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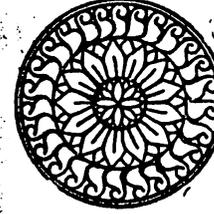
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SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

AN UNTENABLE REMARK OF DR. RANADE ABOUT THE NON-MENTION OF THE TANMĀTRAS IN THE GĪTĀ AND ITS PRIORITY TO THE SĀṂKHYAKĀRIKĀ

In his well-known work "*The Bhagavad-gītā : philosophy of God-realization*" Dr. R. D. Ranade remarks : "We have to make an important statement here about the *tanmātras* in proof of the priority of the *Bhagavad-gītā* to the systematized Sāṁkhya philosophy. That the *tanmātras* are not mentioned by the *Bhagavad-gītā* might evidently be taken to be an argument for its priority. That these are developed in Sāṁkhya philosophy later is out of question." (pp. 25-26).

In this passage Dr. Ranade seems to formulate three assertions, namely (1) the *tanmātras* are not mentioned in the *Gītā*; (2) this non-mention proves that the *Gītā* is prior to the systematized Sāṁkhya philosophy; and (3) the *tanmātras* are developed in the Sāṁkhya philosophy in a later period (i. e. long after the composition of the *Gītā*).

According to us, these assertions are fully baseless and they show lamentable weakness of modern critical research as the following arguments would show.

(A) It is quite wrong to hold that the *Gītā* does not mention the *tanmātras*. The *Gītā* statement पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः (13-5) must be taken as referring to the *tanmātras*. The word *indriyagocarāḥ* (object of the senses) cannot mean

here the *bhūtas*, for the *bhūtas* are separately mentioned in the first foot of this stanza by using the word *mahābhūta*. The commentators also take this expression as referring to the *tanmātras*.¹

Similarly the verse 7.4 enumerating the eight *prakṛtis* must be taken as referring to the *tanmātras* (though the very word has not been used). While commenting on this verse the commentators often speak of the *tanmātras*.²

It should be noted in this connection that the mere absence of the use of the word *tanmātra* cannot be taken as a sign for proving non-acceptance of the *tanmātra* doctrine by the *Gītā*. We are to observe whether the entity *tanmātra* (which is the product of *ahaṃkāra* and is the material cause of the *bhūtas*) has been referred to directly or indirectly.

(B) Even if the *Gītā* does not mention the *tanmātras*, this non-mention cannot be taken as proving the priority of the *Gītā* to the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, for the *tanmātras* are mentioned in such works as are prior to or contemporary with the *Gītā* and the author of the *Gītā* cannot be supposed to be ignorant of those works which must have been deemed by him as highly authoritative. If any doctrine is regarded by a teacher as valid, its non-mention (and not refutation) in any of his compositions does not prove that the teacher has shunned the doctrine as invalid.

1. इन्द्रियगोचराश्च पञ्चतन्मात्ररूपा एव (Śrīdhara). As Śaṅkara says that this stanza speaks of twenty-four Sāṃkhyan tattvas, he must have taken this expression as referring to the *tanmātras* (पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः शब्दादयो विषयाः, तान्येतानि संख्याः चतुर्विंशति तत्त्वानि आचक्षते). Giri comments: "उक्तेषु तन्मात्रादिषु तन्त्रान्तरीयसंमतिमाह-तानीति"

2. पृथिवीतन्मात्रमुच्यते न स्थूला. 'भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा' इति वचनात् । तथा अभादयोऽपि तन्मात्राण्येवोच्यन्ते (Śaṅkara's bhāṣya on *Gītā* 7.4).

As for example the statement पृथिवी च पृथिवीमात्रा च in the *Praśna-Up.* (4.8) must be taken as clearly referring to the *tanmātras*. The expression ऋष्टकैःषड्भिः in the *Śvetāśvatara-Up.* (1.4) contains a reference to the *tanmātras* as they fall under *prakṛtyaṣṭaka* (vide the commentaries on this *Up.*). The word भूतमात्राः in *Kauṣītaki-Up.* 3.8 also refers to them. The expression पञ्च तन्मात्र is found in the *Maitrāyaṇī-Up.* (3.2). Even the *Rgveda*, according to Sāyaṇa, speaks of the *tanmātras*; vide his comment on the expression सप्तार्धगर्भाः in 1.164.36 (सप्त महदहंकारो पञ्च तन्मात्राणि मिलित्वा सप्तसंख्यानि तत्त्वानि) [We may not accept Sāyaṇa's exposition as valid, but it should be accepted that Sāyaṇa did not take it illogical to hold that the *Rgveda-saṃhitā* propounds the theory of the *tanmātras*].

(C) The aforesaid examples are quite enough to show that the author of the *Gītā* was aware of the doctrine of the *tanmātras*. It is needless to say that the aforesaid works were regarded by the author of the *Gītā* as highly authoritative. In spite of all that have been stated above, if it is proved that the *Gītā* does not contain any reference to the *tanmātras*, then we have no other alternative but to suppose that since the *tanmātras* did not fall under the province of the teachings of the *Gītā*, they were not mentioned in it. Thus it becomes fairly clear that the non-mention of the *tanmātras* in the *Gītā* proves nothing.³ A considerable number of important yoga-practices have not been stated

3. If we take the *Anugītā* and the chapters on Sāṃkhya-yoga in the "Śānti-parvan" (in the *Mbh.*) as by the same author, who composed the *Gītā*, the supposed non-mention of the *tanmātras* in the *Gītā* becomes meaningless, for these sections contain clear mention of the *tanmātras*.

in the *Gītā* (e. g. the means of subjugating sleep). Does this non-mention suggest that these yoga-practices were not known to the *Gītā* or that they were not regarded by the *Gītā* as valid means or that they were invented after the composition of the *Gītā*?

(D) The significance of the expression 'systematized Sāṃkhya philosophy' (used by Dr. Ranade) is not quite clear. According to the Sāṃkhya tradition the work by Pāñcaśikha is the first text that represented the systematized Sāṃkhya philosophy. After him, the sage Vārṣaganya, Devala and others are said to have composed works that represented the Sāṃkhya views in a systematized way. The literary history of India does not lend any support to the view that the *Gītā* is prior to the works by Pāñcaśikha, Vārṣaganya and Devala. That the works of these teachers dealt with the *tanmātras* is beyond doubt.⁴

If 'systematized Sāṃkhya philosophy' means the work known as the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* (I do not think that here Dr. Ranade takes the *Sāṃkhya-sūtra* and the *Tattvasamāsasūtra* as the works on systematized Sāṃkhya philosophy) the remarks of Dr. Ranade serve no purpose. Do we get anything philosophically valuable if the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* is proved to have been composed after the *Gītā* (though the dates of these two works have not been determined by modern scholars as yet) if we bear in mind that the pre-Kārikā treatises on Sāṃkhya (most of which were prior to the

4. पञ्च तन्मात्राणि is an aphoristic statement of Devala, quoted in the Aparārka comm. on *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* 3.10.9. That Vārṣaganya also dealt with the *tanmātras* is clearly proved from the following passage of the *Yuktidīpikā*: "एकरूपाणि तन्मात्राणीत्यन्ये । एकोत्तराणीति वार्षगण्यः" (on *Kā.* 22).

Gītā) dealt with the *tanmātras*? Thus it is quite clear that there is no ground in holding that the *tanmātras* are developed in the Sāṃkhya philosophy later.

(E) Dr. Ranade seems to suggest that since the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* speaks of the doctrine of the *tanmātras* which is wrong and since the *Gītā* does not mention the wrong doctrine of *tanmātra*, the *Gītā* must be older than the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, for the authors of later works are not supposed to be as authoritative (*āpta*) as the authors of the older treatises on 'adhyātmavidyā'. It is needless to say that in the case in question this way of argument is wholly irrelevant.

(F) In conclusion I want to draw the attention of my readers to an important point (not historical or literary) in this connection. Does Dr. Ranade mean to assert that before the composition of the *Gītā* there was none in India who directly perceived the *tanmātras* and as such the doctrine of the *tanmātras* was not known to the author of the *Gītā*? The *tanmātras* are perceived through a particular form of the *samprajñāta samādhi*. Was this *samādhi* not practised by yogins at the time of the *Gītā*? Will Dr. Ranade go to the length of saying that this *samādhi* was invented after the composition of the *Gītā*? It should be known that the acquisition of some of the supernormal powers depends upon the realization of the *tanmātras* and these powers are mentioned not only in the *Gītā* but in the pre-*Gītā* works also.

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