

Antaryaga

-- Lalitanandanadha.

*She is the ultimate unified sakti, the paramesvari, tripura,
the very self of brahma, vishnu and maheswara, the being
who is jnana sakti, kriya sakti and iccha sakti.*

- *vamakesvara tantra 4.10.11*

Tantra tradition classifies worship as *internal (antaryaga)* and *external (bahiryaga)*.

External worship is only a stepping stone, a preliminary procedure; a means and not an end. One must go beyond that in due course.

With or without props (*sadhara or niradhara*) *bahiryaga* is in two ways.

Sadhara way of *antaryaga* initially takes the help of certain extraneous images, or gestures, or sounds. The motif is to evolve into **niradhara antaryaga**, and in progression the *sadhaka* gradually sheds all symbolism that was motivating and supporting him in worship. In intense contemplation and visualization *sadhaka* dissolves his mind and transcends into deeper experience of *super consciousness*. Such transformation is termed **bhavana**, a mental process that transforms an idea into reality.

In an extended sense it means contemplation or meditation, comprehending the abstract as real and tangible.

Bhavana is regarded as the sublime form of worship for attaining liberation, even while one is alive (**jeevan mukthi**). *Sadhaka* ultimately comprehends unequivocally the legitimacy that unity is the basis of multiplicity and upholds the multiplicity and that the *Supreme* is being, and *becoming*, the one essence and the manifold phenomena of the universe.

yas tu sarvāṅi bhūtāny ātmany evānupaśyati

sarvabhūteṣu cātmānaṅ tato na vijugupsate

yasmin sarvāṅi bhūtāny ātmaivābhūd vijānataḥ

tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka ekatvam anupaśyataḥ

- *Isa up. 6,7*

And he who beholds all beings in the Self, and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from it. He does not feel any revulsion by reason of such a view.

When, to one who knows, all beings have, verily, become one with his own self, then what delusion and what sorrow can come to him who has seen the oneness!

- *Isa up. 6,7*

Samaya system of worship contemplates the consequential *union* between the power of the aspirant's dynamic will (*chidrupa*), also called as ***lalita kameswari (svatmaiva paradevata Lalita – bhavanopanishad)***, and ***kameswara***, the complete crystallised state of *truth* and *bliss*.

Antaryoga, as prescribed in ***vamakeswara tantra, rudrayamala, bhavanopanishad***, involve *kundalini* yoga, and different identification procedures with ***srimata – srividya - sricakra*** and the deities of nine ***avaranas' of sricakra***.

It also involves inner ***sricakra nyasa*** in the light of the ***avaranas'*** and the ascent of ***kundalini sakti to sahasrara*** and back.

Bhavanopanishad is a seminal *upanishad* of the ***srividya*** tradition.

This *upanishad* has lot of similarities with ***Tantra-raja-tantra***, another major tantric text of the most orthodox ***kadi vidya*** tradition, which insists on virtue, discipline and purity of rituals. It is also portrayed as ***samaya para vidya*** (transcendental knowledge) as the worship is internal, and purely *satvic*.

The foremost contention of *bhavanopanishad* is to ascertain a relation between foundation of the human body and *sricakra*, which is regarded as a prototype symbolic projection of the universe.

In this there is a sincere effort to harmonize (*samarasya*) the *micro* and the *macro* features of human and universal bodies, and collineation of both with *sricakra*. It lays greater emphasis on symbolic representation and contemplation, than on rituals.

Sri guruh parama karana bhuta saktih

Tena navarandhra rupodehah

Navacakra rupam sricakram

.....

Svayam tatpaduka nimajjanam paripurna dhyanam

Evam muhurta trayam bhavanaya yukto bhavati tasya

devatatmaikya siddhih.... Iti upanishad

- Bhavanopanishad

The holy Teacher is the Power (Para-Sakti) that is the cause of all. Of that Power the body with its nine orifices is the form. It is the holy Wheel in the guise of the nine wheels.

The Power of the Boar is paternal: Kurukulla, the deity of sacrifice, is maternal.

The (four) human Ends are the oceans (purusharthas - dharma, artha, kama and moksha).

The body with the seven constituents (Chile, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen), the skin and the hair is the island of the nine gems.

Resolutions are the wish-granting trees; energy (of the mind) is the garden of the trees of plenty.

The six seasons are the tastes, namely sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, astringent and saltish, which are apprehended by the tongue.

Knowledge is the material for worship; the object of knowledge is the oblation; the knower is the sacrificer.

The meditation on the identity of the three, knowledge, its object, and the knower, is the worship rendered to the holy Wheel.

*Destiny and sentiments like love are (the miraculous attainments like) atomicity, etc. Lust, anger, greed, delusion, elation, envy, merit, demerit – these constitute the eight powers of Brahma, etc. (**Brahma, Maheshvari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Raudri, Charmamunda and Kalasamkarsini**).*

*The nine abodes (**muladhara etc.**,) are the powers of the mystic gestures.*

The earth, water, fire, air, ether, ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose, speech, feet, hands, the organs of evacuation and generation and the modification of mind are the sixteen powers such as the pull of lust, etc. Speech, grasp, motion, evacuation, generation, and the attitudes of rejection, acceptance and apathy are the eight (entities) such as the flower of love, etc.

***Alambusa, kuhu, visvodara, varana, hastijihva, yasovati, payasvini, gandhari, pusa, sankhini, sarasvati, ida, pingala and susumna** – these fourteen arteries are the fourteen powers such as the all-exciting, etc.*

*The five vital breaths and the five minor breaths are the ten divinities of the outer spokes, (styled) **Sarvasiddhiprada**, etc.*

The digestive fire becomes fivefold through distinctions based on its association with this pre-eminent breath. (They are) what ejects, what cooks, what dries, what burns and what inundates. Owing to the prominence of the minor breath, these (fires) in the human body come to be styled as the corroder, the ejector, the agitator, the yawner and the deluder. They promote the digestion of the food: eaten, chewed, sucked, licked and imbibed.

*The ten aspects of Fire are the ten divinities of the inner spokes, **Sarvajna**, etc. The qualities of cold, heat, pleasure, pain, desire, sattva, rajas and tamas are the eight powers, *vasini*, etc.*

The five, rudimentary sound, etc., are the flowery shafts. Mind is the bow made of sugarcane. Attachment is the cord (that binds). Aversion is the hook.

*The unmanifest, the Great, and the principle of Egoism are the divinities of the inner triangle: **Kameshvari, Vajreshvari and Bhagamalini**.*

*Absolute awareness is **Kameshvara**. The supreme divinity, **Lalita**, is one's own blissful Self. Of all this, the distinctive apprehension is the red glow.*

Perfection (ensues from) exclusive concentration of the mind. In the performance of meditation consist (various acts of) respectful service.

The act of oblation is the merger in the Self of distinctions like I, Thou, Existence, non-Existence, the sense of duty and its negation, and the obligation worship.

Assuagement is the thought of identity of (all) objects of imagination.

The view of time's transformation into the fifteen days (of the half lunar month) point to the fifteen eternal (divinities).

*Thus meditating for three instants, or two, or even for a single instant, one becomes liberated while living; one is styled the **Siva-Yogin**. Meditations on the inner wheel have been discussed (here) following the tenets of **Saktaism**.*

Whoso knows thus is a student of the Atharvasiras.

- Translation by Dr. A. G. Krishna Warriar

The dissolving in one's being of distinctions such as 'I', 'You', 'Existence', 'Non-existence', 'what is to be done', 'what is not to be done' and the duty to worship is the act of Oblation.

The thought of the sameness of all objects of mind is the act of Nourishment. The fifteen days of the transformation of time are the Eternities (the Nityas).

*One who meditates in this way for three, two or even one moment is liberated whilst living, and is called a **shiva-yogin**.*

*These thoughts on the centre of the **Srichakra** have been discussed according to the tenets of the **Kadi** School. Whosoever knows this is a student of the atharvashiras.*

The truth that brings forth peace is offered as oblation to the deity Lalita Parameswari.

The power of discrimination between good and evil is offered as service to Lalita Parameswari .

The unity between the existent and the non-existent is offered as various items of service to Lalita Parameswari.

The capacity of the various instruments of Knowledge, both internal and external, to perceive the before-said unity in everything is offered as avahana or invocation to Lalita Parameswari.

The perception of such unity outside, inside and every where, is offered as Asana or seat to Lalita Parameswari.

The unity of siva (prakasha) and sakti (vimarsha) is offered as padya or water to wash Lalita Parameswari's lovely feet.

The brilliant experience of bliss from the before said union is offered as achamana to Lalita Parameswari, to Her hands and face.

The experience of the crystal clear state of reality i.e Kameswara's sat aspect is offered as snana or water to bathe Lalita Parameswari.

The descent of the great brahma or paramasiva consciousness i.e. the chit aspect of kameswara to each and every organ is offered as panchamrita snana for Lalita Parameswari's bath.

The power of ultimate bliss appearing as fire of i.e. the ananda aspect of kameswara is offered as vastra or raiment to bhagavati.

A sacred thread, upaveetha is offered to Lalita Parameswari consisting of 27 individual strands representing bliss, wealth, knowledge, action etc. this signifies brahama nadi or the spinal cord.

Non-involvement in one's own and others worldly affairs is offered as ornaments to bhagavati.

Firmness of mind and complete control of mind in every act is offered as flowers to Lalita Parameswari.

The continuous experience of all those previously said acts and their resulting state of high consciousness is offered as dhupa or incense to the mother.

The control of breath and the consequent perception of flashes of light in the field of consciousness are offered as light to Lalita Parameswari.

The stoppage of incoming and outgoing breath is offered as food or naivedya to Lalita Parameswari.

The unitary experience of the three states of jagrat, swapna and sushupti of the consciousness is offered as Betel or tambula to bhagavati.

The movement of prana from brahmarandhra to muladhara and back is offered as pradakshina to the mother.

The fourth state beyond the three states of consciousness is offered as salutation or namaskara to Lalita Parameswari.

The complete immersion in the self with notion that the external body is non-existent is offered as bali to Lalita Parameswari .

Always presenting to the ultimate that truth alone exists and being unconcerned about any act to be done or not to be done is offered as sacrificial fire or homa.

Losing oneself in Lalita Parameswari sacred feet is offered as dhyana or meditation.

This method of worship, called **antaryaga** as prescribed by **bhvanopanishad**, when performed for three *muhurtha*, grants complete liberation to the sadhaka and he becomes *paramasiva* or *mahatripurasundari*.

Sadhaka clears the mind through the practice of *Yoga* meditation as codified in the *ashtanga yoga* of *patanjali*, does self-enquiry of *vedanta*, and then breaks through the final barrier with *samaya srividya*. In many other *hindu* traditional scriptures and writings also *antaryaga* mention of worship is cited.

To mention a few –

*Tasaivam vidusho yajnyasyatma yajamanahsraddha
Patni sariramidhmamuro vedirlomani barhirvedah sikha
Hridayam yupah kama alyam manuh pasuh
Tapognirdamassamayeta dakshina vagghota pranavudgata
Cakshuradhvaryurmano brahma srotramagneet*

*Yavadhriyate sadiksha yadasnati taddhaviryatpibati
Tadasya somapanam yadramate tadupasado yatsam
Caratyupavisatyuttishtate cana pravargyoyanmukham
Tadavahaniyo yavyahriti rahutiryaddasya
Vijnanam tajjuhoti yatsayamprataratti tatsamidham
Yatpratarmadhyandinagam sayam ca tanisavanani*

*Ye ahoratre te darsapurnamasow yerdhamasasca
Masasca te caturmaani ya ritavaste Pasubandha
ye samvatsarasca parivatsarasca teharganah
sarvavedaamva yetatsatram yanmaranam ti davabridhah*

*yetadvai jaramaryam agnihotragam satram yayevam
vidvanudayagane pramiyate devanameva mahimanam
gatva adityasya sayujyamgacchatyadayodakshine
pramiyate pitrunameva mahimanamgatva
candramasah sayujyam salokata mapnotyetow
vai surya candramasoh mahimanow barhmanovidvan
abhijayati tasmadbrahmano mahimanamapnoti
tasmadbrahmano mahimanam ityupanishad*

- Taitti. Up. Narayana prasnam 80 anuvakam

All ephemeral affairs of a *jnani* are inferred to as fractions of sacrificial fire (*yajna*). Initially the physical parts of the *sadhaka* 's body are portrayed as *yajna anga*.

The Self (*svatma*) of the *sadhaka* who has realised *super conscious levels of being* is deemed as *yajamani*, the *doer*.

His focussed attention with reverence (*sraddha*) is his spouse; gross physical body is the sacrificial *fuel* (*idhma*); his bosom (*vuras*) is the *altar*; hair is the sacred grass *kusa*); *sikha* or the lock of hair is the *veda mantra*; heart (*hridayam*) is the sacrificial post (*yupa*); desire (*kama*) is the clarified butter (*ajya*); *morbid irritation* (*kopa*) is the sacrificial animal (*pasu*), penance (*tapas*) is the sacrificial fire (*agni*); non-sensuality or control of senses (*dama*) is recompense (*dakshina*); *vak* is *hota*, the learned *rg veda priest*, *prana* is the *samaveda priest* (*udgatha*), eye is the *yajur veda priest* (*adhvaryu*); *agnidhra*, the one who kindles sacrificial fire is *srotra*, the ear.

All worldly activities are measured up to *gyotistoma yajna*. This *yajna* is meant for the elevation of the *yajamana*, the sacrificer to heaven.

The fasting period is considered to be *diksha*, consecration for a religious ceremony. *Havis* is the *havya-paka*, the oblation coked with butter and milk or an oblation of burnt offering, and the act of ingestion is compared to it.

Consumption of water by the sacrificer is an act of *somapana* (*soma* is a holy nectar). Physical movements are categorised as *Pravargya*; a ceremony introductory to *soma yaga*, at which fresh milk is poured into a heated vessel called *gharma*, or into boiling ghee and offered to *aswini devatas* '.

Yajna ahuti is the sacrificial offering to *vaidika agni*.

Vijnana is knowledge through consciousness mind, and this is attributed to *homa*, the sacrifice.

Trisandhya are the morning, noon and evening times, and they imply *savana*, various libations in the sacrificial fire.

In *hindu* tradition there are sixty *samvatsaras*’, each of which has a name. Once all sixty *samvatsaras* are over, the cycle starts over again. The sixty *Samvatsaras* are divided into 3 groups of 20 *samvatsarasi* each. The first 20 from *prabhava* to *vyaya* are attributed to *brahma*. The next 20 from *sarvajit* to *parabhava* to *vishna* and the last 20 to *siva*. The count is based on the zodiac position of *jupitar*, whose period around the *sun* is little less than 12 years. The full cycle of sixty covers *five jovian* years. *Vedic* tradition computed the set of five years to be *samvatsara*, *parivatsara*, *idavatsara*, *anuvatsara* and *idvatsara*, to be one *yugapancaka*. These mathematical computations of time are reckoned as various *yajnas*’. Longevity (*ayurdaya*) is imagined as *satra yaga*.

Death is construed as the conclusive sacrifice (*avabridha*). Thus a *jivan mukta*, a realised celibate soul, carries on his life as a continual *yajna*. On death in *uttarayana* (*utter* is *north*, *ayana* is *movement towards*; it is northern tilt of the sun from *jan* to *june* every year), the soul of such celibate is believed to enjoy the *sukha* of *indra loka* and subsequently merge into the oneness with the impersonal aspect of the *sun* (*aditya sayujya*). If death happens in *dakshinayana* (*dakshina* is *south*, *ayana* is *movement towards*, the southern tilt of the sun from *june* to *jan*), the soul ascends to *pitr loka* and finally merges into the oneness with the impersonal aspect of the *moon* (*chandra sayujya*). It has to be understood here that such soul after death merges into the impersonal aspect (*nirgunatva*) of the *parabrahman*.

On the other hand chandogya upanishad intricately discussed about *purusha yajna*, wherein the mortal form of a celibate is described as a *yajna*.

Purusho vava yajnastasya yani caturvimsativarsani
Tatpratahsavanam caturvimsatyaksara gayatri gayatram
Pratahsavanam tadasya vasavo ’nvayattah prana vava
Vasava ete hidam sarvam vasayanti .

.....

Udvayam tamasaspari jyotih pasyanta uttaramsvah

*Pasyanta uttaram devam devatra suryamaganma
Jyotiruttamamiti jyotiruttamamiti.*

- Chandogya up. 3.16,17

In *Mahabharata* this *purusha vidya* is lauded as the absolutely superlative knowledge which will confer long life on to the aspirant. *Sri Krishna* was imparted with the knowledge of *purusha vidya* by *ghora*, an *agirasa*. As a result *Krishna* became free from all desires. Here the meditation is that one's life is a sacrifice, and that the first 24 years, compared to the 24 letters of *gayatri mantra*, are the morning offering (*savana*).

These offerings are also connected to *vasus* ', which are imagined as the organs of the *sadhaka*, and the purport of the libation is to extend life further for midday libation, which lasts up to 44 years of life with *rudras* ' imagined as *prana*, and the purpose being healthy life further.

Then the next 48 years are the third libation (*savana*), which is considered as the evening sacrifice, and *adityas* ' are prayed for healthy life.

A human being is supposed to live a total of 116 years, which are in three phases, the 1st 24 years, then the 2nd 44 years and the last 48 years.

The intention of the *sadhaka* initiating *purusha yajna* rites is not to have the desire to eat, to drink and no desire to indulge in sensual pleasures.

His laugh, eating and sense satiations afterwards are envisaged as representing the sounds coming from the *stutas* ' and *sastras* '.

Then qualities of austerity, charity, straightforwardness, non-violence, truthfulness, etc., are an additional gain, in addition to what one gets by living a life as if it were a sacrifice. Here these additional gains are contemplated as *dakshina*.

The words *soshyati* and *asosta* are used when a mother is about to give birth to a child. They are also used when one is about to begin a sacrifice, as such act is considered as rebirth. Death, as the end of all, is also the end of such *purusha yajna*.

As the *sadhaka* bathes and puts on new clothes after the sacrifice, so also, when a person dies his body is bathed and new clothes are put on it. The words *soshyati* and *asosta* incidentally are the same on both the occasions. This makes the similarity between the ritualistic sacrifice and the life as a sacrifice more meaningful. The luminous light that is seen in the sun, the moon, the stars, is the light that that extends from the *eternal light*. The phenomenal world is possible because of this *light*. Those self-disciplined and living a celibate spiritual life can vision this *light* as the eternal cause and effect, the *parabrahman*.

While commenting on the 3.3.24 *brahma sutra*, *sankara bhagavatpada* says that the characteristics of *purusha vidya* as said in *chandogya upanishad* are not to be added to that of *taittiriya upanishad Narayana prasna* because they have not been recited as in the other.

Purush vidyayamiva cetareshamanamananat

- *Brahma sutra 3.3.24*

Hence the *atma yajna* (antaryaga) concept proposed by *taittiriya upanishad* pledges *brahmaprapti* ('He attains the greatness of *brahman*' - *taitti.up.*) after the demise of the *sadhaka*; *purusha yajna* (antaryaga) promises prolongation of life ('*He who meditates thus lives for a hundred and sixteen years*' - *chan.up.*); and the *antaryaga* in *bhavanopanishad* ensures *jivanmukta* status.

Bhakti is clarified by *sankara bhagavatpada* as --

*svasvarupa anusandhanam (svasvarupa
anusandhanam bhaktiriti abidhiyate - sankara bhagavatpada).*

Hritpadmasam dadyat sahasrarachyutamritaih

*Padyam caranayordadyan manasa arghya nivedayet
Tenamritena acamanam snaniyamapi kalpayet
Chittam prakalpayet pushpam dhupam pranan prkalpayet
Tejastatvam ca dipardhe naivedyam ca sudhambudhim
Anahata dhwanim ghantam vayutatvam ca camaram
Nrityamindriya karmai cancalyam manasastadha
Pushpam nanavidham dadyadatmano bhavasiddhaye
Amayamanahankaram aragamamadam tadha
Amogham adambham ca advesha kshobhake tadha
Amatsaryam alobham ca dasapushpam prakirtitam
Ahimsa paramam pushpam indriya nigraham
Daya kshamajnanapushpam panca pushpam tatahparam
Iti pancadasai pushpaih bhavapushpaih prapujayet*

- agama

Heart, the seat of emotions, is the *asana*; the *celestial nectar* that flows from the *sahasrara* is the *padya*; *manas* is the *arghya*; the *sahasrara amrita* is for *acamana* and *snana*; *akasa tatva* is offered as *vastra*; *gandha tatva* is *gandha*; *chitta* is the *kusuma*; *panca pranas* ' are offered as *dhupa*; the ocean of nectar (*sudha sindhu*) in *sahasrara* is *naivedya*; *anahata dhvani* is offered as *ghanta nada*; *vayu tatva* is offered as *camara*; the vacillations of *manas* are offered as *nritya*; abhorred attitude towards the instincts like *kamaa*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada*, *matsarya*, *ahankara*, *raga*, *dvesha*, *kshobha*, are offered as *pushpa*.

*brahmarpanam brahmahavih
brahmagnow barhmanahutam
Brahmaiva tena gantavyam
brahmakarma samadhana*

- B G 4.24

The sacrificial paraphernalia is the *ultimate truth*; the sacrificial fire is the *ultimate truth*; offerings of oblations and ghee by the *brahmana* is the *ultimate truth*; for him being fully absorbed in the by spiritual activities; certainly the *ultimate truth* is attainable.

*Atmatvam girijamatih parijanah pranah sariram graham
Pujate vishayopa bhogaracana nidra samadhisthitih
Samcarah padayo pradakshinavidhiih stotrani sarvagiro
Yadyatkarma karomi tattadakhilam sambho tavaradhanam
- sankara bhagavatpada*

O *sambhu!* You are my *atman*, *girijā* is my mind, *your* accompaniments are my life-forces, *and your* body is my residence.

My various enjoyments and constructions are *your* prayer. My sleep is the state of meditation.

My walking is *your* circumambulation and my spoken words are *your* eulogies.

And whatever I do, that all may be *your* adoration.