CHAPTER IV

GĀYATRĪ MANTRA \(^1\) AND IMAGE WORSHIP \(^2\)

Although all admit that the Gāyatri is the fundamental part \(^3\) of worship as directed in Śāstra, yet the characteristics of the present time make it necessary to consider it both in some degree separately, and also in connection with Tantra. For there are nowadays some who even ask: “What is the necessity for the adoption of Tānkīk Mantras when there is the Vaidik Gāyatri?” The reply is that there is no necessity if necessity for initiation ends with initiation; but those who, on the contrary, have to perform worship based on initiation must certainly be reintegrated according to the Tantra. For in the Kali age worship of Gāyatri is not possible according to the Vaidik method. Without reintigration in Tānik Mantra, worship of the Gāyatri even cannot be considered to be accomplished. Should anyone on that account regret because he thinks the Gāyatri is disgraced thereby then Gāyatri Herself\(^4\) will judge the matter. But there is no cause for lament. There is no fear that the line will fail even if the son should feel himself insulted and therefore die, when the grandson is taken in the arms. It is asked, what is the necessity? But we ask, where is even the want of it. Who will say that the boy who has passed the matriculation examination will not in time be eligible for studies suitable for a degree examination? However that may be, more of this hereafter. At present let us discuss what Gāyatri is according to Āryan notions. Is the Gāyatri mere words or Mantra? If it be merely the former, how can it be so supreme as to be accepted as the fundamental part\(^5\) of worship, the supreme Brahman Himself? If the glory of Gāyatri is due merely to its being a great saying, weighty and solemn, pure, full of sense and truth, then there are hundreds of thousands of great sayings in the Āryan Śāstras.

\(^1\) Gāyatri-tattva. The Gāyatri, the famous Mantra, is the essential tattva of Vedas: “Om, let us contemplate upon the wonderful spirit of the Divine Creator of the terrestrial, atmospheric, and celestial regions. May he direct our minds (towards the acquisition of Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa).”

\(^2\) Sākāra upāsana.

\(^3\) Tattva.

\(^4\) For the Mantra is the Devī Herself.

\(^5\) Tattva or principle.
which are equally replete with truth, and marked with more feeling and sweetness. Why, instead of worshipping them, do we worship Gāyatrī alone as the essential portion\(^1\) of all the Vedas? Why am I, whether learned or ignorant, with or without understanding, called a Brāhmaṇa provided I am initiated according to Śāstra in the Gāyatrī Mantra? Putting aside the world, why has the Lord of it said: “Every Brāhmaṇa is my body, he be learned or unlearned.” In Śrīmad Bhāgavata, Śrī Bhagavān has said: “Even this four-armed form\(^2\) dwelling in Vaikuṇṭha is not dearer to me than a Brāhmaṇa. A Brāhmaṇa is full of all Vedas, and I, too, am full of all Devas.” That is to say, the world is maintained by both Veda and Devatā, and both are therefore equally worshipful. But as all Vedas and myself who are full of all Devas, unite in the Brahma body of a Brāhmaṇa, the latter is the most worshipful of all.\(^3\) “Malicious and misguided men who know not this truth slight me who am the all-pervading Supreme Spirit, the Guru of the three worlds, and Brāhmaṇa in form, by worshipping my images and symbols only” (that is to say, by omitting to worship a Brāhmaṇa as Bhagavān). Manu says: “On the birth of a Brāhmaṇa, Ṣvāra Himself\(^4\) is born on earth in order to guard the sheath of Dharma of all creations.” For him who neglects the Gāyatrī, Śāstra again says in the Gāyatrī Tantra: “It is the embodied spirit of a twice-born person formed of Gāyatrī who is the worshipper of Devatā, and not the body nor senses, nor anything else. Viṣṇu, Śiva and other Devatās are fit objects of worship for him only who is such a Devatā. A Brāhmaṇa who neglects the Gāyatrī should not touch tulsi leaves nor take the name of Hari. A twice-born who neglects the Gāyatrī is like the lowest Caṇḍāla. What will he gain by worshipping Śri-Kṛṣṇa? If through ill-fortune a miscreant who forsakes Mantra, Guru and Deva is born in one’s family, he as well as all his kith and kin of the same gotra\(^5\) should do expiation for it. An effigy made of fifty kuśa leaves should be burnt according to the rules prescribed in Veda. Otherwise his sin will soon enter into all his relatives of the same gotra, and such as come in contact with him will share in his guilt. In the Kali age the number of such sinners will daily and particularly increase.” Again in the same Tantra it is said: “The twice-born who through wilfulness or neglect omits to do japa\(^6\) of the Gāyatrī is of a surety born of the seed of a Yavana.\(^7\) The Brāhmaṇa who is without faith in even the Gāyatrī is, O Devi, truly a Yavana, and being such how can he repeat the Gāyatrī? Fallen is the country in which that sinful Yavana dwells, and fallen also is the Ruler of that country. Brāhmaṇas who associate with him are fallen and infamous.

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\(^{1}\) Tattva or principle.

\(^{2}\) Mūrti.

\(^{3}\) A Brāhmaṇa is called “earth-deva,” (Bhūdeva).

\(^{4}\) The Lord.

\(^{5}\) Recitation of Mantra.

\(^{6}\) Lineage.

\(^{7}\) Foreigner.
Food given by a person who neglects the Gāyatrī is worse even than food given by a Yavana. It were better to partake of the food of a Yavana than even to drink water brought by a sinner who neglects the Gāyatrī.”

Why? Why is it that the influence of a few words makes a man worthy of adoration by Devatās? And again, why is it that the want of those few words makes him the lowest Caṇḍāla, lower than a Yavana? The Śāstra has neither enmity nor friendship with Jiva. It rebukes none and caresses none. It says only what is true. If anyone’s feelings are wounded on account of the statement of a truth, then not he who utters that truth but the truth itself must be considered the cause, and therefore inquiry should be made into that. The truth about Jiva will be revealed if the true principles concerning Gāyatrī, according to Śāstra, are discovered. In fact, it is because we do not know the true nature of Gāyatrī that we hear of all these “why’s”. The moment we realize the true aspect of Gāyatrī then no “why” will remain. Then we shall understand that there can never be distrust in Gāyatrī unless a Brahmaṇa’s nature becomes fundamentally corrupt, and that in such a case the epithets of Caṇḍāla and Yavana are not exaggerated, but merely appropriate expressions. The authors of Śāstra knew at least as well as you or I that it is of little moment whether a few words are said or not. You or I have not done well in thinking that the Gāyatrī, which even a muni, who has taken a vow of silence, may not omit to inwardly repeat without ceasing to be a twice-born, is mere language and words. It should be understood that that which makes a Brahmaṇa by its presence and a Yavana by its absence is not mere language, but the great supersensual Mantrāsakti which controls the Brahmaṇa, and appears as eternal consciousness; and that what we have taken for mere words and feet of verse is not so, but a great Mantra, full of brilliance appearing in the form of characters replete with transcendent principles. A firestick may be only an ordinary piece of wood to a Śavara gathering fuel in the forest, but to the performer of sacrifice with the fire it is a veritable womb which bears luminous fire. Similarly the Gāyatrī may appear only a string of letters to an unbeliever, but to a Śādaka of divine wisdom it is a very mass of radiant shining energy of Mantra. Just as when, sitting even in a dark room, the sacrificer lights the sacrificial fire by the friction of fire-sticks,
and by casting the offerings in that fire offers full oblation\(^1\) in homa,\(^2\) so the śādhaka living in the deep dark samsāra illumines the cave of his heart with the light of Brahmān,\(^3\) kindled by the friction of mind and Mantra. He then offers to that burning fire of the Parabrahman in the fire-pit of consciousness\(^4\) existing as mind engirdled with the three guṇas, all the three forms of action done in waking, dream, and dreamless sleep, whether sāttvik, rājasik, or tāmasik,\(^5\) and whether by mind, speech, or action, and lives in a state of constant and perfect liberation.

The effect of mere language is to produce ideas of skill and emotions and sweetness, whilst that of Mantra is to stimulate the mental faculties with the divine radiant energy,\(^6\) and to thus lead to a full understanding of constantly visible supersensual realitities.\(^7\) A mere collection of words is something gross, whilst Mantra is full of consciousness. A word is a mere display of letters, whilst Mantra is a mass of radiant energy. Sayings give advice to men of the world, whilst Mantras awaken\(^8\) superhuman Śakti. A mere saying is, therefore, like a Jiva, subject to birth and death; whilst a Mantra is Brahmān Himself, unwasting, undecaying. So long as there is a difference between gross matter and consciousness, between Jiva and Brahmān, so long will there exist this difference between a saying and a Mantra—a difference as wide as that between the heaven and the nether world. This is why, as regards the Gāyatrī, the notion that sayings and Mantra are identical is a false and mistaken idea. In order to guard ourselves against it, we must first understand the word-meaning of Mantra, and then proceed to deal with Mantra Śakti.\(^9\) In the Gāyatrī Tantra it is said: “That is called Mantra by the meditation\(^10\) upon which Jiva acquires freedom from sin, enjoyment of heaven, and liberation,\(^11\) and by the aid of which he attains in full the fourfold fruit.”\(^12\) Again: “Because She is sung (gītā) in meditation from Mūladhāra\(^13\) to Brahmārāndhra\(^14\)—that is to say, She enjoying the music of the lute,\(^15\) ever resides as the Mother, consisting of the fifty letters in the regions which extend from the four-petalled to the thousand-petalled lotus\(^16\)—therefore is She gāyat,\(^17\) and because, if meditated upon, She gives liberation

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\(^1\) Āhuti.  
\(^2\) The sacrifice into fire.  
\(^3\) Brahmātejas.  
\(^4\) Caitanya.  
\(^5\) That is, possessing the characteristics of the three guṇas—sattva, rajas, and tāmas.  
\(^6\) Tejas.  
\(^7\) Tattvas.  
\(^8\) Literally, make to shine.  
\(^9\) Power of Mantra.  
\(^10\) Manana.  
\(^11\) Mokṣa.  
\(^12\) That is, dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa.  
\(^13\) The lowest Čakra in the perineal region.  
\(^14\) The cavity of Brahmān on the crown of the head.  
\(^15\) Viṣā.  
\(^16\) That is, from the Mūladhāra padma to the Sahasrāra padma.  
\(^17\) “Sung”. 
(trāṇa) to Jiva by the piercing of the sheath of the Śaṭcakra,\(^1\) therefore is She śri. By the combination of gāyat and śri is formed the word Gāyatī, which is the name of that great Śakti who consists of Mantra.”

In another Tantra it has been said: “Mantra is so called because it is achieved by a mental process. Dhyāna is meditation. In Samādhi the self merges with the Self of the Iṣṭadevata,\(^2\) and Homa is so called because in it offerings are made.”

The nature of mind and its faculties is thus explained in Śāstra:\(^3\) “Mind is the master of the ten senses, and is situate in the centre of the lotus of the heart. It is also called antahkaraṇa,\(^4\) because, without the senses, it has no power of action as regards external things—that is, if the ear does not hear a sound, if the skin does not feel a touch, or if the eye does not see a form, if the tongue does not perceive a taste, or if the nose does not perceive a smell, mind becomes incapable of perceiving the nature of anything. The mastery of mind consists in this alone, that when the senses have been directed each on its own object, mind sits in judgment on them. Mind examines what is good and what is bad. Mind has three guṇas—namely, sattva, rajas, and tāmas. It is from these guṇas that all the different changing states of mind arise. The guṇas being three, therefore, the three mental states are also threefold according as they are sāttvik, rājasik, and tāmasik. The sāttvik states are non-attachment to the world,\(^8\) forgiveness, generosity, and the like. The rājasik states are passion, anger, greed, striving, and the like; and laziness, error, lethargy, and the like, are tāmasik states. Sāttvik states lead only to virtuous acts, rājasik only to sin, and tāmasik states give rise neither to sin nor virtue, but merely waste a life, which is spent to no purpose.”

“Antahkaraṇa”\(^9\) is fourfold—namely, manas, of which the function is doubt;\(^10\) buddhi, of which the function is certainty;\(^11\) and

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\(^1\) That is, the process called Saṭcakrabhedha by which the roused Kundalini pierces and ascends the six Cakras until She unites with the Śiva of the Sahasrāra.

\(^2\) Ecstasy.

\(^3\) That is, the Deity which a particular person worships.

\(^4\) The Pañchadāśi.

\(^5\) Literally, means “doing inside”.

\(^6\) Qualities or principles.

\(^7\) Viśāra.

\(^8\) Vairāgya.

\(^9\) The antahkaraṇa, which is the ego in general (Ahamarththa antahkaraṇa sāmānyam—Yoga Vāṣṭha), is really one, though its functions are distinguished as above.

\(^10\) Manas is that mental faculty which considers whether the subject presented to it is this or that—“doubt”—manah sankalpa vikalpakātmakam (Śāṅkhya Tattva Kaumudi).

\(^11\) After manas functions it presents its object to the self, which sets itself as subject against it. Then Buddhi, which is determination (Adyavasāya buddhi, II, chapter, xiii, Sūtra, Śāṅkhya Pravacana Darśanam), follows with its quality of certainty (Nīcayakarini)
The function of antahkaraṇa, consisting of doubt, is called “manas”; the function of antahkaraṇa, consisting of certainty, is called “buddhi”; the function of antahkaraṇa, consisting of self-consciousness, is called “ahaṅkāra”; and the function of antahkaraṇa, consisting of remembrance, is called “citta”. In the sphere of worship “citta” occupies the first place. Remembrance of Mantra and Devatā, contemplation on the meaning of Mantra, and meditation on Devatā, and all such related matters, are accomplished by processes of the function of “citta”. The meaning of “aṅkāra” is sense. The taking cognizance by the senses of anything is called in the Śastra “pratyakṣa”. A sense devoid of consciousness cannot perceive. The senses are but the doors through which the antahkaraṇa perceives all directly perceptible things. This is the reason why in dreamless sleep, swoon, and delirium, the mind, being unable to function, even things close by are not perceived, despite the existence of the senses. When mind has perceived a thing through the gate of sense, the thought of that thing continues like the steady flow of a current in the antahkaraṇa, which is not possessed by any thing else. But just as innumerable waves rise and fall during the rainy seasons upon the heaving bosom of a river, so various operations of the mind, working upon the innumerable things of the outside world, come and go in the antahkaraṇa of Jīva. In consequence, no particular function of the mind is stationary even for a moment. Some other appears and thrusts it aside. That process by which the antahkaraṇa endeavours to put aside a later and to recall an earlier operation is remembrance, or function of citta. The next question is, What will citta remember? How can citta remember that which has not been registered by the senses and perceived by the mind? Unless a thing has once been perceived, its remembrance is not possible. Here it may be objected that persons in dreams perceive heaven, places of pilgrimage, and the effulgent forms of Devas and Devis which they have never seen before. How can these things be reflected in the mind during dreams without having first been seen by the physical eye? This objection has no force, because all such things as are perceived in

1 Self-consciousness—the ego recognizing itself (abhimāna ahaṅkāra, ii, chap. xvi, Sūtra, ibid.).

2 A term, in its wide signification meaning “mind” or the antahkaraṇa in general, but here meaning that which functions as cintā, “contemplation” of a present or remembered object of thought. In Śāṅkhya, as opposed to Vedānta, Cintā is included in Buddhī.

3 Involved in all contemplation.

4 Direct perception.

5 Śūpti.
dreams are mental. During sleep all the senses become inactive, mind alone remaining conscious. In the dream-play mind is the only actor, so that, whatever is shown, the acts and scenes of that play are but the sport of that one actor assuming different characters. Lions, tigers, snakes, bears, wife, son, friend, and servant, heaven and hell, and all such things seen in dreams are nothing but transformations of the antahkaraṇa. Whatever the mind has at any time seen, heard, or thought, remains engraved thereon like marks on a stone. For various reasons, in sleep subsequent superimposed impressions disappear, laying former marks exposed to view. As the outer curtain is raised, the inner scene is revealed. It is not that heaven has never been perceived. All that we can say is that it has not been perceived in this birth. We have no right to say that it was not perceived in any previous birth. These matters\(^1\) will, however, be explained in our discourse on reincarnation. This much only we shall say here, that mind is the builder\(^2\) of the heaven seen in dream, when it perceives not by aid of the senses, but works only with the aid of such materials as were perceived by it before. It is with such materials that the mind builds in dream heaven, earth, hell, and all such things. Mind, then, without the aid of eye or ear, sports with such things as it has seen or heard by the eye or ear, but with this difference, that by bringing one thing in contact with some other previously perceived thing, it makes both appear in a form different from their real one. True, we see heaven in dreams, but the idea that that heaven is heaven is but a reflection of the heaven which the ear has perceived through Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Had we not heard the beauty of heaven described by Itibhāsas,\(^3\) Purāṇas, and the like, and impressed that heaven in our minds, the idea of heaven would never have been found within us, and without such idea we should never have seen heaven in dream. It is the previous impressions caused by our having heard of heaven which makes us see heaven in the dream picture. In this lies the distinctive character of the picture. The palaces, temples, woods, and groves which we see in it are but reflections of things which we have seen on earth, with this difference, that through its previous impressions the mind decks them out in various ways. In the case of a shining city seen in dream the brilliance as well as the city are of previous perception. Mind only puts the brilliance and the city together. Dense forests full of animals of prey have always existed, but to-day mind places me before a tiger in such a forest. In this alone is to be seen the handiwork of mind, the hidden mystery of the drama, the characteristic of the dream. It is for this reason that I have said that a thing which has not been perceived by one of the five senses can never be seen in dream, for mind, the showman, does not contain it in his store-house. Dreams

\(^1\) Tattvas.  
\(^2\) Viśvakarma.  
\(^3\) Histories.
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relating to Devatās worshipped by Sādhakas are, however, brought about by a different process, which we shall explain in the chapter on the eight forms of Siddhi of a Sādhaka.

This instance of dream proves that, whether in waking or sleep, citta cannot remember anything which has not been heard, touched, seen, tasted, or smelt.

Even in the case of meditation upon a Mantra some one or other of these five sense-principles must be present. In the case of the Gāyatri there is much difficulty on this point.

Worship of Gāyatri

Many people nowadays believe that it is the Brahman without attribute who is the Devatā of the Gāyatri, so that with the Gāyatri Mantra only his attributeless aspect should be contemplated. But in this there is a difficulty. The attributeless Brahman is beyond the range of the mind, speech, or senses, and how can mind think or citta remember that which is not within the range of the senses. If it is impossible even in dream to see anything which has not been previously perceived by the senses, how is it possible to do so when awake? The contemplation of the Gāyatri Mantra is thus rendered impossible. Secondly, the attributeless Brahman is beyond all attributes. That which is such shows neither favour nor disfavour, neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction, so that nothing should be desired or expected from it in this Samsāra. And what is the use of going to that from which nothing can be obtained, of which nothing can be expected, and to whom nothing is near, and nothing is distant?

It may be said that Gāyatri does not ask anyone to go or come, but only to sit down and meditate. But meditation is not possible without mind. The latter is intimately associated with the three qualities. The supreme Brahman is without them. It is, therefore, as impossible to hold the firmament between a pair of tongues as it is to worship the attributeless Brahman by a mind with attributes. Thirdly, whether we be on the paths of knowledge, devotion, or work, worship of the Brahman without attribute is against all opinions, reason, and Śāstra. “The mental process by which the self is related to the Brahman with attributes is called worship.” For this reason it would have been preferable that anything else than worship should be done in relation to the attributeless Brahman, which it is supposed the Gāyatri seeks to establish. But how can we help it? The Śāstra has, again, said: “The twice-born—that is, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas—are all Śāktas, and not Śaivas or Vaiṣṇavas;
for they all worship Gāyatri Devī, the Mother of the Vedas.” This means that, whatever one may become afterwards, whether Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Saura, or Gānapatya, one is at base a Śākta.

For Gāyatri, who is the Mother of the Vedas, and from whom a person derives his twice-born character, is Herself an embodiment of mighty Śakti.

Here also it has been said: “All worship Gāyatri Devi.” How can one who is attributeless be made the subject of a mind with attributes? Fourthly, it is said that the Brahman which Gāyatri seeks to establish is attributeless. Śāstra, however, says that, when meditating on Gāyatri during japa, she should be contemplated under three forms according as it is morning, noon, or evening. In the morning She is Gāyatri, and appears as a young girl, rosy like the young sun. She is two-armed Brahmāṇi, riding a swan, holding in her hand rudrākṣa beads, the thread, and begging-bowl, residing in the disc of the sun, the presiding Devī of the Rgveda. At noon She is Sāvitrī, and appears as a young woman, dark as the petals of a blue lotus. She is Vaiṣṇavi, riding the bird Garuda, holding in Her four arms a conch shell, discus, mace, and a lotus, residing in the orb of the sun, the presiding Devī of the Yajurveda. In the evening She is Sarasvatī, and appears as an older woman of spotless white beauty. She is three-eyed Rudrāṇi, crowned with the crescent moon, riding a bull, holding a trident and drum, residing in the solar disc, the presiding Devī of the Śāmaaveda.

In the commentary of Śāṅkaraśārya on Sandhyā, as prescribed in the Yajurveda, the following passages are quoted: “Gāyatri at morn,

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1 Worshipper of the sun.
2 Worshipper of Ganeśa.
3 That is, Dhyāna, during recitation (japa) of mantra, as the Catholic, when saying the rosary, thinks, of each scene of the joyful, sorrowful, or glorious mysteries.
4 Feminine aspect or Śakti of Brahmā.
5 Hamsa, which is also described as a goose or flamingo, the vehicle (Vāhana) of Brahmā.
6 The seed of a fruit, used for mālā (rosary), etc.
7 Karnāḍaṁu, used by ascetics to carry food given to them.
8 Adhishṭātri.
9 Feminine aspect or Śakti of Viṣṇu, whose Vāhana is the Bird-King Garuda.
10 Śaṅkha.
11 Cakra.
12 Gadā, all three held by Viṣṇu.
13 Feminine aspect or Śakti of Rudra (Śiva), whose Vāhana is a bull.
14 Trisūla.
15 Damaru, a small “hour-glass” drum, held as well as the trident by Śiva.
16 Daily worship, performed at morning, noon, and eventide.
Sāvitri at noon, Sarasvatī at eventide. She bears these three names at these three times of the day, and She herself is Sandhyā at all three times (Vyāsa).

"The morning Sandhyā is Gāyatṛī, the noon Sandhyā is Sāvitri, and the evening Sandhyā is Sarasvatī" (Yājñavalkya).

"Gāyatṛī is red, Sāvitri is white (according to some Veda), and Sarasvatī is dark (according to some Veda). These three appearances of Gāyatṛī have been mentioned for the three Sandhīs. In meditation at other times She should be contemplated upon as being of a white colour" (Vyāsa).

"Three-footed Gāyatṛī who in Her three feet embodies the three Šaktis of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara; Her alone should the twice-born seek and worship in three forms."

Again, it has been ordained that this very Gāyatṛī, who appears as Šakti, should be contemplated as a male at the time of prāṇāyāma thus:

"At the time of inspiration of breath contemplate (according to some Veda) the Mahātmā dark as the petals of a blue lotus, with four arms in the circle of the navel. At the time of retention of breath contemplate (according to some Veda) Brahmā, the grandfather of the world, red of body, with four mouths seated on a lotus in the region of the heart. At expiration of breath contemplate Maheśvara, the Destroyer of sin, clear, fair and white, like the purest crystal in the region of the forehead."

Oh, thou Brāhmaṇa, who hast privilege in Veda and worshipp Gāyatṛī, tell me now, do these forms represent that aspect of the Brahman which is without attributes?

Whether the Brahman be with or without attribute, and possessed of form or not, will be hereafter discussed. Šāstra says that the Brahman whom the Gāyatṛī speaks of is without attribute, but it also says that at time of japa and prāṇāyāma His form with attributes should be contemplated. How are we to harmonize these two statements of Šāstra? If in Gāyatṛī He is explained to be without attribute, why does Šāstra again join that He should be contemplated with attributes? How shall we establish a concordance between these apparently conflicting statements? We shall deal with this matter afterwards. But here we ask why has this conflict come about? Has Šāstra itself the power to determine anything in Him?"

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1 Šī in original. 2 Powers.
3 Regulation of breath, or breath exercises (see Introduction to Tantric Šāstra).
4 Pūraka. 5 Great Spirit; here Viṣṇu.
6 Kumbhaka. 7 Šī in original.
8 Loka. 9 Rccaka. 10 Śiva.
11 Literally, "enjoyest adhikāra in Veda." "
12 Literally, "to build or break anything about Him."
Of course not. Is it not bound to say that which He really is? Had the Śāstra been the creation of mere human authorship then there would certainly have been much ground both for affirmation and denial. But according to the Āryan view Śāstra is not a human production, but the production of Him concerning whom these questions arise. How then can objection arise as to why the Śāstra has said this or that? Bhagavān Himself takes his own portraits in His own camera. These portraits reproduce the different appearances in which He is sitting before it. His will is the sole cause of these differences. For this reason an objection as to why Śāstra has said this or that is fundamentally impossible.

The Vācyā and Vācaka Śaktis of a Mantra

Śādhakas will particularly bear in mind that not only in the Gāyatri but in every Mantra there are two Śaktis—the Vācyā Śakti and the Vācaka Śakti. The Devatā who is the subject of a Mantra,1 is the Vācyā Śakti, and the Devatā who is the Mantra itself is Vācaka Śakti. For instance, the Devatā presiding1 over all Viṣṇu Mantras is Durgā in the Mantra of the hymn of one thousand names of Durgā. Durgā is the Devatā and Mahāmāyā is the Śakti. In the hymn of a thousand names of Viṣṇu, Paramātmā Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Devatā, and the son of Devaki2 is the Śakti, and so on. As the seed lies inside the fruit so the Vācyā Śakti lies within the Vācaka Śakti. As one cannot see the seed without penetrating through the fruit, so one cannot perceive the true nature of the Vācyā Śakti without first worshipping the Vācaka Śakti. It is the Vācyā Śakti who is the life of a Mantra, and the Vācaka Śakti is that by which such life is sustained. Without life what is there to sustain? And if it be not sustained life is not possible. For this reason, without both of these two Śaktis a Mantra cannot even be awakened3 and Siddhi cannot be obtained in it.4 In particular, without worship of the Vācaka Śakti life cannot be infused into a Mantra.5 To think of Śādhana and Siddhi in connection with an unconscious Mantra is as though one were to take

1 These terms are explained in the text.
2 Pratipādya Devatā.
3 Mantramayī Devatā.
4 Adhiṣṭātri residing in or presiding over. Every mantra has its Adhiṣṭātri Devatā.
5 Mother of Kṛṣṇa.
6 That is, there is no mantracaitanya. Unless the mantra is awakened in and by the consciousness of the sādhaka the mantra thus becoming parcel of the consciousness of the sādhaka himself, it is mere dead sound and letter and without fruit.
7 Mantrasiddhi (see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra).
8 The conditioned consciousness necessarily works by and through form (which is the nature of its thinking) to the formless "That," which manifests to the sādhaka in worship as form.
a dead child in one's lap, and thought to attain worldly prosperity with its help. By worship the Sādhanaka must here understand not the worship of the twentieth century spreading like some contagious disease, but the worship ordained by Sāstra for the Aryan race. For the fruit of this worship, to which we shall refer, is stated in the Sāstra. The Mantra of this worship is not prayer or self-dedication, ending in roaring thunder and storm-clouds in an autumnal sky. The first fruit of its utterance is a shower of glances from Devas powerful enough to deluge the universe, and the last is the wealth of Siddhi. As the waters of earth drawn by the sun gather in the sky, and then fall on the earth as rain and are dried up, and again and again are drawn by the sun, and fall and are dried up, so is this dualistic world drawn towards the brilliant solar orb which is the subject of the Gāyatri, and then descends as knowledge of the non-dualistic truth, flooding the dry dualistic samsāra, making a current of non-dualistic Brahma-knowledge and Brahma-bliss to flow all over the dualistic universe, setting aside illusive dualism, drawing non-dualistic knowledge towards Her from whom dualistic existence originates. And in the meantime the wealth of the eight Siddhis grows and ripens, filling the vast universe, the field of action belonging to that worthy cultivator the Sādhaka. For this reason we are not to understand by the Gāyatri Mantra the beginning of a storm, but the Mother, who is fair as clouds laden with water. The attributeless Vācyā Śakti, who is the subject of the Gāyatri, knows that Her aspect without attribute is unapproachable by Jivas who have attributes. She has therefore blessed the world of devotees by the assumption of form with attributes favourable to the Sādhana and Siddhi of the Sādhaka, and it is this form dwelling in the hearts of devotees which is the Vācaka Śakti resident in the Gāyatri Mantra. It is the lustre of Her colours, white, yellow, blue, and red, which manifests itself in the lustre of Kulaksuṇḍalini, voicing the fifty letters of the Alphabet. It is of Herself that every letter speaks. Śāstra therefore says: "Oh, Muni, who can relate the unparalleled greatness of that Ādyā Śakti?" Śiva Himself, with his five mouths, has failed to describe it. When death approaches the dweller at Benares who longs for liberation, to him Śambhu Himself appears, and utters in His ear the great Mantra called Tāraka-Brahma in the form in which it was given by his Guru, and thus grants him the supreme liberation of Nirvāṇa. Oh, Jaimini Brāhmaṇa and Ṛṣi! it is that great Śakti who gives the liberation of Nirvāṇa, for She alone is the bija of all Mantras. Oh, high-souled

1 Upāsanā. 2 That is, in moaning, weeping, etc. 3 Tattva. 4 See Introduction to Tantra Sāstra. 5 Karma. 6 The Devi whose seat is in the Mūlādhāra. 7 Primal Śakti. 8 Śiva. 9 Seed or seed mantra.
man, all Vedas have described that Guru of liberation as the Devatā who resides in all Mantras. In the city of Benares, Mahēśvarā, desirous of granting liberation to all creatures, even to such as hares, insects, and the like, who have received no initiation, Himself utters in their ears at the time of death the name Durgā, the great Tāraka-Brahma Mantra.”

Again, in the chapter on Creation in the same Śāstra, it has been said: “High-souled man! in this manner Bhagavān Brahma created the whole world, and Prakṛti Devī, appearing through part of Herself as Śāvitri, whom the twice-born worship at three sandhyās, received Him as Her husband. Similarly the Devī incarnated Herself in part as Lakṣmi and Sarasvatī, and in Her play received Viṣṇu, the maintainer of the three worlds, as Her husband.”

Over and above this there are descriptions of Her innumerable manifestations in the form of the Mātrkā varnas. To these aspects we shall refer in their proper place. In fact, there is no difference in substance between the different states, Vācyā and Vācaka, of Sacchidānandamayī. As clouds are the compact state of water, so the aspect with attributes of the Vācaka Śakti is but the compact state of the attributeless Vācyā Śakti. As clouds moved by the wind liquefy and pour rain, so, moved by the love of devotees, the Deva with form and attributes gratifies them by manifesting to their view that aspect of Hers without attributes which pervades the universe. Sādhana and Siddhi are the necessary processes to secure such gratification. For this reason we find in Śāstra that whenever She has out of Her extreme favour to a devotee fully manifested Herself, She has, despite of Her being formless, shown the world-form as Her own form. Had the Vācaka Śakti been separate from the Vācyā Śakti, how were it possible for the unlimited Śakti extending throughout the universe to appear in that limited form? How could the womb of a limited form hold this universe? And so, oh, devotee, I say the cloud is but a condensed mass of particles of water. Open your heart, cry “Oh, Mother!” fan it with the wind of devotion, and then you will see that a copious incessant downpour will deluge the three worlds. And then, not only ourselves, but the whole dualistic world will enter and sink in the unfathomable womb of the one and only existence. When the Śakti with attributes resident in the Mantra is, by dint of the Sādhana of the Sādhaka, awakened, She will open the gate of the monistic truth, when it will become possible to see the true nature and essence of this universe.

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1 Mahābhāgavata Discourse between Vyāsa and Jaimini.
2 Morning, noon, and evening.
3 Vībhūti.
4 Letters of the alphabet.
5 She whose substance is existence, consciousness, and bliss: the definition of Brahman.
6 Viśvarūpa.
7 Bhakti.
8 Tattva.
Just as in order to obtain a knowledge of the magic art of acting the actors and actresses must themselves play their parts, so unless the Actor and Actress in the play of this world themselves graciously show us their art, none can give a true perception of what is Brahmavidya. But the matter is different for those who, appearing themselves in the character of actors and actresses, make a play of that play, who in reading dramas themselves become the dramatic persons, and who the moment they close their eyes cause the universe with attributes to vanish, and see the attributeless Brahman. For they are themselves both exhibitors and spectators, both actors and audience. They can change their character ten times in an hour, and themselves enjoy the sight of it. They can do what they like. We have nothing to say to it. Nevertheless, whatever others may say, they themselves know that they are not one whit better than what they were before, but have merely assumed a part. So much about the playing of parts; the seeing of the real play is a different matter. But the thirst of the heart of those who hope that He will play, and they will see; that He will dance, and they will be the cause of His dancing; that He will show His real aspect and they will enjoy it to their hearts’ content, cannot be satisfied by the sight of this worthless play. Their solemn resolve is that so long as new and charming clouds do not appear in the sky, they would rather cry with plaintive hearts and parched throats incessantly, like a cātaka, in this life, tormented by the three kinds of sorrow; than, being drawn by the false attraction of the mirage, rush towards it like foolish deer, and be untimely consumed with the fire of a burning thirst. Sooner or later a day must come in the year of human life when the eye will be soothed and the heart refreshed by the blissful world-filling beauty of the soothing shining cloud, and the thirst of the heart will be satiated for life by the shower of Her gracious glances full of nectar. For this reason the devotee depends on Her alone, is all submission to Her, never begs at the door of others, and says: “Oh, Mother, I know that Thy true aspect is Brahmakaivalya that Thou art without attribute, and attainable by true knowledge alone. I know that Thou art also full of kindness for Thy devotee. I know that Thou art our Lady, and that the universe is Thy form. I know that Thy substance is existence, consciousness, and bliss, and that Thou in various forms grantest the

1 Knowledge of Brahman.
2 A remark directed against the Brahmo sect, who are here described as thinking that they can do without Sādhana, and by simply closing their eyes can see the Nirguna Brahman.
3 A bird which is said to live only on rain.
4 Vide ante.
5 The supreme liberation.
6 Iśvārī, feminine of Iśvara, the “personal” Deity.
desires of Sādhakas. I know that Thou holdest the three worlds in play. I know, oh, Mother, that Thou art the ordainer of all ordainers. But still I know that for the man who is helpless, destitute, and woebegone, who seeks a shelter from danger, and who has no means of fulfilling his desire, Thou art the sole amulet, Mantra, and healing balm. It is in order that She may grant this prayer of the Sādhaka and to prove the truth of this faith that She who is the Vācyā Śakti, whose substance is eternal consciousness, assumes playful forms as Vācaka Śakti. Dwelling as Daughter in such a form the Mother of the world said to Her Father, Himalaya: 'None can comprehend my subtle form without first having duly meditated on my gross form. The sight of this subtle form releases Jiva from the bonds of Samsāra, and gives him Nirvāṇa Samādhi.' For this reason a Sādhaka who desires liberation must first seek refuge in my gross forms, and then, having by Kriyāyoga duly worshipped these forms slowly and step by step, think of My supreme, unwasting, subtle form.'"

The Sādhaka will from this realize that it is only after full worship of Her in Her aspects with form that he has the right to think, little by little, of Her subtle aspect. Now where is that subtle aspect, and where stand you and I?

As in Gāyatrī, so in every Mantra, the Vācyā Śakti is without attribute, and the Vācaka Śakti is with attribute, for the latter is the object of worship and the former the object which is to be attained. The Vācaka Śakti must be used as a means and support in order that the Vācyā Śakti may be attained.

So long as I must worship with this, my mind and heart preserving the distinction that I am the worshipper and She is the worshipped, so long there is no other alternative than to worship that aspect of Her which has both form and attributes. But on the day that my mind and heart sink in the womb of Prakṛti, the twenty-four tattvas will disappear in Herself, all egoism will be destroyed, and I shall lose myself in that state beyond all speech and thought, in which "neither you nor I exist". On that day where am I or who is mine? Your existence depends on mine, so that if I cease to exist where, then, are you? And even if "you" do exist there will be no "I" to discover "you". Only so long as a river does not fall and lose itself in the sea does the distinction between river and sea exist. But when the river mingles with the sea the former ceases to exist; and so does the sea to the river, which is lost in it, though it exists for all the world besides. The individuality of the

1 Śūkṣma.  2 Dhyāna.  3 Sthūla.  4 Ecstasy of liberation.  
5 See Introduction to Tantra Śastra.  
6 Of Sāṅkhya—vić., Prakṛti, Mahat, Ahaṅkāra, Manas, Indriyas, Tanmātras, Mahābhūtas.
river ceasing to exist, it can no longer say what it has become owing to the loss of its self. There is then no means of either separating the “self” of the river, nor can the river separate itself. For this reason I say that when I cease to exist She, too, notwithstanding Her existence, ceases to exist so far as I am concerned, for with the destruction of my individuality Her individuality in its relationship to me has also been destroyed. Now tell me, O Śādhaka! whom shall you worship when sinking in the attributeless aspect of the Self. This state is not worship, but the ultimate fruit of it called Nirvāṇa or Brahmakāivalya. In this state the worshipper becomes one with the worshipped. There remains neither worshipper nor worshipped, but only She. If you consider this as also suitable for worship, I know not where in the domain of the Ātaly with dishevelled hair ¹ you can get liberation. However that may be, the question is one which concerns only those who have attained that state. We say to you, Jīva, that so long as that state of a Jīva lasts, no other means are available to you but worship. So long as you must worship you must, in order to maintain that worship as such, continue to worship a Deity which possesses form. Do not be afraid. Neither you nor I will have to clutch indiscriminately at anything or everything.

She who created Jīva knew aforehand the pangs of the Jīva’s heart, and because She must be attained the Daughter of the Mountain has surrendered Herself to various forms. Because of this we on earth may dare to stretch our hands towards heaven to seize Her. Although, whether on earth, in heaven, or in the nether world, She is one without a second, She has yet assumed various forms as Mother of the dualistic world. It is the sight of this grand play of Brahmamāyī which has led Śāstra to say in the Kulārṇava Tantra: ²

“Brahman, who is all consciousness, without body or part, and beyond the power of speech and mind, builds forms for Himself for the benefit of Śādhakas.”

In the Mahānirvāna Tantra, Sadāśiva says to the Devī: “Hear why Thou art worshipped, and why Thy Śādhana leads Jīva to Brahma-Sānyujya ³? Thou art the supreme Prakṛti of the Supreme Soul. O Śivē! ⁴ the whole world is born of Thee. Hence Thou art its Mother. O Lady! everything in this world, be it great or small, moving or unmoving, has been created by Thee, and exists under Thy control. Thou art the Mūlaprakṛti ⁵ of all Vidyās, ⁶ and the origin of even Us ⁷; Thou knowest

¹ Devī as Kāli and other appearances (Mūrti) is so represented.
² Chap. vi. ³ Union with Brahmān.
⁴ The Devī.
⁵ The root or primal Prakṛti.
⁶ Śaktis.
⁷ That is, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, and other Devas.
the Tattva of the entire universe, yet none knows Thy true aspect. Thou art Kāli, Tārā, Durgā, Śoḍaśī, Bhuvanesvāri, and Dhūmāvatī. Thou art Bagalā, Bhairavi, and Cinnamastā. Thou art Annapūrṇā and the Devi of speech. Thou art Mahālakṣmi, who dwells in a lotus. Thou dost embody all Śaktis. In Thee are all Devas. Thou art subtle as well as gross, manifested as well as unmanifested. Formless, Thou dost possess also forms. Who can know Thy true aspect? For the success of worshippers, the welfare of the whole world, and the destruction of the Dānavas, Thou assumeth all kinds of bodies. Thou art four-armed, two-armed, six-armed, and eight-armed. For the preservation of the universe Thou holdeth all kinds of arms and weapons. Mantra, Yantra, and other modes of Sādhanā, as well as the three forms of worship, Paśu, Vira, and Divya, are all described in Tantra in accordance with these different aspects of Thine.” The same Tantra says: “Thou dost embody all Śaktis; Thou art the supreme Ādyāsakti. Our Śaktis as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe, are derived from Thy Śakti. Thy eternal forms are of varied colour and shape, and adored by means of various forms of Sādhanāa. Who can describe all these? It is by the grace of a drop of Thy mercy that it has been given to Me to describe in Kulatantara Āgama and other Śastras the mode of Sādhanā and worship of those forms of Thine.”

From these Śaṣṭrik references it appears that the Daughter of the Mountain, knowing the incapacity of Jīva to conceive any idea of Her subtle nature, incarnated Herself in various forms for Sādhanā and Siddhi, the welfare of the three worlds, and for the relief of earth from the burden of its sins. This is the firm faith of those who proceed along the path of Sādhanā under the control and protection of Śastra. Different is the opinion of those who hurry along the path of selfishness, keeping Śastra under their control. None can object to another preaching his own individual opinions. But those who hide themselves under the cloak of Śastra, and in an unnatural way kill or wound it, stabbing its heart with wrong meanings and perverted interpretations, pouring into it the poison of selfishness, proclaiming to the world that they are doctoring the Śastra from the poisonous bag, full of sharp weapons of selfishness belonging to modern social reformers, founders of religion, critics, and

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2 Various forms of the Devī, including the Daśamahāvidyā.
3 Sarasvati.
4 Demons.
5 The worshipped diagram.
6 The three Bhāvas.
7 Primal Śakti.
8 That is, the powers of Brahmā and others.
9 Tattva: existence or reality.
10 Bhūbhāra.
murdering charlatans, must be exposed in order to show with what excellent remedies they trumpet their doctoring of the religious world. We must also see whether the very wasted, contracted, and slumbering state of religion which they have brought about in the present time by virtue of their treatment is merely a sleep of rest for religion, or its eternal sleep in death. In this section we shall disclose to Sādhakas that new treatment of Sādhanadharma by these doctors, which consists of hitting its head with the Brahma-weapon:¹

Cinmayasyāprameyasya niṣkalasyāśārīriṇah.
Sādhakānām hitārthāya brāhmaṇo rūpakalpanā.

That is to say, Brahman who is all consciousness, without body or parts and beyond the reach of speech and mind,² builds forms for the benefit of Sādhakas.

We have given before the interpretation of this verse, based on the authority of Śāstra. But the above mentioned doctors are opposed to this interpretation. They say that worshippers have themselves given imaginary forms to Brahman for their own purposes, although, as a matter of fact, Brahman has no form. If this be true, then Sādhakas have not only given imaginary forms to Brahman, but their alleged purposes and benefit must be imaginary. If Brahman has really no form, how can we believe that a true purpose can be served by attributing false and imaginary forms to Him? You may say that contemplation of form merely produces concentration of mind, and that, by His grace, gives siddhi. Here we ask, Does it not make one feel inclined to laugh when one thinks of something as existing which one knows to be non-existing? It is neither contemplation nor concentration, but the play of a child with Brahman. A girl knows well enough that a doll can never be a living thing. She is not also ignorant of the fact that she is a little un-married maiden. Still when she plays she shows great concern for her doll-son, pretends that it is crying, feigns to give it milk, takes it on her lap, caresses it, and so satisfies her own mind. The attribution of false forms to Brahman is exactly similar. I know that the attributeless Brahman has no pleasure, displeasure, virtue, vice, attraction, attachment, pity, generosity, no love, affection, dual relation, or even body. Is it not then absolutely useless for me to meditate upon imaginary forms of that attributeless reposeful Brahman who has no form, and to worship Him to gain His favour? Who will deny that they are madmen who believe that during the eternal flow of worldly events from time immemorial Aryan worshippers have been simply wasting their energies in such a useless task?

¹ A pun: the Brahma-weapon is a very dangerous one. Here it refers to the modern eclectic sect, called the Brahma Śamaj.
² Aprameya.
Secondly, if forms are imagined in order with their help to acquire concentration of mind, why abandon such forms as are naturally beautiful and calculated at the very first glance to captivate the mind; and why make the restless mind still more restless by the imagination of all kinds of unnatural and various forms for Devas and Devīs. There is no objection to such an argument in the case of those who have imagined such unnatural forms. But such an idea is dangerous to those whose success depends on the dictates of Śāstra. Whilst worshipping, I am independent, but at the time of receiving the fruits of worship I am dependent on Śāstra! It is very difficult to enter into this monstrous mystery.

Does Siddhi obey my command? Is it not the height of impudence or the raving of a madman to suppose that Siddhi will appear and move in the way I shall order it, and follow upon whatever form I shall contemplate? Knowing that this vanity of free thought in Śāstra must one day be shattered, Bhagavān, in the discourse between Śrī Bhagavān and Uddhava in the Śrīmad Bhāgavata,1 says:

"The Sādhaka who disobeys Śāstrik ordinances and does sādhanā according to his will, not only fails to achieve siddhi, but also goes to Hell." His licence deprives him of siddhi, and the great sin of disobedience to Śāstra leads him to Hell.

Will you and I to-day give imaginary forms to Him whose will has created the infinite of the Brahmāṇḍa? It is, indeed, creditable to you that you, being a man, have been able to believe it. I ask, What is your authority for this imagination of forms? You will reply that Śāstra had said: "Sādhakānāmhitārthāya, brahmaṇorūpāṇaṃ."2 I find nothing to object to in what Śāstra has said, but the danger lies in the manner in which it is understood.

1 Chap. xii.

2 Vīda ante; the proper translation is, "For the good of sādhakas Brahmā builds forms," but, as pointed out later, the author's opponents translate the sentence differently.