JOR 34-35 (1964-66, Madras 1973), p. 95.

<sup>81</sup> Gov. Or. Mss. Library Madras, 5298.

<sup>82</sup> Gov. Or. Mss. Library Madras, 5288.

of a particular *saṃpradāya*, in *casu* the religion of the Pāñcarātrins. Murālidharadāsa—the name means “Servant of the one who holds the flute, i.e. of Kṛṣṇa”—left us a Sevākalpataru, on the nature of the service of, i.e. of the worship to be offered to, Kṛṣṇa and the benefits to be derived therefrom. There are more works of this class produced in various communities and called, for instance, Sevāphalam “The fruit of service”. A short text entitled Hari-dāsasiddhānta “The settled doctrine of Haridāsa” sets forth a devotee’s views regarding self-surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

Goraḅṣa, a native of the Cola region in the South, who, after becoming an adept of the Kashmirian Śivaite philosophy (12<sup>th</sup> century), received on the occasion of his initiation the name Maheśvarānanda “Whose bliss is the Great Lord (Śiva)”, informs us in his commentary Parimala of some details about his life and works. Of the latter a poem remains, the Mahārthamañjarī “The bunch of flowers of (the mystic tradition called) Mahārtha”.<sup>83</sup> In the seventy stanzas of this poem, explained in his own Parimala, he gives by means of symbols and images a clear account of the philosophical ideas of the monist system of Kashmirian Śivaism. The contents of this work which was, he says, revealed to him by a *yoginī*—his yogic power represented as a female deity—was written down in Mahārāṣṭrī and translated by himself into Sanskrit.

Another work of a more theoretical or theological character is, for instance, Bodhendra Sarasvatī’s (16<sup>th</sup> century) Hariharādvaīta-Bhūṣaṇa<sup>84</sup> which is an attempt to prove the identity of the gods Hari (Viṣṇu) and Hara (Śiva).<sup>85</sup> The Sakalādhikāra attributed to Agastya deals with Śivaite saints.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> L. SILBURN, *La Mahārthamañjarī de Maheśvarānanda avec des extraits du Parimala* (text, translation, introduction, commentary), Paris 1968. Older editions are as K. S. T. S. 11, Bombay 1918 and *The Mahārthamañjarī with the commentary Parimala of Maheśvarānanda*, ed. by T. GAṆAPATI ŚĀSTRĪ, in *Trivandrum Sanskrit series* 66, 1919 (Prākṛit and Sanskrit texts).

<sup>84</sup> *Hariharādvaīta-Bhūṣaṇam* (with *Kārikā*) . . . edited by T. CHANDRĀŚEKHARAN, Madras Gov. Or. Mss. Series 25, 1954; see *Journal Gaṅgānātha Jha Research Institute*, 11–12 (1953–1955).

<sup>85</sup> Other religious literature which is of interest from a philosophical point of view will be discussed in the fascicles on the philosophical schools in volume VI of this *History*.

<sup>86</sup> Ed. (with a translation): V. GOPALA IYENGAR, Thanjavur 1973.