INFLUENCE OF NĀTHAYOGIS ON TELUGU LITERATURE

M. Venkata Reddy* & B. Rama Rao**

ABSTRACT

Nāthayogis were worshippers of Śiva and played an important role in the history of medieval Indian mysticism. Nine nāthas are famous, among whom Mātsyendranātha and Gorakhnātha are known for their miracles and mystic powers. There is a controversy about the names of nine nāthas and other siddhas. Thirty great siddhas are listed in Ṣhātadhyāyī and Ṣhātadhyāyīvalī. The influence of nātha cult in Andhra region is very great. Several literary compositions appeared in Telugu against the background of nathism.

Nannecodadeva, the author of Kumārasambhavam mentions ṣadānanga and also respects the nine nāthas as ādisiddhas. Two traditions of āsanas after Vaiśisṭha and Mātsyendra are mentioned by Kolani Gaṇapati-deva in Śivayogasāramu. He also considers vajrāsana, muktāsana and guptāsana as synonyms of śiddhāsana. Śuka, Vānadeva, Mātsyendra and Janaka are mentioned as adepts in Śivayoga. Nava-rāthacaritra by Gaurana is a work in the popular metre dealing with the adventures of the nine nāthas. Phanibhaṭṭa in Paratattvarasāyanamu explains yoga in great detail. Vedaṇṭavārtikam of Paramānandayati mentions the nava-nāthas and their activities and also quotes the one and a quarter lakh varieties of laya. Vaidyasāramu or Nava-nātha Siddha Pradīpikā by Erlapāṭi Perayya is said to have been written on the lines of the Siddhikriyas written by Nava-nātha siddhas.

INTRODUCTION:

All the nāthas or nāthayogis are worshippers of Śiva and followers of Śaivism which is one of the oldest religious cults of India. The Śaiva cult is very ancient and is found in Vedas also. The rudrādhyāya in Yajurveda and other hymns are supposed to be the basis for the Śaiva cult. The remains at the Mohenjodaro civilization

*Yoga Supervisor, Vemana Yoga Research Institute, Market Street, Secunderabad-500 003.
**Asst. Director incharge Indian Institute of History of Medicine, Hyderabad-500 001.
have also revealed some evidence showing the existence of Śiva worship.

The nāthayogis played an important role in the history of medieval Indian mysticism. These yogis or nāthas worshipped God as Nātha—the Supreme Master. The worshippers of Nātha were adepts in yoga, which was supposed to give them supernatural powers. Among the nāthas Matsyendranātha and his most able disciple Gorakṣanātha, are known throughout India for their marvellous performances of miracles and mystic powers.

There is a controversy about the names of navanāthas—the nine nāthas. Thirty great Siddhas of haṭhayoga are listed in Haṭhapradīpikā and Haṭharatnāvalī. An earlier work, entitled Nāthalīlāmṛta in Sanskrit also gives a list of siddhas, which appears to be the common source for the two later works. Haṭhapradīpikā and Haṭharatnāvalī. The only difference is that the name of Allamaprabhu, which does not find place in Nāthalīlāmṛta, is included in Haṭhapradīpikā and Haṭharatnāvalī. A list of the nine nāthas is also found in Gorakṣa Siddhānta Saṅgraha. In this list the name of Ādinātha as guru (preceptor) is found and then occur the names of Matsyendranātha, Udayanātha, Daṇḍanātha, Santoṣanātha, Kūrmanātha, Bhavanāji and Gorakhnātha, the son of God.

Though Andhra region is not supposed to be the birth place of nāthas, the influence of nātha cult in this region is very great. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Andhra region was very favourable for the growth and spread of Nāthism. Nāthic practices permeated into the society of Andhra people. The religious rites and practices of this region were deeply hued with the practices of Nāthism.

All the varieties of literary creation in Telugu language have taken place against the background of Nāthism. Works on śaiva cult appeared in Telugu in various forms of poetry like dvipada kāvyas, prabandhas, yaksagānas, šatakas, udāharaṇa kāvyas. geya kāvyas.

Apart from the above, Purāṇas and Sthalapurāṇas also appeared on śaivism in Telugu. Among all these, geyakavyas which are like folk songs, have been very popular.
KUMĀRASAMBHAVAMU:

KUMĀRASAMBHAVAMU was written by Nannecoḍadeva, a śaiva poet around twelfth century (1130 A. D.). Telugu literature of early and medieval period does not abound in original works. Telugu works of this period were so completely immersed with the Sanskrit original that the material drawn, the language used, the technique employed and the ideas developed are translations or copies of material created originally in Sanskrit. But the work Kumārasambhavamam is an exception to this.

Kumārasambhavamam is dedicated to Jaṅgama Mallikārjunadeva, who lived at śrīśailam and was a great pāśupataśaiva yogi. The Jaṅgama Mallikārjunadeva is supposed to be a contemporary of Allama-prabhudeva. Nannecoḍadeva had a very great reverence for his preceptor and he describes his guru as below:

Mallikārjunadeva was worshipped by all yogis, who are experts in all branches and the six aṅgas of yoga like prāṇāyāma etc, was the greatest doyen of yogis, was the embodiment of the knowledge itself, was well versed in the literature of Vedas, six aṅgas (branches of Vedas) sciences and philosophies (śāstra) purāṇas, epics, āgamas and all arts, was the preceptor of all vidyās and was the incarnation of or the form of supreme self.

These descriptive adjectives are applicable not only to his guru Jaṅgama Mallikārjuna, but to the Lord Jaṅgama Mallikārjunadeva, the deity of śrīśaila as well. Jaṅgama Mallikārjuna was a great yogi of śaiva cult.

The term Navanātha is found associated with the doctrine of siddha cult and this is probably the earliest use of the term in the available Telugu literature. Kumārasambhavamam refers to Jaṅgama Mallikārjuna as a follower of śaḍaṅgayoga-the yoga concept with six aṅgas (steps) only. śaḍaṅgayoga is mentioned in Gorakṣaśatakā. The poet Nannecoḍadeva points out in the ninth chapter that the nine nāthas are to be highly respected as they are "Ādisiddhas".
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ŚIVAYOGASĀRAMU AND MANOBOODHA:

The author of these two works, Ganaṇapārādhya, otherwise known as Ganaṇapatideva, is the grandson of the brother of Indulūri Annaya, the great Brāhmaṇa General, who married Ruyyāmba, the daughter of Kākatiya Queen Rudramadevi (1258-1296 A.D.). The surname of the poet is Kolani and the poet's grandfather Indulūri Gannayarudra is known as Kolani Rudra since he ruled over Kolanivīdu (Kolani region), the present Eluru in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. Since the General lived during the time of Pratāparudra II (1295-1326 A.D.), Ganaṇapatideva might have lived around 1400 A.D.

Chronologically 'Manobodha' is the first of Ganaṇapatideva's works and it is also the first work on vedānta-philosophy-in desi metre in Telugu literature. The following verse in Śivayogasāramu, the magnum opus of Ganaṇapatideva mentions the authorship of the two works.

'I composed, in the desi Telugu language (akin to spoken language), in an unparalleled way, the treatises Paśupāśapatiṭījāṇa and Suśa- rīrabhavavijaya Manobodha.'

The title kāntāsahodaruḍu (brother of ladies) found in Manobodha is also mentioned in Śivayogasāramu in a verse as 'anyāṅganāsahodaruḍu'-brother of women or wives of other men.

Written in desi metre in popular language, Manobodha clearly explains the principles of vedānta in a manner that it is easily understood by the common folk. The revival of the desi metre began during the time of Kākatiya rule primarily owing to the efforts of Śaiva poets who handled higher philosophical themes without the aid of Sanskrit technicalities and brought out the vedānta from ecclesiastical mathas and libraries to the understanding of ordinary folk in desi language which was genuinely indigenous. This is followed by Ganaṇapārādhya. He adopted in Śivayogasāramu, the kāvyā style for scholars and desi style in Manobodha for the common people at large.

Āsanas: More interesting and informative is the history of yogic practices than the history of yogic terms. One, for example, is the
word “āsana”. Meditative āsanas like padmāsana, siddhāsana, etc. are described in several ancient texts. There are some variations regarding the practices also. Two traditions are known with regard to āsanas—(1) Vasiṣṭha tradition and (2) Matsyendra tradition. This classification is found in hathayogic treatises like Haṭhapradīpikā and Haṭhaharatnāvali. Śivayogasāramu is an earlier work than Haṭhapradīpikā, though some of the āsanas adopted by sages like Vasiṣṭha and yogis or siddhas like Matsyendra are described in both.

From the statement in Śivayogasāramu “āsanas are as accepted by sages like Vasiṣṭha and also by siddhas like Matsyendra etc.” it is evident that Gaṇapatideva accepted the two traditions of āsanas after sage Vasiṣṭha and yogi Matsyendra.

Another important fact is that Gaṇapatideva considers āsanas like vajrāsana, muktāsana and gulphāsana or guptāsana to be synonyms of siddhāsana.

The relevant passage runs among these āsanas, the siddhāsana, which is revealed by Matsyendra is called by some as vajrāsana, by others as muktāsana and also as gulphāsana by some others.

Śvātmārāma later followed the same view. It is possible that both might have drawn this from another common source. Other texts, however, differentiate these four āsanas.

While describing the greatness of yoga (yogamahīma) in Śivayogasāramu, Gaṇapatideva mentions śuka, Vāmadeva, Matsyendra and Janaka as the mahātmas (great souls) who are adepts in Śivayoga.

The prevalence and influence of haṭha yoga during the period can be assessed from the following sentence: It is only due to the influence of haṭha yoga that the very great saints like Ādinātha, Matsyendra and Gorakṣa wander in this universe according to their will and pleasure having conquered the daṇḍa weapon of kāla (time or yama,

*Sivayogasāramu first mentioned this tradition.
**Gaṇapatideva considers vajra, gupta and mukta āsanas as synonyms for siddhāsana. The Telugu tradition is different to Gheraṇḍa Samhitā, a Bengali tradition.
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The god of death) i.e. death and having acquired and adorned themselves with endless knowledge.

Ganapatideva’s work Śivayogasāramu has proved to be a source of inspiration for many a later writers on haṭhayoga as is seen from the treatises in Sanskrit and Telugu.

HARAVILĀSAMU OF ŚRINĀTHA:

Śrīnātha, the famous Telugu poet known as the Emperor of poets—kavisarvabhauma—was the Vidyādhikārin (Minister of Education) in the court of Pedakomati Vema Reddy (1403–1420 A. D.) of Koṇḍavīdu. He was the son of Māraya and Bhīmāmba. He composed many works in Telugu and also the inscriptions of Vema in Sanskrit. He praises Matsyendranātha in his Haravilāsamu as follows:

By worshipping the mother goddess, Matsyendranātha and others became the authorities of yoga.

SVARAŚĀSTRAMANJARI OF GANAPĀRĀDHYA:

Another work “Svaraśāstramanjari” by Gaṇapārādhyā is a Telugu rendering of original Sanskrit work which explains how good or bad events can be foretold according to the position of the Sun and the Moon. While mentioning various philosophical sects in this context, the name of Gorakṣa is mentioned.

NAVANĀTHACARITRA:


Navanāthacaritra by Gaurana, composed about 1376 A. D. gives a coherent account of the lives of the nāthas in Telugu and makes it clear that siddhas and nāthas are identical. This view is confirmed by other sources. The most important personage among them is Mīna-nātha who is said to be the son of Śiva-Pārvatī, sent to this world for the propagation of the śaiva cult and faith. It is also said that the last six siddhas went all over the world preaching the siddahkriyas.
There are no indications as to whether the poet Gaurana had any work as the basis for his treatise.

Gaurana dedicated Navanātha-caritra to Muktiśāntibhikṣa-vṛttiś-vara, the head of the important maṭha in Śṛiśaila, by the inspiration of Mallikārjuna of Śṛiśaila.

In Andhra region Śṛiśaila and Kālahasti, and the five āramas, Amarārāma at Amarāvati and Dākṣārāma and others have been the important śaiva centres of pilgrimage. There is a lot of śaiva literature developed not only as translations and adaptation of the original Sanskrit texts but also as accounts of the greatness and efficacy of these śaiva centres.

Gaurana was the son of Ayyalaprabhu and Pocāmba of Gautamagotra. His father was the nephew of Potaraju, the minister of Śīngaymādhava of Recarla family who ruled from Devarakonda.

Hence Gaurana, his nephew, must have lived some time later i.e. about 1400 A.D. Gaurana is already known to the Telugu world by his Hariścandropākhyāna in dvipada metre which is considered as a work of high literary merit in Telugu literature. Guarana was a poet both in Telugu and Sanskrit. He was a devotee of Bhramarāmbika, the goddess of Śṛiśaila who blessed him with poetic talents.

The upper classes of the society during this period were influenced by Brahmanism and the appeals of the śaivas were generally made to the masses and hence they chose the simple dvipada form of metre for their literary compositions. Even this story of Navanāthas was earlier written in the classical form i.e. Padya Prabandha by Śrīgirikavi. Poet Gaurana rendered it into the dvipada form as required by his patron, to popularise it among the masses.

The first two chapters while describing the adventurous wanderings of the śaiva guru Mīnānātha, particularly deal with the story of Śāṅgadhara. There is a general tradition among the Telugu people, centering this story around Rājarājānarendra-the Eastern Chalukyan king, who ruled the Telugu region in the early part of 11th century
A. D. from the capital Rājamahendravaram. But the scene of the action of the whole story of Šāṅgadhara is said to be Malwa region. Only the name of the king coincides and it is perhaps this coincidence that made Telugu people attribute the whole story to the Chalukyan king of Rājamahendravaram.

Though the story and the incidents have become popular in the Telugu region, it is likely that they did not gain currency in the Telugu country before 16th century A. D. since Gaurana would not have failed to connect the story with his own province. The two Andhra translators of Haṭhayogapradīpakā—D. Y. Doraswamayya (1904) and Raacakoṇḍa Annamayyaśāstri (1907) have connected the story of Caurāṅgi with the King Šāṅgadhara of Rājamahendravaram (Rajahmundry). Caurāṅginātha, another disciple of Māstyendra belonged to the Pāla dynasty of Bengal. Caurāṅginātha’s step mother had his hands and feet cut off and his body thrown into a forest. Here, he was discovered by Māstyendra, who initiated him and restored to his former self after 12 years of self-discipline by yoga. Caurāṅgi is believed to be the son of king Devapāla and Queen Māyāmati. The analogy of this story with that of Šāṅgadhara is significant in explaining this confusion.

The remaining three chapters of Navanātha-caritra deal with the further wanderings of Mīnanātha and his disciples and their pursuits in alchemy, parakāya-praveṣa (entering into the body of others-transmigration) and then attainment of vajradeha. They exhibited various powers of the siddhas.

The complete work written in Telugu is in a very simple style, keeping at the same time the dignity of the theme.

One important point in this topic deserves to be noticed. In Kaulajñānanirṇaya both the names Mīnanātha and Māstyendranātha are found in the colophons, and also in different copies of manuscripts of Akula Vīra Tantra. They have been proved by Bagchi to be identical persons. Navanātha-caritra also mentions these two names as identical.
PARATATTVARASĀYANAMU:

Telugu poets of the prabandha (classical) period generally selected some story for their theme from Purānic legends. Almost all poetic works in this period narrate some Purānic story or fiction in the prabandha style. Paratattvarasāyanaṁu of Phaṇibhaṭṭa is one of the very few prabandhas in Telugu literature that have vedānta or philosophy as their theme.

Phaṇibhaṭṭa explains yoga in great detail under Haṭhayoga. Śiva is said to have taught 84 lakhs of āsanas though the sages practised only 84. It also mentions the two siddha traditions of āsanas—Vasiṣṭha and Matsyendra. The efficacy of the āsanas is also brought out. The philosophic subjects like sāṅkhyā and yoga have no doubt been part of purāṇas and other works but in a very acute form. Telugu poets like Potana, Phaṇibhaṭṭa and Vemana have tried to give them a more popular treatment. Phaṇibhaṭṭa (1450-1500 A.D.) has given a reference cited above in this work “Paratattvarasāyanaṁu” as follows:

“There are several schools or opinions propagated by siddhas like Vasiṣṭha and Matsyendra.” The style of Phaṇibhaṭṭa is so simple and clear that the abstract ideas of vedānta and yoga are made sufficiently clear and interesting.

VEDĀNTAVĀRTIKAM:

Vendāntavārtikam of Paramāṇandayati orParamāṇandatīrtha (around 1600 A.D.) the true follower of Dattatreya cult, describes the fourfold classification of yoga. These are mantra, laya, haṭha, and rājayoga. According to him Ādīnātha was the oldest among the navanāthas. Laya is mentioned by Ādīnātha as of “one lakh and a quarter varieties”. In this connection Paramāṇandatīrtha cited the following verses from Haṭhapradīpikā: “Among these, laya is described as of one and quarter lakh varieties. Authority for this is the sentence ‘Ādīnātha has mentioned one lakh and a quarter (lakh) varieties of laya’ in Haṭhapradīpikā. Hence layayoga is in the form of a continuous flow”.
Paramānandatīrtha mentioned various non-vedic philosophical sects of Čārvāka, Jaina and Buddha. The names of navanāthas and their activities are also given. Satyanātha, Sālokanaṇātha, Ādinātha, Anādinātha, Mātsyendranātha, Ghaṭayantranātha, and Gorakṣanātha are identified. These names are mentioned in Gorakṣa Siddhānta Saṅgraha also.

**NAVANĀTHA SIDDHAPRADIPIKĀ:**

The influence of navanāthas is not only on yogic works but is also found on the Telugu medical works on Rasaśāstra and Ayurveda. Vaidyasāramu or Navanātha Siddhaprādipikā is said to have been written on the lines of the Siddhikriyas written by Navanāthasiddhas. The work has been dedicated to Śrī Rāma, worshipped at Bhadrācalam in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh. The name of the author is Erāpāṭi Perayya who belonged to Hārīta gotra and was the son of Vīrana and Sāvitrī. The scribe of this manuscript Mājeṭi Sarveśa-lingam was a close associate of C. P. Brown and it was copied before 1840. A.D.

M. Somesekharashtra, the well known authority on the history of Andhra, summarised thus the influence of nāthas, siddhas and the śaiva schools, on the Andhra region.

‘The popular śaivism seems, however, to have been encumbered by a number of religious practices and beliefs, gathered around it during its contact with other schools of śaivism, namely, Yogaśaiva cult of the Nāthasiddhas, and the śākta Tāntric cult which flourished in this period (1325-1448 A. D.) and had their own respective following. These two cults also had an indelible impression both on the Telugu literature and on the religious life of the people’.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


సారాంశ

టెలుగు సాహిత్యానికి నాయకుల కు ప్రభావం

ఏమ్ వెంకటరెడ్డి అండి రామారావు

నాయకులు చిత్ర కొన్ని ఉపయోగం ఉండేందుకంటే అతరినే భారతీయ రహ్మనుడు కే ఇతరించిన గంధాన్ని మంచినిమంచిన నాయకులను తీసి ప్రభావం ఉంది. నాయక సాధన సాధనాలు, జింకమే మత్యాన్ని తామా అనుమతించి మంచినిమంచిన నాయకులను తీసి ప్రభావం ఉంది. నాయకులు అన్ని సాధనాలు నాయకులు నూతన దినాలలో చేపానికటి దూరంగా ఉంటాయి.

యుగాలంంచిన రామారావు కు లేదు దండయోగం ఉల్లభంగా ఉంది. నాయకులు ఆధిత్యానికి సమాధానం చేయడానికా మంచినిమంచిన తాముండి దండయోగం ఉల్లభంగా ఉంది. ఆప్ వేశాచారం, మూల్భుతానం గుట్టాటి మంచినిమంచిన పరమార్థం కొ పాండి నాయకులను కొంచేసి ఉంటాయి. పాండి, వేశాచారం, మతయోగం అనంతం కొంచేసి ఉంటాయి. నాయకులు నాయకులు నాయకులు నాయకులను నాయకులు ఉల్లభంగా ఉంటాయి. గంధాన్ని నాయకులు అధీనంగా ఉంటాయి. నాయకులు నాయకులు నాయకులు నాయకులను నాయకులు ఉల్లభంగా ఉంటాయి. నాయకులు నాయకులు నాయకులు నాయకులను నాయకులు ఉల్లభంగా ఉంటాయి.