

## सम्पादक-मण्डल

- डा. रामकरण शर्मा  
भूतपूर्व कुलपति, सम्पूर्णानन्द संस्कृतविश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी; नयी दिल्ली  
डा. रामचन्द्र नारायण दाण्डेकर  
भण्डारकर प्राच्यशोधसंस्थान, पुणे  
डा. जोर्जो बोनाजोली

### EDITORIAL BOARD

- Dr. R.K. Sharma  
Formerly Vice-Chancellor, Sampurnanad Sanskrit University,  
Varanasi; 63 Vigyan Vihar, New Delhi - 110092.  
Dr. R.N. Dandekar  
Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune  
Dr. Giorgio Bonazzoli, M.A. (Milan); M. Th. (Rome)

### EDITOR

Ram Shankar Bhattacharya. M.A., Ph.D., Vyakaranacharya

### ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Ganga Sagar Rai, M.A., Ph.D.  
Oscar Pujol, M.A.

लेखेषु प्रतिपादितानि मतास्चि लेखकैरेवाभ्युपगतानि; न पुनस्तानि  
सम्पादकैरन्यासेन वाभ्युपगतानीति विज्ञेयम् ।

Authors are responsible for their views, which do not bind the Editors  
and the Trust.

Authors are requested to use Devanāgarī characters while writing  
Sanskrit ślokas and prose passages. They are also requested to follow the  
system of transliteration adopted by the International Congress of  
Orientalists at Athens in 1912 [ऋ = r; च् = c; छ = ch; ढ = ḍ; श् = ś;  
ष् = ṣ; ढ् = ṁ].

Traditional Sanskrit scholars are requested to send us articles in  
Sanskrit (i) dealing with the religious & philosophical matters in the  
Purāṇas and (ii) explaining the obscure & difficult passages in the  
Purāṇas.

## पुराणम्-PURĀNA

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1]

[February 4, 1996

### माघपूर्णिमाऽङ्कः

### MĀGHĀ-PŪRNIMĀ NUMBER

### Contents-लेखसूची

	Pages
1. गङ्गास्त्रोत्रम् [Eulogy of Gaṅgā] <i>Compiled By Dr. Ram Shankar Bhattacharya</i>	1-2
2. पञ्चगङ्गाष्टकम् [Eight Verses in Praise of Pañcagaṅgā] <i>Compiled By Sri Rampad Chakravarti</i>	3-5
3. Advaitic Concepts in the Purāṇas [पुराणेषु अद्वैतविचाराः] <i>By Dr. N. Gangadharan;</i> 15 Devan Colony, Muthalamman Koil Street Extn., West Mambalam, Madras 600033	6-24
4. Expressions and Colloquialism in the Purāṇas [पुराणेषु व्यवहारभाषाप्रयोगाः] <i>By. Smt. Prof. Dr. Sindhu S. Dange;</i> Gimnar, Gokhale Road, Mulund (East), Fort Bombay-81	25-32
5. Archaeology and the Bhāgavata [पुरातत्त्वं भागवतं च] <i>By Prof. R.N.Mehta;</i> 8 Shreyas Society, Race Course (West), Baroda-7	33-42

- Vāmana Purāṇa, Cultural study of (S), Trivedi, Mahanand, Sampurnanand, 1975, Ph.D.
- Varāha Purāṇa, Cultural study of, (S), Pandey Viswanath, Sampurnanand, 1976, Ph.D.
- Varāha Purāṇa; A study of, (H), Tripathi, Usha, Gorakhpur, 1983, Ph.D.
- Varāha Purāṇa; A study, (H), Bhatt, Nareṣh Bhagavatshankar, Patel, 1977, Ph.D.
- Vāyu Purāṇa, Legends of, (H), Tyagi, Shyama Devi, Meerut, 1979, Ph.D.
- Vāyu Purāṇas, Critical survey of the geographical material in the Nilamata, Matsya Viṣṇu and, Saxena, Savitri, Delhi, 1964, Ph.D. ✓
- Viṣṇu and Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Comparative study of, (S), Tripathi, Rammilap, Sampurnanand, 1970, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu, Critical and comparative study of the, and Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Sharma, Hukum Chand Vasisht, Punjab, 1975, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu, Critical survey of the geographical material in the Nilamata, Matsya and Vāyu Purāṇas, Saxena, Savitri, Delhi, 1964, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Cosmology in the, Sharma, Anita, Delhi, 1985, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Critical study of the, Bagai, Santosh, Delhi, 1975, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Critical study of the culture and philosophy of the, (H), Chaudhary, Damodar Prasas, Bihar, 1978, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Critical study of the religious, social and historical data in the, Chauhan, Manohar Singh, Agra, 1964, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Cultural aspects of the, Thakur, Harendra Dayal, Patna, 1970, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Dharma in, (H), Pandey, Ravindranath, Gorakhpur, 1982, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Philosophy in the, Tyagi, Seetharam, Durgavati, 1986, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇudharmottara, Critical edition of. Kāṇḍa 111, Adhyāya 1-88 with an introduction, critical notes and indexes and appendices, Shah, Priyabala Jivanlal, Bombay, 1951, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa, Study of the Kāvyaśāstra portion of, (H), Misra, Paramanand, H.S.Gaur, 1984, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa, Cultural study of the, Shukla, Lakshmi Chand, Delhi, 1979, Ph.D.
- Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa, Polity in, Shastri, Devrattan, Jammu, 1977, Ph.D.
- Vratas in the Smṛtis and Purāṇas with special reference to Upāsanaś, Sharma, Rani, Delhi, 1977, Ph.D.

\*\*\*

## TAPAS AS DESCRIBED IN THE PURĀṆAS \*

BY

RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

[प्रत्येकं पुराणेषु तपसां विवरणमुपलभ्यते, यदाश्रित्य निबन्धोऽयं प्रणीतः । पञ्चप्रकरणविभक्तेऽस्मिन् निबन्धे इमे विषया यथाक्रमं विवृताः - पौराणिकसंस्कृतौ तपसः प्रसिद्धिः, तपसो महत्ता, तपःपरकं शास्त्रम्, तपसो गौरवितं स्थानम्, तपसः प्राशस्त्यम् अप्राशस्त्यं च, तपसां पौराणिक्यः सूच्यः, तपःशब्दार्थः, तपसः स्वरूपम्, मुख्यं गौणं च तपः, तपसो विशेषणानि, तपसां भेदाः, तपोऽनुकूलानि स्थानानि, तपःसंबन्धिनो दोषा गुणाश्च, तपःसंबन्धि काल-वयआदिकम्, तपःकारिणो वानप्रस्थाः, वानप्रस्थार्थं शास्त्रम्, तपःकारिणां विशेषणानि, तापसानां तपःस्थलानि, तपस उपायरूपता, तपसां विशिष्टानि फलानि च ]

## I. The cult of tapas

## Introductory

Though tapas (austerity, penance, self-castigation) does not fall under any of the five original topics (*lakṣaṇas*) of the Purāṇas, (namely *sarga*, *pratisarga*, *vaṁśa*, *manvantara* and *vaṁśyānucarita*), yet they mention tapases in various occasions, chiefly in the descriptions of the *vānaprastha āśrama*, procedure of worship and vows and often in the delineations of the lives of almost all sages and some particular kings and even *asuras*. Though the Dharmasūtras and Smṛtis also deal with tapases, yet Puranic description of tapases is of varied nature and seems to contain many details not found in the Sūtras and Smṛtis. A few tapases are mentioned in the Purāṇas only.

In the following pages an attempt is being made to present the Puranic material on tapases. The richness of Puranic material on tapases may be known from the Puranic passages given in the appendix by way of example.

Tapas seems to have become an inseparable part not only of the individual life but of the social life also. This may be known from the Puranic assertion that elder and respected persons are said to be of three kinds, namely *Jñānavṛddha*, *tapovṛddha* and *vayovṛddha* (Bṛhan-nāradyā-p. 23.34). The influence of tapas was so deep that the Puranic

\* 'Purāṇas' include the two epics and the Harivaṁśa.

authors thought it worthwhile to mention which of the sacred places were not resorted to by *tapasvins* on account of fear; vide Sk. Kumārikā 1.12.11-12 in which five such places are mentioned, namely Kumāreśa, Stambheśa, Barkareśvara, Mahākāla and Siddheśa.

It is interesting to note that we find a word-play on *tapas* in Skanda-p. Kumārikā 4.13. The Brahmins are shown here to declare that their wealth is taken away by the 16th and 21st mute (Sparśa) letters: स्पर्शेषु षोडशं चैकविंशं गृह्णन्ति नो धनम् . The 16th letter is त् and the 21st is प् and thus the word तप (स्) is indicated. This undoubtedly shows the popularity of *tapas* in ancient India.

The influence of *tapas* may be known from the fact that in ancient India some places were named after the names of the persons who practised *tapas* there; येन यत्र तपस्तप्तं तस्य नाम्नातिविश्रुतः (SK. Nāgara. 12.13; Devībhāgavata-p 6.12.13). This is said to justify the names of the Vāmana-āśrama and the Satyayūpa āśrama. There are hundreds of names based on this principle. There is no doubt that the names like Bharadvāja āśrama, Agastya āśrama, Dālbhya āśrama, Kaṇva āśrama etc. are based on this principle. Place names like Garga-srotas (Śālyap.37.16), Bhṛgutuṅga etc. (that do not bear the word āśrama) are also based on this principle.

A point is to be noted in this connection. There are a considerable number of places where reputed persons practised *tapas*, though the places were not named after the names of the *tapasvins*. This shows that the principle holds good in those cases where either the places of *tapas* had no names, or the places had non-significant or less-known names.

It should not be understood that the Puranic-description of *tapases* as practised by individuals are true. Authors of the relevant passages, who were directly or indirectly acquainted with various kinds of *tapases*, usually mentioned those *tapases* as they thought proper according to the situation and also to their sectarian view-point. That is why sometimes similar *tapases* are mentioned in connection with different persons. It is remarkable to note that more or less identical verses are found in the descriptions of *tapases* practised by Dharmarāja (in Sk. Dharmarāya 3.4-8) and Harikeśa (in Sk. Kāśī 32.134-144) in one and the same Purāṇa.

#### Glorification of *tapas*

It is wellknown that *tapas* is given a high position by the authors of the Purāṇas. <sup>1</sup> Even a divine character is given to *tapas*, for it is regarded as

one of the ten divine attributes of God; see Vāyu-p. 10.65-66; Kūrma-p. 1.10.39-40 (cr.ed.) Brahmāṇḍa-p. 3.2 218-219; Saura-p. 23.16.17. Puranic authors aver that *tapas* is at the very root of all deeds of great persons: महत्कर्माणि यानीह तेषां मूलं सदा तपः (Sk. Kumārikā 25.6) and declare that the accumulation of *tapas* is superior to that of wealth (तपः-संचय एवेह विशिष्टो धनसंचयात्, Padma-p. 5.19.246). They lay stress on the fact that *dharma* performed with the help of *tapas* is conducive to *mokṣa*:

योऽर्थेन साध्यते धर्मः स क्षयिष्युः प्रकीर्तितः ।

यः पुनस्तपसा साध्यः स मोक्षायति मे मतिः ॥

(Sk. Nāgara 32.41 Ven.).

The glorious position of *tapas* may be inferred from such statements as assert that *tapas* associated with *śama* (restrain of internal organs), *dama* (restrain of external organs) etc. is said to constitute what is known as *brahmaprakṛti* (tendency of the Brahmin) (Bhāgavata-p. 11.17.66) and that it is utter foolishness to apply *tapas* for the fulfilment of petty desires, for it is capable of conferring liberation:

यस्त्वेतत् कृच्छतश्चीर्णं तपो निःश्रेयसं महत् ।

कामायाल्पीयसे युञ्ज्याद् बालिशः कोऽपरस्ततः ॥

(Bhāgavata-p. 11.18.10)

#### Original *śāstra* on *tapas*

The Mahābhārata informs us that *tapas* was one of the themes that were treated in the *śāstra* composed by Brahmā, the Pitāmaha (Śānti-p. 59.141). This may not be a historical statement but it can reasonably be presumed that ancient teachers regarded the practice of *tapas* as coming from hoary past. The frequent mention of *tapas* along with its results in the Vedic Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas testifies to the antiquity of the cult of practising *tapas*.

In this connection it is worthy of note that in the Purāṇas we find mention of particular *tapases* that are said to be spoken out by Brahmā. A severe *tapas* called Mahāniyama is one of such *tapases* (Śānti-p. 340.46):

The antiquity of *tapas* may be proved by the statement 'tapas was chiefly practised in the Satyayuga (तपः परं कृतयुगे Śānti-p. 23.28). This *tapas* must not be taken as physical mortification but as characterised by

(ends of life) are (figuratively) taken as identical with *tapas*: तप एव परो धर्मस्तप एव परं वसु । तप एव परः कामो निर्वाणं तप एव हि ॥ (Sk. Kāśikhaṇḍa 51.33) ven. ed.

1. There is no need to quote any Puranic passage for this assertion. It is enough to quote the following verse by way of sample in which the four Puruṣārthas

*jñāna* (*jñānamaya*) (cp. यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः, Muṇḍaka Up. 1.1.9), for in a similar verse the Vāyu-p. (8.65) reads *dhyāna* in the place of *tapas* and the Brahmāṇḍa-p. (2.7.59) reads *jñāna*. This is corroborated by two verses on the duties in the Kṛtayuga of Bhāgavata-p. 11.17.10-11 (आदौ कृतयुगे.....उपासते तपोनिष्ठाः) in which *tapas* is associated with *upāsana*.

#### Dignified position of Tapas

On account of possessing a highly efficacious character *tapas* has been viewed in various ways by the authors of the Purāṇas. A few of such notions are given below.

*Tapas* is regarded as (i) one of the sources (*mūla*) of Sanātana-dharma (Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.30.37-38); (ii) one of the four feet of Dharma, the other three being *vidyā*, *dāna* and *satya* (Bhāgavata-p. 3.13.25); (iii) one of the *mahāguṇas* (Bhāgavata-p. 1.16.27-30); (iv) one of the seven gates of *svarga* (Matsya-p. 39.22); (v) one of the five members of *siva-dharma*, the other four being *karman*, *japa*, *dhyāna* and *jñāna*; (vi) one of the ten means of virtuousness (Padma-p. 2.69.5; the printed reading ततो ध्यानं is to be corrected to तपो ध्यानं); (vii) one of the eight component parts of *dharma* (Mbh. Vana-p. 2.75); (viii) one of the eight duties or observances (*caritras*) that constitute *siṣṭācāra* (Matsya-p. 145.38-39); (ix) one of the yogic *niyamas* which are said to be five, ten or twelve in different Purāṇas (Viṣṇu-p.6.7.31; Agni-p. 161.20; 382.31-32; Liṅga-p. 1.8.29-30; Sk. Dharmāraṇya 5.20-21; Garuḍa-p. 1.218.12-13; Bhāgavata-p. 11.19.34; V.Dh. U. 3.233.202; Sk. Kāśīkhaṇḍa 35.33).

#### Superiority as well as inferiority of tapas

*Tapas* has sometimes been given a superior position than that of *yajña* and the like.<sup>1</sup> Similarly it is regarded as superior to renunciation and *sannyāsa*; vide Kūrma-p. 1.19.33-45 (cr.ed.) where it is said that on being asked which is to be preferred out of *tapas*, *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* that lead to *śreyas* (highest good) Vasiṣṭha, Pulastya, Pulaha and other sages expressed their opinion in favour of *tapas*.

On the other hand *tapas* is sometimes regarded as inferior to certain virtues. As for example, *tapas* is regarded as inferior to *japa* (the muttering of sacred syllables) in Liṅga-p. 1.75.13 and Śiva-p. 1.17.147. The expression *tapasvibhyo' dhiko yogī in* Gītā 6.46 undoubtedly suggests the inferiority of *tapas* in comparison to internal yoga practice. A

1. यज्ञाच्च छेयस्तथा तपः (Vāyu-p. 91.114); तपो यज्ञादपि श्रेष्ठमित्येषा परमा श्रुतिः (Śānti-p. 79.17). कर्मयज्ञसहस्रेभ्यस्तपोयज्ञो विशिष्यते liṅgs-p. 1.75.13); क्रियायुक्तदशम्यश्च तपोयुक्तो विशिष्यते (Śiva-p. 1.17.146).

similar position is given to *tapas* in Śānti-p. 13.9 (तपस्यागोऽविधिरिति निश्चयस्त्वेष धीमताम् । परं परं ज्याय एषां येषां नैःश्रेयसी गतिः ). In the ladder consisting of *tapas*, *tyāga* (renunciation) and *avidhi* (i.e. *naiṣkarmya*) *tapas* is placed on the first or lowest rung.

Reason for this apparently conflicting view is not difficult to seek. The conflict is based on the specific senses in which *tapas* and *tyāga* and other virtues are taken. To be explicit: *Tapas* is said to be inferior if it is taken chiefly in the sense of physical mortification without having any connection with some degree of spiritual development; *tapas* is held to be superior if it is helpful in acquiring one-pointedness, meditation and the like. (In this form also the element of a particular kind of external restraint does exist to a considerable degree.) In such examples virtues like renunciation and the like are taken in a narrow sense. A mechanical act of renunciation is certainly inferior to *tapas* that possesses a considerable degree of internal restriction.

#### List of tapases

For interested readers we are giving here a list of references to those Puranic passages in which a large number of *tapases* are mentioned. In this connection it should be noted that these passages mention *tapases* sometimes by names, sometimes by direct descriptions, sometimes by using epithets to ascetics. Sometimes *tapases* are indirectly known from the acts performed by ascetics. (These lists are not exhaustive).

(A) Passages on the third or Vānaprastha āśrama:- Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 28.24-27; Bhāgavata-p. 11.18.11.19; Agni-p. 160; Viṣṇu-p. 3.7.18-23; Nārādīya-p. 1. 27.85-91; 1.43.120-122; Padma-p. 5.15, 33/- 349; Garuḍa-p. 1.102. 1-6; Kūrma-p. 2.27.1-38 (cr.ed.); Viṣṇudharmottara-p. 2.130; Devī-p. 2.9-13; Bṛhannārādīya-p. 25.46-52; Bṛhadharma-p. 3.7; Saura-p. 20.1-10; Narasimha-p. 59; Mbh. Śānti-p. 244; Anuśāsana-p. 142.4-59.

A few *tapases* (chiefly mental) are sometimes mentioned in the passages on the fourth or *sannyāsa āśrama* also, which are usually found after the description of the third *āśrama*.

(B) Passages describing hermitages etc. Kūrma-p. 2.37.93-102. Varāha-p. 212.7-15; Bhāgavata-p. 1.18.25-27; 103.33-35; 4.34.46; Brahmāṇḍa-p. 2.50.36-43; Sk. Kāśīkhaṇḍa 22.13-21; Nāgarakhaṇḍa 1.5-9; Ch. 4; Ch. 206; Viṣṇukhaṇḍa Ayodhyā Ch. 9; Mbh. Anuśāsana-p. 14.55-59; Sāmba-p. 42.16-36.

(C) Passages describing *tapases* practised by individuals: Rāmāyaṇa 1.70.30-32 (Cyavana); Bhāgavata-p. 10.3.33-35 (Vasudeva and Devakī); 4.8.71-80 (Dhruva); Matsya-p. 148.10-12 (Tāraka); 35.12-17 (Yayāti); Brahmāṇḍa-p. 2.22.69-78 (Paraśurāma); Narasimha-p. 25.22-

28 (Ikṣvāku); Vāmana-p. 24.7-11 (Kaśyapa); Sk. Setu 39.35-37 (Viśvāmītra); Sk. Prabhāsa 14.8-10 (Jaigīṣavya); Sk. Kumārikā 25.25-29 (Pārvaṭī); Sk. Dharmāranya 3.4-8 (Dharmarāja); Sk. Kāśī 32. 134-144 (Harikeśa); Mbh. Vana-p. 38.22-27 (Arjuna); Vana-p 12.11-16 (Kṛṣṇa) Śānti-p. 261.13-37 (Jājali); Vana-p. 167.14-17 (Arjuna); Ādi-p. 118.7-21 (Pāṇḍu); Ādi-p. 118.32-37 (Pāṇḍu); Śānti-p.9.4-11 (tapases intended to be performed by Yudhiṣṭhira).

## II. Nature and kinds of tapases

### The word tapas

From the passage व्रतं हि कर्तृसन्तापात् तप इत्यभिधीयते (Agni-p. 175.3) it is clear that the word tapas is derived from the root *tap santāpe* (Bhvādi; *santāpa*, literally burning). This shows the character of tapas; tapas invariably causes pain to the person who practises it. This *santāpa*<sup>1</sup> is due to the bearing of opposites<sup>2</sup> or of the adverse circumstances with the view of acquiring some goal.

The above quoted passage points to the difference between vows (*vrata*) and tapas. The sentence केन व्रतेन चीर्णेन तपोवृत्तिः प्रजायते (Saura-p. 14.11) suggests that tapas is to be performed by a person who is capable of performing *vratas*, which are of the nature of *saṅkalpa* (mental resolve) as has been expressly stated by Medhātithi on Manu 4.13 (मानसः संकल्पो व्रतमुच्यते शास्त्रविहितमिदं मया कर्तव्यम् इदं वा कर्तव्यमित्येवम्).

### Essential characteristic of tapas

A consideration of Puranic passages reveals that tapas is understood in the following three forms:

1. Cp. the view of Devabodha (the commentator of Mahābhārata): तपः कारयेन्द्रियसन्तापनो धर्मः on Udyoga-P.43.12). This is the reason that some of the expiatory rites like Kṛcchra, Sāntapana etc. (that cause pain to their practitioners) are regarded as tapas as is found in the Vyāsabhāṣya commenting on the word tapas under Yogasūtra 2.32 (व्रतानि चैव यथायोगं कृच्छ्रचान्द्रायणसान्तापनादीनि).
2. उपवासपराकादिकृच्छ्रचान्द्रायणादिभिः । शरीरशोषणं प्राहुस्तपसां तप उत्तमम् ॥ (Kūrma-p.2.11.21); चान्द्रायणादिभिर्यस्तु शरीरस्य विशेषणम् । तपस्तु गदितं सद्भिर्योगसाधनमुत्तमम् ॥ (Bṛhannāradya-p.31.89); शरीरशोषणं चापि कृच्छ्रचान्द्रायणादिभिः (Garuḍa-p.1.229-20 said as an alternative view); चान्द्रायणादिनिपुणस्तपांसि सुशुभानि च (Liṅga-p.1.8.38; the sentence refers to tapas as one of the *niyamas*). Passages like तपसा कर्षितोऽत्यर्थं कृशो धमनिसन्ततः (Kūrma-p.1.19.39) also shows that the chief characteristic of tapas is physical mortification.

(i) Tapas is essentially physical and it invariably creates a considerable degree of pain to the practitioner; <sup>1</sup> it is often regarded as 'the drying up of the body'.

(ii) Tapas is chiefly mental <sup>2</sup> i. e. it is of the nature of restrain primarily of the internal organ and secondarily of the external organs.

(iii) Mere mortification of the body is not to be taken as tapas; only that external restrain is to be taken as tapas which helps one to realize the self or to attain various spiritual goals.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes this form of tapas is regarded as the higher form of tapas.

It appears that originally the word tapas must have been used in the sense of those rigorous acts which were willingly practised to fulfil some purpose. These acts invariably cause more or less bodily mortification (*santāpa*). Mental development was not of much importance in this form of tapas. When this view came to be onesided i. e. when mere mortification came to be regarded as tapas, the second view came into existence as a reaction. The third view is a reconciliation of these two views, and it is accepted in the schools of philosophy.<sup>4</sup>

Tapas is undoubtedly of the nature of an act: रजस्तमोघ्नं यत् कर्म तपसस्तत् स्वलक्षणम् (Śānti-p. 217.16). The nature of the act must be eradivative of the *rājasa* and *tāmasa* qualities like distraction, unattentiveness, idleness, sleepiness, etc. In another place the Mahābhārata refers to this view by saying: तपः स्वधर्मवृत्तित्वम्.<sup>5</sup>

One point is to be noted in connection with bodily mortification (*śarīra-śoṣaṇa*). According to the general view of tradition tapas is

1. इन्द्रियाण्येव संयम्य तपो भवति नान्यथा (Mbh. Vana-p.211.18); संन्यासं तप इत्याहुर्वृद्धा निश्चितवादिनः (Aśvamedha-p.47.1); संन्यासं परमं तपः (Śānti-p.161.9); मनसश्चेन्द्रियाणां च ऐकाग्रं परमं तपः (Brahma-p.130.18; Agni -p.372,19; Garuḍa-p 1.229.20, as an alternative view); अहिंसा सर्वतः शान्तिस्तप इत्यभिधीयते (Liṅga-p.1.10.19) कामत्यागस्तपः स्मृतम् (Bhāg. P. 11.19.37); Śrīdhara observes: कामत्यागो भोगोपेक्षा तपो न कृच्छादिः).
2. This may be proved by those Puranic passages that mention both internal and external restrain: ब्रह्मचर्यं जपो मौनं निराहारत्वमेव च । इत्येतत् तपसो मूलम् (Vāyu-p. 59.41); तपसा कर्षितोऽत्यर्थं यस्तु ध्यानपरो भवेत् । संन्यासी स हि विज्ञेयो वानप्रस्थाश्रमे स्थितः ॥ (Garuḍa-p.1.49.13).
3. Cp. तत्त्वं चित्तप्रसादनम् अबाधमानम् अनेनासेव्यम् इति मन्यते (Vyāsabhāṣya2.1); Vācaspati remarks: तावन्मात्रमेव तपश्चरणीयं न यावता धातुवैषम्यम् आपद्येतेति (Tattvavaiśāradī).
4. तपः स्वधर्मवृत्तित्वमिति भारतदर्शनाद् आश्रमविहितं कर्म (Kullūka on Manu 12.104). तपः ... त्वम् occurs in Mahābhārata; see Vana- parvan, Appendix no.19 and 32.
5. तपश्चासाधारणो धर्मो वानप्रस्थानां कायक्लेशप्रधानत्वात् तपःशब्दस्य तत्र रूढेः (Śārīraka-bhāṣya 3.4.20).

*kāyakleśapradhāna* (one in which bodily torture is in predominance).<sup>1</sup> This view is particularly true if tapas is taken as a form of *prāyaścitta* (expiation) to get rid of the ill consequences of some sinful act, or as a means of achieving some gross worldly gain. But if tapas is performed as a *yogāṅga* (an auxiliary act of yoga) i. e. as a means for realizing the self, then the element of bodily mortification becomes secondary<sup>2</sup> (though bodily restraint is not totally overlooked). That is why the Puranic authors sometimes emphatically declare that non-violence, truthfulness etc. are to be known as tapas and not the 'drying up of the body'.<sup>3</sup>

This view is presented in various ways. Vāyu-p. 59.41 remarks that the source of tapas (*tapaso mūlam*) is celibacy, muttering of sacred syllables, silence and fasting. Śānti-p.221.4 holds that a fast for a long time is considered *tapas* by the ignorant; according to the wise it is not so, for a such a fast may create obstacle to self-knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

#### Tapas—original and secondary

A peculiar use of the word tapas is found in the Purāṇas. While in some Puranic passages tapas is viewed as a distinct virtue like *ahimsā*, *satya*, *dayā* and the like (for tapas along with *ahimsā* etc. is read in one and the same sentence),<sup>5</sup> in other passages virtues like *ahimsā*, *satya* etc. are regarded as the forms of tapas. This apparently anomalous use deserves to be considered. The reason for taking tapas in two different positions is as follows:

The essential nature of tapas is 'the endurance of opposites in a particular way'. This endurance is not the same as the virtues (*ahimsā*, *satya* etc.) in their theoretical forms. In fact the endurance is connected with the practice of these virtues. To be explicit: if a person wants to

1. शरीरं तु तपो घोरं सांख्याः प्राहुर्निरर्थकम् (Mahābhārata, p. 6013 Gita press ed; it occurs in the southern recension of the Mahābhārata.)
2. अहिंसा सत्यवचनमानुशंस्यं दमो घृणा । एतत् तपो विदुर्धैरा न शरीरस्य शोषणम् ॥ (Śānti-p. 79.18); व्यावृत्तस्यैव दोषेभ्यो यस्तु वासो गुणैः सह । उपवासं तमाहुस्तु न शरीरस्य शोषणम् ॥ (quoted by Haradatta on G.Dh.S.19.11 with the remark 'इति पुराणे दर्शनात्'.)
3. यदिदं तप इत्याहुरुपवासं पृथग्जनाः । मासपक्षोपवासेन मन्यन्ते यत् तपो जनाः । आत्मतन्त्रोपघातस्तु न तपस्तत् सतां मतम्. Nilakanṭha observes आत्मतन्त्रम् आत्मविद्या तस्या उपघातो विद्मः. Cp. Bhāgavata-p.7.12..22 (यथा बुद्धिर्न विपद्येत कृच्छतः).
4. विद्या दानं तपः सत्यं धर्मस्येति पदानि च (Bhāgavata-p.3.13.25); वेदाभ्यासस्तपो ज्ञानं मिन्द्रियाणां च संयमः ॥ अहिंसा गुरुसेवा च निःश्रेयसकरं परम् । (Agni-p.165. 4b-5a); प्रत्याहारं विनिर्दिष्टं परमं तत् तपः स्मृतम् (V.Dh.U.3.281.1).
5. ब्रह्मचर्यं तथा मौनं निराहारत्वमेव च ॥ अहिंसा सर्वतः शान्तिस्तप इत्यभिधीयते । (Līṅga-p.1.10.18b-19a); संन्यासं तप इत्याहुर्वृद्धा निश्चितवादिनः (Aśvamedha-p 4.7.1); अहिंसा सत्यवचनमानुशंस्यं दमो घृणा । एतत् तपो विदुर्धैराः (Śānti-p.79.18); मूलं हि सर्वधर्माणां ब्रह्मचर्यं परं तपः (Sk. Revā. 194.24).

practise truthfulness he shall necessarily have to curb or overcome the desire of telling lies with a view to gaining something and to face its consequences with a cheerful or peaceful mind. This is what is meant by 'the endurance of opposites' (*dvandvasahana*). Thus it stands to reason that whenever a person practises any act of high morality, he shall have to overcome some amount of *dvandva* and this fact is the reason for regarding *ahimsā*, *satya* etc. as the forms of tapas. Such figurative use is found in all the branches of Sanskrit literature.

#### Some significant epithets of tapas

It is noteworthy that while mentioning tapases, Puranic authors often use some qualifying expressions like *para*, *parama*, *ugra*, *duścara*, *ghora*, *dāruṇa*, *uttama* etc.<sup>1</sup> Though sometimes they are used for metrical reasons, but in some places they are evidently used to serve some purpose. As for example in some places these are used to show the character of the tapas, i. e. the development in the internal excellence or external severity of the tapas; in other places these are used to denote a particular kind of tapas as is found in Harivamśa 1.25.4 (अनुत्तरं नाम तपः) in which the word *anuttara* is apparently used as an adjective of tapas. Though *anuttara* (in the sense 'one that has no superior') may be rightly construed with tapas, yet the commentator Nilakanṭha takes it in the sense of *mauna* (silence), evidently on the strength of the word *nāma*. A similar example is found in the passage स महानियमो नाम तपश्चर्यासु दारुणः (Śānti-p. 340.46). The description of the tapas as given in 340.47 shows that it is a particular kind of tapas. The external severity of tapas seems to be the reason for the epithet *dāruṇa*.

In सुदुश्चरं नाम तपः (Brahmāṇḍa-p. 2.65.3) *suduścara* does not seem to be the name of a tapas but a qualifying expression. Here *nāma* may be taken as suggesting *prasiddhi* or any other suitable sense.

#### Kinds of tapases

Tapases have been divided in various ways. The most popular division is based on the three *guṇas*. Accordingly tapases are either *sāttvika* (in which the *Sattva* *guṇa* is predominant) or *rājasa* or *tāmāsa*. That form of tapas is *sāttvika* which is performed without attachment, without likes or dislikes and without any desire for acquiring worldly

1. तप उत्तमम् (Śānti-p. 222.5; Bhāgavatā-p. 4.23.7); तपस्युग्रे (Bhāgavatā-p. 4.13.4); तपः अतिदुश्चरम् (Br. Nār-p. 14.48); तपो घोरम् (Vana-p. 187.5); परमं तपः (Brahma-p. 130.18); तपश्चर्यैश्चोग्रैः (V. Dh. U.2.131.42); तपो नानशानात् परम् (Śānti-p. 161.7); तपश्चर्यासु दारुणः (Śānti-P. 340.46).

prosperity but is directed to some spiritual goal; a *rājasa* tapas is that which is performed with egotism, arrogance and the like and with a strong desire for secular results; and a *tāmāsa* tapas is that which is prompted by violence and undertaken by delusion without proper consideration.<sup>1</sup>

For practical purposes tapases are said to be of three kinds, concerning speech (*vācika* or *vāṅmaya*), body (*śārīra* or *kāyika*) and the mind (*mānasa*). For the definitions of these three, see *Gītā* 17.14-16.

A two-fold division of tapases is found in *Śānti*-p. 217.17:

ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ।  
वाङ्मनोनियमः सम्यङ् मानसं तप उच्यते ॥

Here *vācika* tapas is included in the *mānasa* tapas and *śārīra* tapas is taken in a broader sense. Though the inclusion of *vācika* tapas in *mānasa* tapas seems to be illogical, yet this inclusion has some basis. The organ *vāc*, though external, expresses what is conceived by the mind (यद्धि मनसाभिगच्छति तद् वाचा वदति, *Tāṇḍya* Br. 11.1.3) and thus the function of the *vāc* may be taken under the function of the mind.

### III. Factors connected with Tapas

#### Places favourable to practising tapas

From the *Purāṇas* it appears that the places especially favourable to tapas are not only the holy places of land but forests, caves of mountains and banks of rivers. That is why *vānaprasthas* (whose chief object is to practise tapas) are said to resort to *tirthas*, *prasravaṇas* (springs), fountains and forests.

Not only the persons entering the *vānaprastha āśrama*, but particular sages, kings and others are sometimes said to go, at any time, to some forest, mountain, *tirtha* or *kṣetra* to practise tapas in order to fulfil some purpose. Women also sometimes went to forests to practise tapas; as for

example after the death of *Kṛṣṇa*-*Satyabhāmā* and other wives of *Kṛṣṇa* went to forest with the desire of practising tapas as stated in *Mbh.* *Mausala*-p. 7.74. *Gāndhārī*, *Kuntī*, *Satyavatī* (*Vyāsa*'s mother) and some others are said to go to forest to practise tapas in the last part of their life.<sup>1</sup>

Since particular places, forests etc. are highly favourable to tapas on account of some reasons; they are rightly called *tapaḥkṣetra*—extremely fit for practising tapases. It appears that this epithet was given deliberately so that people would think that in these places their practice of tapas would necessarily be successful or that the places being favourable to tapas success would be achieved by exerting less effort or in less time.

In the *Purāṇas* following places are frequently said to be *tapaḥkṣetras*: *Kurukṣetra*, *Puṣkara*, *Badarikāśrama*, *Bhṛgutuṅga*, *Jambūmārga*, *Kalāpagrāma*, *Śrīparvata*, *Prabhāsa*, *Prayāga*, *Vārāṇasi*, *Pṛthūdaka*, *Himālaya* (mt.) *Kālañjara* (mt.), *Amarakaṇṭaka* (mt.), and *Nādeśvara*. Forests known as *tapaḥkṣetras* are the following: *Dharmāraṇya*, *Puṣkarāraṇya*, *Daṇḍakāraṇya*, *Gṛdhrāraṇya*, *Guruvisālavana*, *Devadāruvana*, *Naimiṣāraṇya*, *Pañcavaṭī*, *Magadhāraṇya*, *Siddhāraṇya*, *Dvaitavana*, *Saindhavāraṇya*, *Kurujāṅgala* and *Utpalāraṇya*

The glorified position of forests in the field of practising tapas may be known from such statements as तपस्तप्यति योऽरण्ये found in several *Purāṇas* (*Garuḍa*-p. 1.49.12. *Kūrma*-p. 1.2.78 cr.ed.) and also from two passages जगाम तपसे वनम् and प्रपेदे तपसे वनम् found frequently in the puranic descriptions of the lives of sages and kings. There are strong reasons to believe that there arose a 'forest cult' in ancient India and it lasted for a long period. The following verse of the *Mahābhārata* may be considered in this connection:

वननित्यैर्वनपरैर्वनस्थैर्वनवासिभिः ।

वनं गुरुमिवासाद्य वस्तव्यं वनजीविभिः ॥ 2

(*Anuśāsana*-p. 142.13).

1. सात्त्विकं राजसं चैव तामसं त्रिविधं स्मृतम् ।  
विज्ञेयं हि तपो व्यास सर्वसाधनम् ॥ ९ ॥  
सात्त्विकं देवतानां हि मुनीनामूर्ध्वरेतसाम् ।  
राजसं दानवानां हि मनुष्याणां तथैव च ॥ १० ॥  
त्रिविधं तत्फलं प्रोक्तं मुनिभिस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ।  
जपो ध्यानं तु देवानामर्चनं भक्तिः शुभम् ॥ ११ ॥  
सात्त्विकं तद्धि निर्दिष्टमशेषफलसाधकम् ।  
इह लोके परे चैव मनोऽभिप्रेतसाधनम् ॥ १२ ॥  
कामनाफलमुदिश्य राजसं तप उच्यते ।  
निजदेहं सुसंपीड्य देहशोषकदुःसहैः ॥ १३ ॥  
तपस्तामसमुद्विष्टं मनोऽभिप्रेतसाधनम् ।  
(*Siva*-p. 5.20.9-14). (The fourth foot of verse 9 is metrically defective).

1. Names of a considerable number of women, who practised tapas, are found in the *Purāṇas*. The daughter of *Sāṅḍilya* (*Mbh.* *Salya*-p. 54), *Śivā* (*Udyoga*-p. 109.19) and the daughter of *Kuṅḍi Gārgya* (*Salya*-p. 52) are wellknown examples mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*.  
2. *Vanajivin* is the same as *vānaprastha*, which is explained as वने प्रकर्षेण नियमेन तिष्ठति चरतीति वनप्रस्थः, वनप्रस्थ एव वानप्रस्थः. (*Mitākṣarā* on *Yāj. Smṛti* 3.45).

### Two conditions for rendering tapas well-developed

The Mbh. declares that tapas becomes well-developed (*samṛddha*) when it gets rid of faults or defects (*doṣas*) and at the same time it becomes endowed with qualities or excellences (*guṇas*):

दोषैरेतैर्विमुक्तं तु गुणैरेतैः समन्वितम् ।

एतत् समृद्धमप्यृद्धं तपो भवति केवलम् ॥

(Udyoga-p. 43.39)

*Doṣas* are said to be nineteen (12+7)- क्रोधादयो द्वादश यस्य दोषास्तथा नृशंसानि च सप्त राजन् (Udyoga-p. 43.15). Twelve *doṣas* are mentioned in 43.16, namely *krodha* (wrath), *kāma* (desire), *lobha* (avarice), *moha* (delusion), *vidhitsā* (craving), *akṛpā* (mercilessness), *asūyā* (cavilling), *māna* (vanity), *śoka* (grief), *spṛhā* (hankering) *īṛṣyā* (envy), and *jugupsā* (reviling).

In 43.19 the seven faults are mentioned. These faults are to be derived from the seven adjectival expressions referring to these faults: (1) *sambhogasaṁvid* (one who is full of thoughts about enjoyment), (2) *viṣama* (not equiposed), (3) *atimānin* (possessing hautiness), (4) *dattānutāpin* (one who repents of generosity), (5) *kṛpaṇa* (a miserly person), (6) *vargaprasāmsin* (one who exteems his group). and (7) *vanitām dveṣṭā* (one who hates one's wife).

*Guṇas* (excellences) are chiefly *dama*, *tyāga*, *apramāda* and *vairāgya* (see verses 12,23,28,29 and 35).

### Age, time and duration concerning the practice of tapas

There is no injunction about the age for taking up the practice of tapas, nor any statement about the age suitable for such practice. Persons in their childhood are described as going for practising tapas, even severe tapas, as we find in the life of the celebrated devotee Dhruva, who was of four or five years of age (चतुःपञ्चाब्द) at the time of practising tapas (Viṣṇu-p. 1.11.34). Kings are usually said to embrace the life of an ascetic at the later part of their life.

We find no specific mention of any particular time for taking up the practice of tapas in general. There is however mention of seasons in connection with some particular tapases, as is found in Sk. Prabhāsa 21.12-13 (वर्षास्वाकाशशायी च हेमन्ते सलिलेशयः ॥ पञ्चाग्निसाधको ग्रीष्मे) and in other Purāṇas.<sup>1</sup> Some tapases have connection with month, day or night; cp. the expressions like मासोपवासिन् (Sk. Nāgara 169.42); एकान्तरितभोजन

1. ग्रीष्मे पञ्चतपाः वर्षास्वप्नायकाशिकः । आर्द्रवासाश्च हेमन्ते (Agni-p. 160.3); (Cp. Bhāgavata-p. 10.3.33 (वर्षवातातपहिमघर्मकालगुणाननु । सहमानौ .....)).

(Sk. Nāgara 206.3), त्रिरात्रभोजिन् (Sk. Nāgara 198.59), and the pasages like ये वै दिवा निरुच्छासाः (Sk. Kāśī 22:16).

Tapases are sometimes shown to have been practised for a very long period—one or several years. Mention of *sahasra* and *ayuta varṣas* (Vāyu-p. 90.3;94.10, Śiva, Rudra 3.22.52 etc.) is to be taken as mythical.

### IV. Practitioners of tapases

#### Tapas and vanāprasthas (forest hermits)

Passages saying about the practice of tapas in forests by *vānaprasthas* are found almost in all the Purāṇas. Only a few of such passages are quoted below:

- |                                                |                         |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (i) वानप्रस्थास्तपस्यन्तोऽनुसंचरन्ति           | (Śānti-p. 192.1).       |
| (ii) होम.....तप एव च । धर्मोऽयं वनवासिनाम्     | (Kūrma-p. 1.2.41cr.ed.) |
| (iii) तपो हि यः सेवति काननस्थो                 | (Narasimha-p. 59.10).   |
| (iv) यस्त्वेतां नियतश्चर्यं वानप्रस्थश्चरेत्   | (Viṣṇu-p. 3.9.23).      |
| (v) वानप्रस्थः प्रकुर्वीत तपश्चान्द्रायणादिकम् | (Br. Nāradya 25.52).    |

(Puranic chapters on the *vānaprastha āśrama* have already been referred to in the first section of the article).

#### Peculiar character of the Vānaprasthas

It is remarkable to note that the *vānaprasthas* were so strict in maintaining their character as ascetics (*tapasvins*) that they wholeheartedly refrained from taking any help or service from others and consequently they came to be known as *svaśarīropajīvin* (lit. one who lives by his own body; Anuśāsaṇa-p. 142.3), i. e. one who is one's own servant, otherwise called 'svayam̐dāsa' (Nilakaṇṭha's comment).<sup>1</sup> This evidently shows that *vānaprasthas* were not allowed to keep servants to look after their works. That this was a fact may be known from the descriptions of the *vānaprastha*-life of kings and the like as found in the Purāṇas.

#### The Śāstra of forest hermits

The Purāṇas inform us that a person practising tapas in a forest is called a *vaikhānasa*: 'साधनात् तपसोऽरण्ये साधुर्वैखानसः स्मृतः (Vāyu-p. 59.24; Liṅga-p. 1.10.9) and that the *vānaprasthas* were required to follow 'srāvāṇa vidhi' (विधिना श्रावणेनैव Śānti-p. 21.15b-16a). The import of the word is not quite clear. Nilakaṇṭha's explanation of *srāvāṇena* by *śāstra-*

1. See also Bhāgavats-p. 11.18.6 (स्वयं सचिनुयात् सर्वं नाददीतान्यदाहृतम्). It appears that on account of the tiresome life the Śānti-p. 243.21 uses the expression निरानन्द while describing forest-hermits.

*śravaṇād vihiteṇa'* seems to be farfetched and unconvincing. The original word seems to be *śrāmaṇa* (vide Haradatta's comments on G. Dh. S. 3.26; Vasiṣṭhadharmasūtra 9.10). The critical ed. of the Mahābhārata however reads श्रीमणेनेव in 21.15.

#### Division of vānaprasthas

In the Garuḍa-p. (1.49.11-13) <sup>1</sup> *vānaprasthas* are found to be divided into three classes, namely *vanavāsīn*, *vanastha* and *sannyāsīn*. Respective duties of these three classes are described here also. It appears that in the duties of the first class, bodily hardship is predominant; of the second class, external worship is predominant; of the third class, mental control is predominant. <sup>2</sup>

A fourfold division of forest hermits is given in Bhāgavata-p 3.13.27. The classes are: *Vaikhānasa*, *Valakhilya*, *Audumbara* and *Phenapa*. <sup>3</sup>

#### Attractive descriptions of persons practising tapas

Some of the Puranic descriptions of persons practising tapas are found to be extremely charming; see the description of Mārica Kaśyapa in Vāmana-p. 24.7-11; of Kapila in Brahmāṇḍa-p. 2.53.17-21.

Significant epithets bearing the word tapas are often used (in referring to persons practising tapases), namely *ugratapas*, *taptatapas*, *mahātapas*, *dīrghatapas*, *tapaḥkuśala*, *taponiṣṭha*, *taponitya*, *tapaḥprasita*, *tapoyukta*, *prathita-tapas*, *tapaḥ-samṛddha*, *tapomūrti*, *taporāśī*, *tapaḥ-śīla* etc.

A few examples of noteworthy epithets showing the physical aspect of the ascetics are given in the footnote. <sup>4</sup> Since these epithets are used in connection with more than one ascetic in the Purāṇas, there is no need to mention the names either of the ascetics (to whom they are used) or of the particular Purāṇas.

1. भूमौ मूलफलाशित्वं स्वाध्यायस्तप एव च । संविभागो यथान्यायं धर्मोऽयं वनवासिनाम् ॥ ११ तपस्तप्यति योऽरुण्ये यजेद् देवाञ् जुहोति च । स्वाध्याये चैव निरतो वनस्थस्तापसोत्तमः ॥ १२ ॥ तपसा कश्चितोऽत्यर्थं यस्तु ध्यानपरो भवेत् । संन्यासी स हि विज्ञेयो वानप्रस्थाश्रमे स्थितः ॥ १३ ॥ (१/४९ अ.) ।
2. Cp. Kūrma-p. 1.2.42 in which tapas is regarded as one of the essential dharmas (duties) of bhikṣus or sannyāsīns.
3. The commentator Śrīdhara shows the distinctive nature of these classes as: वैखानसा अकृष्टपच्यवृत्तयः । बालखिल्या नवेऽत्रे लब्धे पूर्वसंचितान्नत्यागिनः । औदुम्बराः प्रातरुत्थाय यां दिशं प्रथमं पश्यन्ति तत आहृतैः फलादिभिर्जीवन्तः । फेनपाः स्वयंपतितैः फलादिभिर्जीवन्तः ।
4. तेजसा भास्कराकारैः स्थितः, अग्निशिखोपमः, हुताशवद् दीप्यमानः, निवातस्थप्रदीपवत्, निभृताम्भोधिसंनिभः, ज्वालामाल इवानलः, शुद्धदेहः, विद्युदम्बोरुहनिभा जटा बिभ्रत्, अनल इव दीप्तः, दीप्यमान इवानलः, आदित्यसंकाशाः, त्रेताग्निसमविग्रहः, तेजोमयः, महातेजाः, अग्निसमप्रभः, ज्वलनोपमः, ओजसा दीप्यमानः, तेजोभिर्ज्वलन्निवः, भास्करप्रभः, ज्वलिततेजाः, घोषितप्रभः, ज्वलन्निव तेजसा, विधूम इव पावकः, स्वतेजसा दीप्यमानः, ज्वलन्निव पावकः, ज्वलिततेजाः.

#### Places where renowned persons practised tapases

The Purāṇas are sometimes found to mention the names of those places where somebody practised tapas. A few names of such places along with the names of the practitioners in brackets are given below:-

Bindusaras (Bhagīratha)-Matsya-p. 121.26; Brahmāṇḍa-p. 2.18.31; Mbh. Vana-p. 145.44. Daṇḍakāraṇya (Gotama)-Brahma-p. 85.41; 147.2; Varāha-p. 71.10. Dhūtapāpā River (Rudra)-Brahmāṇḍa-p. 3.13.20. Kanakhala (Garuḍa)-Padma-p. 1.20.67; Matsya-p.183.69. Badarikāśrama (Mitra and Varuṇa)-Matsya-p. 201.24. Haridvāra (Māṇḍavya)-Padma-p. 6.135.37; 6.21.1; 6.22.18. Indradyumna-saras (Pāṇḍu)-Mbh. Ādi-p.. 119.10; Vana-p. 199.9-11. Mandara mountain (Śiva)-Vāmana-p. 51.74. Muṇḍapṛṣṭha hill (Śiva)-Vāyu-p. 111.15.

#### V. Results of practising tapas

##### Tapas as a means

That tapas is one of the powerful means for acquiring secular as well as spiritual goals has been stated in the Purāṇas, which use the word 'tapoyoga' in the sense of 'tapas as a yoga', i. e. *upāya*, means (Vana-p. 105.11). Puranic authors are aware of the fact that all other means can work successfully if they are aided by tapas. This notion is expressed by the Purāṇas by saying that tapas is at the root of all means (तपोमूलं हि साधनम्, Śānti-p. 161.4).

About the efficacy of tapas two views are propounded in the Purāṇas: (1) A person who is bereft of tapas cannot acquire the results of his efforts, <sup>1</sup> and (2) anything difficult to be acquired can be realized through tapas. <sup>2</sup> Since everything can be realized through tapas, the authors of the Purāṇas boldly assert that tapas is at the root of the world (तपोमूलमिदं जगत्, Sk. *Caturaśītiliṅga* 11.7). The sentence is regarded here as a Śruti.

Tapas is regarded as one of the five great means that are enjoined in the Vedas and the Purāṇas: वेदशास्त्रपुराणेषु पञ्चैते गतयः स्मृताः (Anuśāsana-p. 16.65). The five *gatis* are: *yajña*, *tapas*, *karmasannyāsa*, *vairāgya* and *jñāna*. The commentator Nilakaṇṭha remarks that the goal of practising tapas is to attain the region of stars (*nakṣatraloka*). The Agni-p. (379.1-2) also speaks of these five means and remarks that the region (*loka*) known

1. नह्यतप्ततपा मूढः क्रियाफलमुपाश्रुते (Śānti-p. 161.1); नातप्ततपसां सिद्धिं महत्-कर्माणि यान्ति वै (Sk. Kumārikā 25.6).
2. यद् दुस्तरं यद् दुरापं यद् दुर्गं यच्च दुष्करम् । तत् सर्वं तपसा साध्यं तपो हि दुरतिक्रमम् (V. Dh. S. 2.266. 13-14); यद् दुरापं भवेत् किञ्चित् तत्सर्वं तपसो भवेत् (Śānti-p. 161.5).

as *vairāja* can be achieved through *tapas* (*vairāja* mans 'pertaining to Virāj, who is a gross form of Hiraṇyagarbha or Hiraṇyagarbha himself).

It is needless to say that innumerable Puranic verses declare that the practice of *tapas* is essential for realizing the self or attaining emancipation<sup>1</sup> and that it is helpful in eradicating impurities and blemishes.

#### Remarkable results of tapases

The Purāṇas frequently speak of remarkable results that are acquired through *tapas*. Only a few of such results are stated below :

(1) That acquirement of supernormal powers is dependent on *tapas* may be known from such statements as ऐश्वर्यमृषयः प्राप्तास्तपसैव न संशयः (Śānti-p. 161.5; mark the expressions एव and न संशयः) According to the Bhāgavata-p. there are five means of attaining such powers, namely birth, medicinal herbs, *tapas*, *mantra* and *yoga*.<sup>2</sup> The view is evidently based on Yogasūtra 4.1 (जन्मौषधिमन्त्रतपःसमाधिजाः सिद्धयः).

Since *tapas* is at the root of the whole phenomenal world (त्रैलोक्यं तपसा व्याप्तमन्तर्भूतेन भास्वता Śānti-p. 217.15), a *tapasvin* becomes able to acquire supernormal powers as has been remarked by Nīlakaṇṭha on the above verse (अतएव योगिनां व्यवहितादिसाक्षात्कार उपपद्यते).

(2) In several Purāṇas Vedic mantras are said to have been manifested in the minds of the sages practising *tapases*.<sup>3</sup>

(3) After practising *tapas* for one thousand divine years, the Creator is said to have pronounced the three sounds *bhūr*, *bhuvār* and *svar* (Sk. Avantikṣetra 4.13) and to have created all things and beings through the power of *tapas*.

1. तपसा चानुमानेन निनीषेत् परमं पदम् (Śānti-p.205.19); ज्ञानेन तपसा चैव धीराः पश्यन्ति तत् पदम् (Aśvamedha-p. 47.3); तपसश्चरणैश्चोद्रेः साधयन्तीह तत्पदम् (V. Dh. U. 3.139.42); See also Śiva-p. 7.1.6.72; Kūrma-p. 1.13.44 (cr.ed.); Bhāgavata-p. 11.18.9 (One practising *tapas* is said to attain Bhagavat by passing through the *ṛsiloka*).
2. जन्मौषधितपोमन्त्रैर्यावतीरिह सिद्धयः । योगेनाप्नोति ताः सर्वाः (Bhāgavata-p. 4.6.9). It is held here that all the supernormal powers that are acquired through birth, *tapas* etc. may also be acquired through *yoga*; Cp. Yogasūtra 4.1 (जन्मौषधिमन्त्रतपः समाधिजाः सिद्धयः) । The Bhāgavata-p uses *yoga* for *samādhi* of the Yagasūtra. The comm. Śrīdhara has quoted this sūtra while commenting on this verse. The printed reading of the sūtra as quoted in the commentary slightly differs (जन्मौषधितपोमन्त्रयोगजाः सिद्धयः) from the traditional reading of the sūtra, see also Bhāgavata 4.6.9 (जन्मौषधितपोमन्त्रैर्योगसिद्धैः) ।
3. ऋषीणां तप्यतां तेषां तपः परमदुश्चरम् । मन्त्राः प्रादुर्भवन्त्यादौ पूर्वमन्वन्तरस्य ह ॥ (Matsya-p. 145.62; Vāyu-p. 59.60; Brahmanḍa-p. 1.32.67; See also; युगान्तेऽन्तर्हितान् वेदान् सेतिहासान् महर्षयः । लेभिरे तपसा पूर्वमनुज्ञाताः स्वयंभुवा ॥ (Śānti-p. 210.19).

(4) It is well-known that the effect of curses (*śāpas*) and boons (*varas*) given by ascetics on account of being arrogant and pleased depends absolutely on the power of *tapas* of the ascetics. Sometimes we find even the mention of one's own *tapas* while cursing or bestowing boons, A capital example may be found in Gāndhāri at the time of cursing Kṛṣṇa saying पतिशुश्रूषया यन्मे तपः किंचिदुपार्जितम्.....शप्से चक्रगदाधर ॥ (Striparvan 25.42).

(5) The most astonishing result of *tapas* is to create reversal in the nature of animals. This is found in Puranic passages describing a hermitage or a person practising *tapas* or meditation.<sup>1</sup> It is shown in these descriptions that animals of opposite nature are behaving like friends or ferocious animals are playing with beasts of prey in the presence of yogins. Such a reversal of nature is undoubtedly due to the influence of *tapas*; cp. the Yogasūtra अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः (2.35).

It is needless to say that *tapas* enables a person to attain secular results like fame, beauty, fortune, span of life, prosperity, offspring, death of enemy, victory in battle etc.<sup>2</sup> Interested readers may go through Ch. 57 of the Anuśāsana-p. of the Mahābhārata which contains a list of *tapases* with their respective results.

\*\*\*

1. Sk. Revākhaṇḍa 192.11-16 (*Tapas* practised by Nara-nārāyaṇa); Sk. Nāgara. 1.10-11; Brahmanḍa-p. 2.50.6-13; 2.51; Anuśāsana-p. 14.61.
2. तपोमूलं महत् सुखम् (Mbh. Śalya-p. 48.14); सौभाग्यं रूपमुत्तमम् । तपसा लभ्यते सर्वं (Agni-p. 382.13); तपसा प्राप्यते यशः । आयुःप्रकर्षो भोगाश्च लभ्यन्ते तपसा विभो ।.....रूपं संपत् तथैव च । सौभाग्यं चैव तपसा प्राप्यते भरतर्षभ ॥ (Anuśāsana-p. 57.8-9).