



ŚRĪ HARIVĀKYASUDHĀSINDHU
OF ŚRĪ ŚATĀNANDA MUNI -
A CRITICAL STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO
THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE OF
THE PHILOSOPHY OF LORD SWĀMINĀRĀYAṆA
AS REFLECTED IN *VACANĀMṚTAM*

हेतुः सर्वावताराणां सोऽवतार्य्येव वर्तते । इति ज्ञेयो न चैवान्यैरवतारैः समो हरिः ।
तस्मिन्नैव ततः प्रीतिः कर्तव्या सुदृढा सदा । तयैव संसृतेर्मोक्षः सर्वेषामस्ति नान्यथा ॥

Preface

Śrī Harivākyasudhāsindhu (HVSS) is a free flowing Sanskr̥ta translation of the Gujarātī, Vacanāmṛtam, the foundational philosophical text of Bhagwān Swāminārāyaṇa (1781-1830 C.E.), who founded Swāminārāyaṇa religion in Gujarāta. This Sanskr̥ta text, comprising of 262 chapters-Tarangas, containing 7974 ślokaś, mostly in the Anuṣṭubha meter, generally remains true to the Gujarātī text. It is the work of Śrī Śatānanda Muni, a contemporary disciple-saint of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa. To the best of my knowledge a critical study of this Sanskr̥ta text has not yet been undertaken in English language or even in Gujarātī. The philosophy, as per the text, shows clearly the development of the concept of Parabrahman with reference to Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa. while in many places in the original Gujarātī Vacanāmṛtam Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa is described as a teacher and ācārya, the HVSS directly describes him as God, Kṛṣṇa, and even as the source of all incarnations:

हेतुः सर्वविताराणां सोऽवतार्यैव वर्तते।
इति ज्ञेयो न चैवान्यैरवतारैः समो हरिः ॥ १४ ॥
तस्मिन्नैव ततः प्रीतिः कर्तव्या सुदृढा सदा।
तथैव संसृतेर्मोक्षः सर्वेषामस्ति नान्यथा ॥ १५ ॥

HVSS 142/14-15

Thus in the Taranga 142 of HVSS, Śrī Śatānanda describes Him as the Avatārī of all the avatāras and that emancipation [mokṣa or mukti]

will be possible only by such an understanding of His nature. He is not to be considered as equal to other incarnations. This is absolutely new development that requires research and study of HVSS vis-a-vis the Gujarātī text. The HVSS, along with the commentary of the first ācārya of the Vadatāla diocese, is recently published in the traditional 'Pothi' form by the Swāminārāyaṇa temple of Bhūja. We also have an old manuscript of it in the archives of AARSH at Gāndhīnagara. (MSS No. 900, 901)

I have made use of all these in my study along with the earliest printed edition of HVSS 1969 published from Vārāṇasī by Śāstri Hariprakāśadāsa. He is also the editor. There is also, surprisingly, a Gujarātī translation of HVSS which itself is the Sanskr̥ta translation of the Gujarātī Vacanāmṛtam.

My study of HVSS and the Setumālā Tīkā has convinced me that the philosophy of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa differs significantly in many ways from that of the Viśiṣṭādvaita of Śrī Rāmānuja. It has different and more ontological realities. It has the new concept of Akṣarabrahman, which is different from the realities of Jīva, Īśvara and Parabrahman. Its concepts of Upāsanā, Bhagvad Niṣṭhā and Jīvanamukta, are totally different from that of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism. We should therefore give an independent nomenclature to Swāminārāyaṇism and should not be satisfied with the add-on term **Navya-Viśiṣṭādvaita**, which has been used up to this time and which does not bring out the purport of the philosophy of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa.

I do not know how to express my gratitude to my spiritual Master H. H. Pramukhaswāmī Mahārāja who inspired and insisted that I must undertake and complete the study of Sanskr̥ta scripture, Śrī Harivākyasudhāsindhu at my age of sixty years. His encouragement along with that of Sādhu Vivekasāgaradāsa and Sādhu Īśvaracāraṇadāsa of Ahmedābāda instilled in me courage and strength to start the work.

I am thankful to the authorities of AARSH Akṣaradhāma and the English Publication Department of the Ahmedābāda Akṣarapuruṣottama Swāminārāyaṇa Mandir that made available to me all the rare relevant books and manuscripts for this study.

But my most pleasant surprise was the acceptance of my request by Prof. Dr. Rājendra I. Nāṇāvaṭī, Ex. Director Oriental Research Institute, Baroda to be my guide. I had the pleasure to study with him at St. Xavier's College, Bombay during 1959-1961. He has remained a friend and well-wisher. Thus I have advantage of being his student and for this research job. I was greatly helped by one of the outstanding ascetic scholars of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇism, namely Sādhu [Dr.] Śrutiprakāśadāsa, the walking encyclopedia of the Sanskr̥ta works of the faith. He holds many degrees in addition to Vidyā-Vāridhi of Rāśtriya Sanskr̥ta Sansthāna. Without unfailing help of these two great scholars, I would not have completed my work.

I would also like to thank the Mahanta (head), Sādhu Ānandsvrūpadāsa and the Kothārī, Sādhu Viśvavihārīdāsa of Akṣaradhāma.

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The study, I hope, will make way for further research in the field
of original philosophy and theology propounded by Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa
in early 19th century, its development in late 19th century and its
present status.

AARSH, Akshardham

Gandhinagar

Dated, the 28th December, 2006

(Jyotindra M. Dave)