

CHAPTER TWO

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THE AUTHOR, HIS LIFE, DATE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

CHAPTER - II.The Author, his date, life and contributions:

Regarding the date and life time of Śrī Śaṅkara, everything is shrouded in obscurity. Śrī Śaṅkara has not left behind him any detail regarding his life time or the date of his compositions. In none of his compositions is there a mention of any other composition by him - like 'uktaṁ hi mama granthe' or 'uktaṁ hi mayā' which can at least help the reader to trace out any quotation of Śrī Śaṅkara. So no conclusion is possible regarding his date and works without a critical approach.

The problem of obscurity is seen even regarding his parentage, place of birth, etc. It is probable that Śrī Śaṅkara (780-820 A.D) was born at Kālaṭi on the banks of the River Periyar in the erstwhile State of Cochin. Śivaguru and Āryāmbā were his parents. Another view is that Chidāmbaram in South Arcot was his place of birth and Visvajit and Vasiṣṭha were his parents.<sup>1</sup> But the former view can be more welcome. Śaṅkara is a quite popular name among the Nāmpūtiri Brahmins. So also among the antarjanams, Āryāmbā is a familiar name. The reference to Kaippillī Illam as Śaṅkara's home also proves Śrī Śaṅkara's birth place to be Kālaṭi. The legend regarding the shower of golden gooseberries<sup>2</sup> mentions

1. Basu Mallik lectures on Vedānta - p.232

2. (T.M.P.Mahadevan) Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya p.11.

the name Svarṇathu mana, which is situated on the way to Chottānikkara Devī Temple near Kālaṭi. It may be true that Śrī Śaṅkara had walked begging <sup>for</sup> alms and reached Chottānikkara. So also the Śrīgeri Maṭha erected by the authorities as <sup>nu</sup> moment to the great advaitic teacher and the cave where he is supposed to have meditated are testimonials to this.<sup>3</sup> Recently the authorities of the Kāñcī Kāmakōṭi Pīṭha also erected Śrī Śaṅkarastūpa, paying homage to Śrī Śaṅkara's birth place, Kālaṭi in Kerala.

Śrī Śaṅkara's writings testify to his adoration for his mother. S.L. is an example for this.<sup>4</sup> He is said to have lost his father even in his childhood. Śrī Śaṅkara may have been a posthumous child. The story of Śrī Śaṅkara's acceptance of asceticism to save himself from the grip of a crocodile is nothing but an exaggeration of his willingness and interest in ascetic life. One having no real interest in ascetic life cannot spend so much time and energy on the philosophy of various branches. It was because he had least interest in wordly life that Śrī Śaṅkara could make a valuable contribution of compositions to Advaitic Philosophy. The credit here goes to Śrī Śaṅkara's widowed mother who had brought him up with so much tolerance, and so much broad-mindedness and so much willingness. Most of the valuable contributions of India emerged from the huts of sages, where

3. Basu Mallik lectures on Vedānta. p.232

4. Also see Bṛhadāra-  
nyakopaniṣadbhāṣya - "Putrasya samyaganuśāstrī"

transcendental meditation, self-control and asceticism were practised. And there is possibility that Śrī Śaṅkara too had such a serene and calm atmosphere where transcendental wisdom provoked him to compose a wide literature in various branches of Indian philosophy and religion, especially in Advaita.

Being brought up in poverty Śrī Śaṅkara must have developed his thought of adjuring wordly life. Disgusted with the falsity of worldly life, he put on the ascetic's robes. After attaining salvation or Non-dual knowledge, he turned himself a preacher and a prophet.

Śrī Śaṅkara had left no evidence regarding himself for he lost egoism completely, on attaining the Non-dual knowledge just because <sup>he was</sup> broad-minded to lay more importance on his teachings than on giving a propaganda regarding himself and his family. It may be true that Śrī Śaṅkara being an advaitic philosopher he had concentrated much upon Advaitic teachings and hence there is a tendency among scholars to ascribe only the bhāṣyas on the Prasthānatraya to Śrī Śaṅkara. But putting more stress on Prasthānatrayabhāṣya does not mean that his efforts were confined within the scope of the commentaries on Brahmasūtra, Bhagavadgītā and the major upaniṣads. Being free from all bondages Śrī Śaṅkara had visited many temples and shrines during his pilgrimages to propagate Advaita philosophy and religion. Thus the

poetic mind, inside the depth of the great advaitic heart of Śrī Śaṅkara could mould out fine eulogies of the various Gods and Goddesses. It is no exaggeration if one says he was a renowned poet also, in addition to being a philosopher, for, a true philosopher, will be a true poet also. This is a tradition in India.

### Date of Śrī Śaṅkara

Śrī Śaṅkara is said to be a younger contemporary of Śrī Kumārilabhaṭṭa. Śrī Sureśvara the well known disciple of Śrī Śaṅkara has cited two verses from Kumārilabhaṭṭa's Slokavārtika in his Brhadāranyakopaniṣadvārtika.<sup>5</sup> So Śrī Sureśvara can be placed in a period later to Kumārilabhaṭṭa. Śrī Kumārila has been attacked by Dharmakīrti who has been attacked by Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Sureśvara. But they have never been attacked back by Dharmakīrti. Likewise Śrī Kumārila has been attacked by Santarakṣita, Kamalaśīla and Akalaṅka but they have not touched upon the writing of Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Sureśvara.<sup>6</sup> So in determining the date of Śrī Śaṅkara, Śrī Kumārila's date will be useful. And it can be concluded that Śrī Śaṅkara's date is definitely after that of Kumārila.

A Cambodian inscription mentions one Śivasoma who claims himself to be the pupil of Bhagavān Śaṅkara.<sup>7</sup>

5. M.Umesh, Sankara's date. "yajjātiyair pramānaistu yajjati yajjātiyārthadarśanam." etc.

6. ibid. 93

7. "yenādhītāni śāstrāṇi bhagavān śankarāhvayāt" Ibid.

This Śivasoma was the preceptor of Indravarmān who ruled during A.D. 878 - 887. So Śrī Śaṅkara's date comes prior to that. This Śivasoma was a Tāntrik. There is possibility that he had learnt tantric philosophy from Śrī Śaṅkara who composed S.L. to pay homage to his preceptor Śrī Gauḍapāda, the composer of Subhagodaya. Following the footprints of his Paramaguru, Śrī Śaṅkara wrote S.L. also as an authoritative tantric and devotional work.

Śrī Kumārila's date is said to be not earlier than sixth century and not later than the first half of eight century.<sup>8</sup> So we have to conclude that Śrī Śaṅkara had lived during the period between that of Śrī Kumārila and Śrī Śivasoma. The reliable manuscript giving such mention regarding the date reads thus

Nidhināgebhavahnyabde vibhave śaṅkarodayaḥ<sup>9</sup> (780 A.D)  
kalyabde candranetrāṅkavahnyabde guhāpraveśaḥ<sup>10</sup> (820 A.D)

### Ṣaṅmata-Sthāpaka

Though Śrī Śaṅkara was noted as the prince - philosopher of Advaita in India, one notable service of his was that he had founded Ṣaṅmata i.e., he modified and codified the six forms of worship viz., Gāṇapatyaṅ, Kaumāraṅ, Vaiṣṇavaṅ,

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8. ibid., p.59

9.- Ibid.

10. Ibid.

Sauram, Śaktam and Śaivam.<sup>11</sup> He prescribed Pāncāyatana pūjā for his own disciples. He is supposed to have installed the Janākarṣaṇa and Dhanākarṣaṇa yantras at Śrīraṅgam and Tiruppati which have the power to attract devotees and offerings.<sup>12</sup>

Śrī Śaṅkara had also founded the monastic orders and institutions in India. Titles for ascetics following different orders in ascetic life, came after Śrī Śaṅkara. The titles are said to be ten viz., Saraswati, Puri, Bhārati Vana, Āraṇya, Tīrtha, Āsrama, Giri, Parvata and Sāgara.<sup>13</sup>

Śrī Śaṅkara had saved many Hindu religious schools from ferocious practices and given the deserving purity to them. He introduced this mainly in the case of Śakti worship, i.e., in Samayamata especially. This was practised by Hindus since his time. The discipline of Samayamata is named as Swatantra tantra in S.L. which has in itself Jñāna, Bhakti, Mantra, etc.<sup>14</sup>

### Sarvajñapīṭha

It is said that Śrī Śaṅkara ascended his throne of Sarvajñapīṭha (omniscience) at Kashmir.<sup>15</sup>

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11. Śaṅkara and Śaṅmata, Preface.

12. Ibid.

13. T.M.P. Mahadevan, Śaṅkarācārya, p.51

14. S.N.Sastri, L.S.N., p.8

15. T.M.P.Mahadevan - Śaṅkarācārya, pp.39-41

Kashmir is important as a mystic centre exhorting Śakti aspect of ultimate reality to sādhakas. Āryāvarta (India) represents the Bindutrikona (mystic triangle) of Śrīcakra; (mystic yantra bestowing one's desires when contemplated) having the three points in Kashmir, Kanyākumārī and Nepal with Kāśī as the Bindu (the central point). There is a Śaṅkarācārya temple on the Śaṅkarācārya Hill otherwise called Takht-i-Sulaiman Hill<sup>16</sup> at Kashmir.

### Mahāsamādhi

Having thus completed his mission, he entered Mahāsamādhi (supreme trance) at Trichur Vatakkūṁnātha temple.<sup>17</sup> Some claim it to be Kashmir<sup>18</sup> and some to be Kedārnāth,<sup>19</sup> and some as Kāñcī.<sup>20</sup> It is believed that Kāñcī is the place where 'Mother' pervades as invisible and subtle ether in the Kāmākṣī temple. Śaṅkara was fortunate to have Devī Darsana (vision of Goddess) in the bila (holy cave) there. Śaṅkara consecrated the Śrīcakra (mystic yantra) in front of Her image. The life-size-huge image of Śaṅkara made of

16. Ibid.

17. K.S.C., Vol.I., p.119

18. Ibid., p.118

19. M.C.S.S., p.880

20. N.Veezhinathan, Śaṅkara and Śaṅmata.

stone is taken to the Muktimandapa (where Śaṅkara is said to have attained liberation) on Vyāsapūjā day every year, on the banks of Sarvatīrtha paying homage to Vyāsa.<sup>21</sup>

Date

Contradictory view:

There are different views regarding the date of this great spiritual and philosophical preceptor of India. According to some scholars he was born in 509 B.C.<sup>22</sup>

P. Śeṣādri places the date in the 7th century whereas Rāmakriṣṇāsrāma places it between 805-837 A.D.<sup>23</sup> According to Colebrooke, Śaṅkara's date is between 800-900 A.D.<sup>24</sup>

R.G.Bhandarkar dates it as 680 A.D.<sup>25</sup> Telang argues the date to be 6th century A.D.<sup>26</sup> B.G.Tilak and Swami

Prabhavanada place Śaṅkara's date towards the close of the 7th century A.D.<sup>27</sup>

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21. T.M.P. Mahadevan - Śaṅkarācārya., pp. 47-55  
(Another view is that Śaṅkara had an accidental death. While diving in air, an enemy had murdered him in fraud through black-magic by attacking on his shadow. At his death-bed he is said to have repented for 3 sins 1. for confining Almighty within stone and mortar i.e. icons. 2. for qualifying Brahman who transcends all qualities and 3. for frequenting temples; for, that was against His omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience. - Vide Mahaccaritasamgrahasagara., p.880 and vide Frazer - Golden Bough., p.93)
22. Max Muller - Hindu World., p.788.
23. P.Sesadri - Sriśaṅkara., Passim
24. Baladeva Upadhyaya - Sri Śaṅkarācārya., p.35
25. Dr.S.Radhakrishnan - Indian Philology., Vol.2, p.447
26. Prabuddha Bhārata., Nov. 1957, Passim.
27. Spiritual heritage of India., p.279

Vaṭakkūṅkūr cites a colophone to say that he was born thirty seven years before Kolla Era that is Kaliyuga - 3921.<sup>28</sup> "A.N.Kṛṣṇaswāmy quotes 788 A.D. to be the date and Swāmikkannupillai mentioned 805 A.D. as the date. Nāgayya in the Travancore State Manual places it as first century B.C. Appāsāstri refutes it, basing his argument on the pattaya (copper plate) given by Sudhanvabhūpati (as 5018 Yudhistira-sataka i.e., 500 B.C)<sup>29</sup> "But this view is not so much accepted because it was during these centuries that Buddhism made rapid progress in North India. To make Śaṅkara and Buddha as contemporaries does not seem wise, for, all books stress the fact that Śaṅkara incarnated to refute Buddhism. Had they been contemporaries, Buddhism could not have got so much propagation at the same time and at the same place when Advaita also was gaining such wide acceptance." says Naṭeśa.<sup>30</sup> T.R. Cintāmaṇi places it to 655-687 A.D.<sup>31</sup> Dr.Somerwell places the date to 788 A.D.<sup>32</sup> B.Bhaṭṭācārya<sup>33</sup> also, is of the same view and says that Śaṅkara's visit to Kashmir influenced the exposition of the Pratyabhijñā system

28. K.S.S.C., Part I, p.6

29. Ibid. p.163

30. Ibid. p.165

31. K.S.C., Vol.I., p.113

32. A Study of History Abridgement, p.29

33. S and P.W., p.659.

(Advaita system repeated through Saivistic arrangement of Tattvas.) T.M.P.Mahadevan refers to Dravidasisu (in the 75th verse of S.L.) who became a renowned poet by drinking the milk given by Goddess Pārvati. This name indicates Tirujñānasāmbandar who is said to have lived during 700 A.D.<sup>34</sup> Considering the evidences and majority of opinions, Śaṅkara's date can be placed between 788 and 820 A.D.

Authorship of S.L.

Śaṅkara's authorship of S.L. is not accepted by many scholars.<sup>35</sup> The following manuscripts discovered on S.L. have their colophones as "Śaṅkara"<sup>36</sup>

1. A4. No. 33 B.24. Oriya Script - 'Iti Śrī Śaṅkarācāryaviracitā Anandalahari Samāptā.'
2. Baroda Museum. B.1 "Iti Śrī Śaṅkarācāryaviracitaṁ Saundaryalaharīstotraṁ sapratimaṁ samāptiṁ agamat devīkrpātaḥ."
3. B.2 O.1. Baroda No.7356 "Iti Śrī Parmahansa-parivrājaka Śaṅkarācāryaviracitaṁ Saundaryalaharīnāmnā Sikhariṇīvr̥ttena Śrī Jagannāthkāstutisāmpūrṇaṁ."
4. M.D. Desai-Baroda-B3. "Iti Śrī Śaṅkarācāryaviracitā..."

34. See Śaṅkarācārya., pp.7-8

35. Norman Brown, S.L., p.25

36. Ibid. pp. 31-36

5. B4.O.R.I. Baroda. No.3513. "Iti Śrī Paramahaṁsa-  
parivrājakacarnācakra-cūḍāmaṇi Śaṅkarācārya-  
viracitaṁ Śrī Saundaryalaharīstotraṁ samāptaṁ."
6. B5. No.5393. "Iti Śrīmatparamahaṁsaparivrājakācārya  
Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpādaḥ."
7. B.L.I. No.483 of 1887, 1891. "Iti Śrī Śaṅkarācārya-  
viracitaṁ Saundaryalaharīstotraṁ sampūrṇaṁ."
8. H<sub>1</sub> Harvard University Library No.304.  
"Iti Śrī Śaṅkarācāryaviracitaṁ Saundaryalaharī-  
stotraṁ sampūrṇaṁ."
9. H<sub>2</sub> No.881 "Iti Śrīmat Śaṅkarācāryaviracitaṁ  
saundaryalaharī samāptaṁ."
10. HS No.881. "Iti Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya .....  
sampūrṇaṁ."
11. H<sub>6</sub> No.882. Surat. "Iti Śrī dravidaviṣayamaṇḍanena  
akhaṇḍakavimaṇḍalakhandaṇena Śrī Śaṅkarācāryena  
viracitā Saundaryalaharī samāptā."

Still, many scholars ascribe its authorship, not to Śaṅkara but, to somebody else belonging to that samprādāya, of a later period. The reason held, is that, the references made in the poem, are supposed to be of a later period (later than 10th century A.D.)<sup>37</sup> whereas Śaṅkara is said to have lived during 788-820 A.D. So also, the Śākta Philosophy mentioned in the work is much more different from the Advaitic philosophy of Śrī Śaṅkara.

As to the references made in the work, the mention of (1) the number of rasas; (2) the nāsābharana (nose-stud) and (3) the cities of Vijayā, Kalyāṇī, etc., are the chief ones.

Norman Brown is of the opinion that there is a mention of nose-stud in the 61st stanza of S.L., which appears in Indian History only during 10th century A.D. The stanza cannot be a later addition because, no manuscript misses this stanza.<sup>38</sup> To one's surprise, it is seen that Mackay has identified some of the studs found at Mohan-Jo-daro as nose ornaments.<sup>39</sup> Cape-comorin temple, which was a cause for the shipwrecks, owing to the lustre of its nose-stud, was installed even in the 6th decade of 5th century A.D.<sup>40</sup> G.S.Gurye says - "The Devī temple at Kanyākumārī in the extreme south is dedicated to Bhagavatī a name for Devī which is attested in the form of Bhadrāryā, in Patna district inscription of the 6th decade of 5th century A.D."<sup>41</sup> Regarding this installation Guru Dutt says<sup>42</sup> "it has been held not without any ground that the cult of Śiva and Śakti, with which the Tantras are prominently associated, was already established and flourishing for four millenniums before Christ

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38. See Norman Brown - S.L., p.27

39. Rai Govinda Candra - F.E.M.J., p.532

40. G.S. Gurye - G & M., p.245

41. Ibid.

42. Hindu Culture., p.254

at the time of the civilization of the Indus Valley. In historic times, Pliny mentions worship of Kanyākumārī at Cape Comorin, a fact which suggests that it must have been established in South India long before the time of Periplus."

Regarding the number of rasas, Norman Brown says:-

"It has been claimed that before 9th century, the number of rasas is given only as eight."<sup>43</sup> Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra, the book he depends for his argument, shows only what Bharata accepted.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the unsatisfactory character of the text Nāṭyaśāstra and the mention of eight rasas in some manuscripts, and nine in some other manuscripts,<sup>45</sup> cannot be considered as a support for his argument.

The terms Kalyāni, Vijayā, etc., mentioned in the 49th stanza of S.L. raise doubt that it is an indication of Vijayanagar Empire which flourished during the 14th century A.D. But a stone inscription at the time of Devapāla mentions these names in 10th century A.D.<sup>46</sup>

The first available commentary on S.L. was that of Lakṣmīdhara of 14th century A.D.<sup>47</sup> Such a distant gap of time between the original text and its commentary makes

43. S.L., p.27

44. Śaṅkara mentions more than 9 rasas - stanza 99, S.L.,

45. "Parānandābhikhyāṁ rasāṁ rasayati."

45. Dr.V.Raghavan - N.O.R., p.15

46. Raj Bali Pandey - H.L.I., p.168

47. 'Vardhamāna Kalyānavijayarājyesu

47. J.N. Farquhar - O.R.L.I., p.266

one feel that the work too might have been composed somewhat near to 14th century. But this presumption does not seem correct, because, so many works composed, centuries before, remain untouched even in the present century.

It is true, that Sri Śaṅkara was an ardent believer of Advaita. But, it does not mean that a philosopher like Śaṅkara could not compose such works like S.L. Even in the explanation of lofty ideas in the Upaniṣads, he does not fail to show his talent in the usage of beautiful similies. In B.S.B. also, Śaṅkara uses some words in support of Tantras.<sup>48</sup> Śaṅkara never condemns sagunopāsanā (meditation of qualified Brahman). "Introducing the Brahmasūtras"<sup>49</sup> he says that Brahman is apprehended under two forms, in the first place, as qualified, having multiformity of names and forms, in the second place as being opposite of this i.e., free from all attributes. These attributes given to Brahman are perhaps, more beautiful than the attributeless Brahman.<sup>50</sup>

48. "Yathā vā arā nābhau samarpitaṁ ..... "B.S.B., 1.3.8.

"Tadeko { grajvalanaṁ ..... " B.S.B., 4.2.16, 17.

49. "Srutattvācca" B.S.B.

50. "Dvaitaṁ mohāya bodhāt prāg jāte bodhe maṇiṣayā  
bhaktyarthaṁ Kalpitaṁ dvaitaṁ advaitādapi sundaraṁ"

Therefore, it can be very well concluded that there is much probability in identifying this excellent literary piece to be of the great Advaitin Śrī Śaṅkara (788-820 A.D.).

Śrī Śaṅkara's works

Śaṅkara's works are generally divided into four parts:- (1) Bhāṣyas; (2) Mūlagranthas; (3) Mantraśāstras; and (4) Stotras.

- I. Bhāṣyas:- (1) Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya; (2) Bhagavadgītābhāṣya; (3) Īśāvāsyopaniṣadbhāṣya; (4) Kenopaniṣadbhāṣya; (5) Kāthopaniṣadbhāṣya; (6) Prasnopaniṣadbhāṣya; (7) Mundakopaniṣadbhāṣya; (8) Māṇḍūkyopaniṣadbhāṣya; (9) Aitareyopaniṣadbhāṣya; (10) Taittirīyopaniṣadbhāṣya; (11) Chāṇḍogyopaniṣadbhāṣya; (12) Brhadāranyakopaniṣadbhāṣya; (13) Nṛsimhatāpanīyopaniṣadbhāṣya; (14) Viṣṇusahasranāmabhāṣya; (15) Sanatsujātiyabhāṣya; (16) Lalitātrisatībhāṣya.

II. Mūlagranthas:

- (1) Vivekacūḍāmaṇi; (2) Upadesasāhasri; (3) Aparokṣānūbhūti; (4) Vākyavṛtti; (5) Svātmanirūpana; (6) Ātmabodha; (7) Sataslokī; (8) Dasaslokī; (9) Sarvavedāntasiddhāntasārasaṅgraha; (10) Prabodhasudhākāra; (11) Svātmaprakāśikā; (12) Maniṣāpañcaka; (13) Advaitapāñcaratna; (14) Nirvānāstaka; (15) Advaitānūbhūti; (16) Brahmānucintana;

- (17) Prasnottaramālikā; (18) Sadācāranusandhāna;  
(19) Yogatarāvali; (20) Upadesapañcaka;  
(21) Dhanyāṣṭaka; (22) Jīvanmuktānandalaharī;  
(23) Anātmāsṛīvigarhaṇaprakarana; (24) Svarūpānusandhāna;  
(25) Yatipañcaka; (26) Pāncīkarana; (27) Tattvopadesa;  
(28) Ekaśloki; (29) Mayapañcaka; (30) Praudhānubhūti;  
(31) Brahmajñānāvalīmālā; (32) Laghuvākyaṅṛtti; and  
(33) Nirvāṇamañjarī.

51

Stotrakāvyaṣ (with Special reference to S.L):-

Tradition ascribes the following stotrakāvyaṣ to Śaṅkara-

- (1) Gaṇeśabhujāṅga; (2) Gaṇeśapañcaratna; (3) Subrahmaṇya-  
bhujāṅga; (4) Śivabhujāṅga; (5) Śivānandalaharī;  
(6) Śivaparādhakṣamāpanastotra; (7) Śivapādādikesānta-  
varṇanastotra; (8) Vedasārasivastotra; (9) Śivakesādi-  
pādāntavarṇanastotra; (10) Swarnamālāstuti; (11) Daśa-  
ślokiṣtuti; (12) Gaṅgāṣṭakam; (13) Dakṣiṇāmūrtiṣtotra;  
(14) Mṛtyuñjayamānasapūjāstotra; (15) Śivanāmāvalyṣṭaka;  
(16) Śivapañcākṣarastotra; (17) Umāmaheṣvarastotra;  
(18) Devībhujāṅgastotra; (19) Ānandalaharī;  
(20) Tripurasundarīvedapādastotra; (21) Tripurasundarī-  
mānasapūjāstotra; (22) Devīcatuḥṣaṣṭyupacārapūjāstotra;  
(23) Tripurasundaryāṣṭaka; (24) Lalitāpañcaratna;

51. Dr.S.V.S.Iyer - K.S.L. - A bibliography

Dr.E.Easwaran Nampūtiri - K.S.L. - A bibliography.

- (25) Kalyāṇavarṣṭistava; (26) Kanakadhārāstava;  
 (27) Mantrāmātrkāpuspamālāstava; (28) Navaratnamālikā;  
 (29) Gāyatrīyastaka; (30) Srīrāmabhujāṅga;  
 (31) Lakṣmīrṣiṃhapāncaratna; (32) Lakṣmīrṣiṃhakarūṇā-  
rasastotra; (33) Āmbāstaka; (34) Srī-Viṣṇubhujāṅga;  
 (35) Viṣṇupādādikesāntastotra; (36) Pāṇḍuraṅgāstaka;  
 (37) Acyutāstaka; (38) Kṛṣṇāstaka; (39) Haristuti or  
Nārāyaṇastotra; (40) Govindāstaka; (41) Bhagavanmānasapūjā;  
 (42) Mohamudgara (Bhajagovindam or Carpatapāncarikā);  
 (43) Acyutāstaka; (44) Annapūrnāstaka;  
 (45) Mīnākṣīpāncaratnastotra; (46) Mīnākṣīstotra;  
 (47) Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotra; (48) Kālabhairavāstaka;  
 (49) Narmadāstaka; (50) Yamunāstaka; (51) Manīkarnīkastaka;  
 (52) Sivamānasapūjā; (53) Prātaḥsmaraṇastotra;  
 (54) Jagannāthāstaka; (55) Ṣaṭpadīstotra; (56) Bhramarāmbāstaka;  
 (57) Sivapañcākṣaranakṣatramālāstotra; (58) Dvādasalingastotra;  
 (59) Ardhanārīśvarastotra; (60) Śārādābhujāṅga;  
 (61) Gurvāstaka; (62) Lalitāpāncaka; (63) Bhavanībhujāṅga; and  
 (64) Saundaryalaharī.

Whether Śaṅkara himself had composed so much is a question, for which, the reply one receives from most of the scholars is negative. The fact is that, while making great propoganda for his Advaitic exhortations, his disciples made the world forget his poetic compositions, and many of his good literary contributions sank deep into the ripples of

monistic teachings. Still, even in explaining the ultimate truth of monism, he did not forget to describe it in the most simple and pleasing way where his felicity of expression is reflected. In the words of P. Śeṣādri - "Young in years, but ripe in wisdom, self confident and self-reliant, yet gentle and tolerant, his influence was irresistible. Though he had soared the highest pinnacle of realization, he oned himself with the humblest and mingled in all harmless forms of worship seeing Brahman everywhere, even in rivers and mountains, sacred ghats and other places, thus objects sanctified by the devotion of ages were glorified by him in sweet and charming verses, breathing the fragrance of pure and exalted emotion as is born out by his stotras on Annapūrnā, Viśwanātha, tutelary deities of Kāśi, Manikarnikā etc. " 52

The composition on Prasthānatraya can claim priority to the composition of Stotrakāvyas, for it is seen that after accepting ascetic life he proceeded to Kāśi and composed the Prasthānatraya on the advice of Govinda, his preceptor. Later, after meeting Śiva in the guise of Caṇḍāla, Śaṅkara was advised to meet Vyāsa, who doubled his span of life; then he went to Kāśi and began working on his compositions. During Digvijaya (whirl-wind campaign) he pointed out the identity of each and every object of worship with Brāhman, so as to make the great advaitic teachings, more simple in the Stotrakāvyas for the common people to understand.

1. Ganeśabhujāṅga is a work in nine stanzas in Bhujāṅga prayāta metre. Each stanza ends with 'Ganādhīsamīsānasūnuṁ tamīde'. Almost all the lines show a high degree of excellence.

E.g. 'Prakāśajjapāratnaratnaprasūnapravālaprabhātārunajyotirekaṁ....'

2. Ganeśapañcaratna is a beautiful literary piece brimming with musical rhythm. The recital of the lines itself gives a melodious fluency.

E.g. "Nitāntakāntadantakāntimantakāntakātmaṁ  
acintyarūpamantakinamantarāyakraṅtanāṁ  
hr̥dantare nirantaraṁ vasantameva yogināṁ  
tamekadantameva taṁ vicintayāmi santataṁ."

3. Subrahmanyabhujāṅga: In 34 stanzas the eulogy of Kumāra is composed. It seems that the deity mentioned here, is that of Skanda at Kukke in Western Ghats, as, is said in the 10th stanza -

"Bhujāṅgeśa, bhūteśa, bhr̥ṅgeśa tasmai  
namaste, namaste namaḥ kukkeliṅga"

Some stanzas are highly rich with prāsa.

"Kumāraṁ vareṇyaṁ saranyaṁ supunyaṁ  
sulāvanyapanyaṁ suresānuvarṇyaṁ  
lasatpūrṇakarūnyamasaddhiranyaṁ  
sukarūnyamāryāgraganyaṁ namāmi."

4. Sivabhujāṅga is composed in 15 stanzas in Bhujāṅgaprayāta metre. The poetic skill in displaying the world of 'words' magic, is evident in many places.

E.g. "Jagannātha, mannātha, gaurīsanātha  
namaste namaste punaste namostu  
prasīda, smara, trāhi, pasya, ava, puṣya,  
kṣamasva, āpnuhīti kṣapā hi kṣipāmah."

5. Śivānandalaharī - Bhakti is dealt with in its extreme degree here. Whatever the devotee does, is considered as offering to Almighty. The aspects of Sāmīpya (nearness), Sārūpya (identity with the form of God), Sālokya (identity with the attributes of God), etc., are depicted in the most pleasing way.

E.g. "Mārgāvartitapādūkāḥ pasupaterāṅgasya kūrcāyate  
gandūṣāmbuniṣecanaṁ puraripordivyābhiṣekāyate  
kiṁcid bhakṣitamānsaseṣakabalaṁ navyopahārāyata  
bhaktiḥ kiṁ na karotyaho vanacarobhaktāvataṁsāyate."

6. Śivāparādhakṣamāpanastotra:- All the 14 stanzas in the work end with

"Kṣantavyo me { parādhah, śiva, śiva  
sivabhiḥ, śrīmahādeva sambho!"

The philosophic aspect of placing Śiva as the super excellent power is found in this poem. Śaṅkara seems to regret for the negligence he had shown to worship, from his childhood. E.g:

E.g: "Snātvā pratyūṣakāle snapanavidhi vidhaṁ nā } hṛtaṁ  
gāṅgotoyaṁ/pūjārthaṁ vā kadācit bahutaragahanāt ka  
khaṇḍabilvīdalāni//nānītā padmamālā sarasi vikasitā  
gaudhapuṣpaiḥ tvadarthaṁ/ksantavyo me } parādhah siva  
siva sivabhiḥ sṛmahādeva sambho!"//

7. 'Śivapādādikeśāntavarnanastotra is an excellent devotional poem in 41 stanzas praising Lord Śiva from foot to head.
8. Vedasārasivastotra is a work in 11 stanzas composed in Bhujāṅgaprayāta metre. Advaitic teachings are expressed in this work.

E.g: "Parātmanamekaṁ jagadbījamādyam  
nirīhaṁ nirākāraṁ oṅkāravedyam  
yato jāyate pālyate yena visvaṁ  
na bhūmir na cā } po na vahnirna vāyuh  
na cakāsamāste na tandrā na nidrā."

9. "Śivakesādīpādāntavarnanastotra: Lord Śiva is praised from head to foot. Here too, we can find excellent examples in prāsa:-

E.g: "Bhūmnā yasyāstasīmṇā bhuvanamanuṣṛtaṁ yat paraṁdhāma  
dhānam  
sāmnāmanāyatattvaṁ yadapi ca paraṁ yad guṇātītamādyam....."

10. Suvarṇamālāstuti: In alphabetical order beginning from A to kṣa, Śiva and His spouse Śivā are praised, in 50 stanzas.

11. Dasaslokīstuti:- Śiva with His other half Āmbā, is described as Parabrahman, in 10 stanzas. Sāmbasiva (the hermaphrodite form of Śiva) is considered to be Parabrahman in whom everything originates, develops and ceases.

E.g. "Akāśasca kuthāyate dasadisābhogo dukūlayate  
sītāmsuḥ prasāvāyate sthiratarānandaḥ svarūpāyate  
vedānto nilāyāyate suvinayo yasya svabhāvāyate  
tasmin me hrdayaṁ sukhena ramatāṁ sāmbe parabrahmani."

12. Gaṅgāṣṭaka:- This ṣṭaka type of stotra praises Goddess Gaṅgā who is having divine power to remove all the sins on earth (in 8 stanzas).

E.g. "Brahmaṇḍaṁ khaṇḍayanti  
harasirasi jāṭavallimullāsayanti  
svarlokādāpayanti kanakagiriguhāgandāsailāt skhalanti  
kṣoṇiprṣṭhe luṭhanti duritacayacamūnirbharaṁ bhartsayanti  
pāthodhiṁ pūrayanti suranagarasaritpāvanī naḥ punātu."

13. Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotra is a philosophical poem in 15 stanzas praising Dakṣiṇāmūrti,<sup>53</sup> an incarnation of Lord Śiva.

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53. Usually pictured as in Yogic pose sitting on the shadow of Banyan tree expounding Vedantic principles to the disciples turning His face towards South.

14. Mr̥tyuñjaya mānasapūjāstotra:- Lord Śiva who is the captivator of death is presented in this poem. Mental worship with offerings like gheer, cardomom, ginger, spinache, etc., is done in the feast arranged for the Lord. Most of the stanzas (23 to 33) are allotted for description of the variety of offerings served to the Lord.

15. Śivanāmāvalyāṣṭaka:- In this ṣṭaka, the 8 stanzas contain the various requests to Lord Śiva to save the devotee from the worries of the world.

16. Śivapañcākṣarastotra - As the name denotes, the poem is composed of 5 stanzas, in which each stanza begins with each alphabet in 'Pañcākṣaramantra' ("Namah Śivāya") in order, from na to ya and all the stanzas end in pañcākṣara i.e., 'namah śivāya'.

E.g. "Nāgendrahārāya vilocanāya  
bhasmāṅgakārāya mahesvarāya  
nityāya suddhāya digāmbharāya  
tasmai nakārāya namah śivāya."

17. Umāmahesvarastotra:- The peculiarity of this praise of Umā and Mahesvara is that, every word in the poem ends with the declension Caturthī dvivacana (dative case).

E.g. "Namah sivābhyāṃ navayauvanābhyāṃ  
parasparāṣṭiṣṭa vapurdharābhyāṃ  
nagendrakanyāvṛṣaketanābhyāṃ  
namonamah saṅkarapārvatībhyāṃ."

18. "Devībhujāṅga-stotra having 28 stanzas is an exposition of tantric philosophy. The way of getting supreme bliss through the 6 cakras (plexuses) in human body and the role of Prāṇāyāma, etc., are explained here.

E.g. "Samākūñcya mūlaṃ hr̥di nyasya vāyūṃ  
mano bhrūbīlaṃ prāpayitvā nivṛttih  
tataḥ saccidānandarūpe pade te  
bhavantyāmba jīvāḥ sivatvena kecit."

19. Ānandalaharī having 20 stanzas, resembles S.L. in beauty of style as well as its metre (sikharinī)

E.g. "Bhavāni stotum tvāṃ prabhavati caturbhirna vadanaih  
prajānāmīśānaḥ tripuramathanah pāncabhirapi  
na śadbhiḥ senānī dasasatamukhairapyahipatih  
tadanyeṣāṃ keṣāṃ kathaya kathamasminnavasarah."

20. "Tripurasundarīvedapādastotra - The tantric philosophy of Haṃsa, Kuṇḍalinī, Mūlatrikōṇa, etc. are explained in 16 stanzas.

E.g. "yā devī hamsarūpā bhavabhayaharam sādhanānāṁ vidhatte (2)

lakṣyā yā cakrarāje navapurālasite yoginīvr̥ndagupte (4)

lakṣyā mūlatrikone guruvarakarūṇāleśatah kāmāpīthe

yasyā visvaṁ samastāṁ bahutaravitataṁ jāyate kuṇḍalinyāḥ

yasyāḥ saktiprarohāt avirālamamṛtaṁ vindate yogivr̥ndaṁ

tāṁ vande nādarūpāṁ prānavapadamayīṁ prānināṁ prānadātrīṁ."(10)

21. Tripurasundarīmānasapūjāstotra is comparatively more lengthy than other stotras, and more elaborately descriptive. External form of worship in gross form in nature with mental offerings and upacāras like arghya (respectful reception with water), ācamāniya (offering holy water in the palm to sip) etc., and internal form of worship of the subtle form of the Goddess i.e., through cakras (plexuses) are depicted here. In style and sense, similarity with S.L. can be seen.

E.g. "Mukhaṁ binduṁ kṛtvā kuṇḍayugamadhāḥ tasya tadadho  
harārdhaṁ dhyāyedyo haramahiṣi te manmathakalāṁ  
sa sadyaḥ saṁkṣobhaṁ nayativanitā ityapi laghu  
trilokīmapyāsu bhramayati ravīndustanayugaṁ."(S.L.19)

cf: "Īkārordhvagabindurānanamadho bindudvayaṁ ca stanau  
trailokye gurugamyametadakhilāṁ hārdaṁ ca rekhātmakāṁ  
itthaṁ kāmakalātmikāṁ bhagavatīmantāḥ samārādhayan  
ānandāmbudhimajjane pralabhatāṁ ānandathuṁ sajjanāḥ."

22. Devīcatuḥṣaṣṭyupacārapūjāstotra describes the 64 upacāras performed to the Goddess (in 72 stanzas) like Vāsagrha (residence), Piṭha (seat), Snāna (bath), Pādūkā (sandals), Añjana (collyrium), Ābharana (ornaments), etc.
23. Tripurasundaryastaka:- This is an astaka in which all the 8 stanzas end with the line "tripurasundarīmāsrāye."
24. Lalitāpāncaratna:- Goddess Lalitā is praised in 5 stanzas, as mother of Heramba (Gaṇapatī). E.g. 'Māmāmbāpuravāsini bhagavati herambamātā { vatu'.
25. Kalyāṇavṛstistava is a stotra in 15 stanzas, in which some tantric aspects are dealt with. She who resides in the trikona (cosmic triangle) expells the fear of death from the minds of devotees. She is the spouse of Bhairava who performs the tāṇḍava (dance of destruction performed by Śiva) and She has Pāsa (noose), aṅkuṣa (goad) ikṣusarāsana (bow of sugarcane) and puṣpabāna (arrows of flowers).

E.g. "Hrīmkārameva tava nāma grhṇanti vedāh  
mātastrikonanilaye, tripure, trinetre  
tvatsamsmṛtau yamabhaṭābhibhavaṃ vihāya  
dīvyanti nandanavane saha lokapālaih." (5)

"Kalpopasamhṛtiṣu kalpitatāṇḍavasya  
devasya khandaparasoḥ parabhairavasya  
pāsāṅkusaikṣavasārāsana-puṣpabānā  
sā sākṣiṇī vijayate tava mūrtirekā." (13)

26. Kanakadhārāstava:- There is a legend <sup>54</sup> behind the instant composition of this beautiful melody having 22 stanzas. During the days of tutelage, Śaṅkara happened to enter an Illam (house of Namputiris) and meet the old lady there; he asked for alms from that lady. She had nothing to give, except some dried goose berries, which she generously gave to Śaṅkara. Pleased at her generosity, Śaṅkara requested Goddess Lakṣmī to bless the lady with wealth. This request emanated in the form of a poem. Lakṣmī means Śrī (wealth) and hence the name Śrīstuti to this composition. A shower of gold goose berries occurred there and the house, came to be known as Svarnattumana later on, (which is located near Cottānikkara) in Kerala. The poem as a whole, is an earnest request to remove starvation and bless the generous person with gold. The aspect of erotism in the first few lines is notable.

E.g. "Mugdhā muhurvidadhatī vadane murāreḥ  
prematrapapranihitāni gatā { gatāni  
mālādr̥ṣermadhukarīva mahotpale yā  
sā me sriyaṁ diśatu sāgarasāmbhavāyāḥ".

27. Mantramātrkāpuspamālāstava:- The poet contemplates the Goddess in the wish-yielding island, surrounded by Kadamba trees, as depicted in Tantras. His offering of oblations in mind ~~is~~ is expressed in 17 stanzas.

28. Navaratnamālikā:- As the name indicates, nine lines are jewelled in praise of Kālī, giving importance to tantric concepts like lunar plane, solar plane, fiery plane, etc.

29. Gāyatriyaṣṭaka:- Gāyatrī, as worshipped by Yogins is extolled in eight stanzas.

E.g. "Prānāyāmaparāyanaiḥ budhaganaiḥ saṁsevyamānāḥ sīvāḥ ..."

30. Srīrāmabhujāṅga is composed in Bhujāṅgaprayāta metre in 29 lines, and is highly rich in prāsa.

"Namo viśvakartre, namo viśvahartre  
Namo viśvabhoktre, namo viśvabhartre  
Namo viśvanetre, namo viśvajetre  
Namo viśvapitre, namo viśvamātre."

31. Lakṣmīnṛsīmhapāncaratna in five stanzas explains the illusory world, in which the devotee's function is to meditate upon Goddess Lakṣmī and God Nṛsīmha.

"Tava hitamekaḥ vacanaḥ vaksye, śṛṇu sukhakāmo yadi satataḥ  
svapne dr̥ṣṭaḥ sakalaḥ hi mṛṣā jāgrati ca smara tadvaditi  
cetobhr̥ṅga bhramasi vr̥thā bhavamarubhūmau virasāyaḥ ..  
bhaja bhaja lakṣmīnarasīmhanagha sarasijamakarandaḥ."

32. Lakṣmīnṛsīmhakaruṇārasastotra:- Detachment from worldly life is instructed in the thirteen stanzas of this work, because worldly life never gives pleasures to one; worldly life is compared to several unpleasant things like a deep cave, a deep well, an ocean, a tree of sins, a serpent, a wild fire, a spider-web, a wild elephant etc.

33. Ambāṣṭaka:- This aṣṭaka type of stotra is very fluent in style and rich in vr̥tṭyanuprāsa.

E.g. "Yatrā<sup>1</sup>śrayo jagati tatrā } gajā vasatu kutrāpi nistulasukā  
sutrāmakālemukha satrāsana-prakara sutrānakāri caranā  
chatrānilātiraya patrābhirāmaguna mitrāvarī-samavadhūh  
kutrāsahanmani vicitrākṛtiḥ sphurata putrādi dānanipunā."

34. Śrī Viṣṇubhujāṅga:- This poem in 14 stanzas, is in the form of a monologue where Śaṅkara reminds us of the sad plight, one has to suffer during old age.

E.g. "sarīraṁ kalatraṁ sutaṁ bandhuvargaṁ  
vayasyaṁ dhanam sadma bhr̥tyaṁ bhuvam ca  
samastaṁ parityajya hā kaṣṭameko  
gamisyāmi dukhena dūraṁ kilā } haṁ  
jareyaṁ pisācīva hā jīvito me  
vasāmati raktaṁ ca māṁsaṁ balam ca  
aho deva, sīdāmi dānānukāmpin  
kimadyāpi hanta tvayodāsitavyaṁ."

35. Viṣṇupādādikesānta-stotra:- This poem, is comparatively a lengthy one in fiftyone stanzas. Lord Viṣṇu is praised from foot to head. His Śaṅkha (conch-shell), Padma (lotus) Gadā (club), and cakra (discuss) are also described. Yamaka is rich in this poem.

E.g. "Yā vāyāvānukūlyāt sarati manirucā bhāsamānā samānā  
sākaṁ sākāmpamaṁse vasati vidadhati vāsubhadraṁ subhadraṁ  
sāraṁ sārāṅga saṁghair mukharita-kusumā mecakāntā cakāntā  
mālā mālālitāsmāna viramatu sukhair yājayantī jayantī."

36. Pāṇḍuraṅgāṣṭaka depicts the beauty of Lord Kṛṣṇa in eight stanzas.

37. Acyutāṣṭaka too is a praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa in eight stanzas.

38. Kṛṣṇāṣṭaka:- It is said that when Śaṅkara sang this praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Goddess Lakṣmī, they appeared before Śaṅkara while staying near his mother at her death-bed, to give liberation to her.

"Iti harirakhilātmarādhitah śaṅkarena  
śrutivisadaguno } sau mātrmoksāṛthamādyah  
yativarānikate, śrīyukta āvirbabhūva  
svaḡunāvṛta udārah śaṅkhacakraḡjahastah."

There is another Kṛṣṇāṣṭaka composed by Śaṅkara praising Kṛṣṇa, having different forms like (1) King, (2) Teen-ager, (3) Cowherd, (4) One surrounded by Gopas and Gopikās, (5) Small child stealing butter and milk, (6) Infant and (7) Lastly as God Almighty.

39. Haristuti or Nārāyaṇastotra: In simple and fluent style Lord Nārāyaṇa is praised in thirty stanzas.

40. Govindāṣṭaka:- Though this āṣṭaka, charming with a melodious fluency, was composed in praise of Śaṅkara's preceptor, it is counted among stotras, since Govinda is a synonym of Lord Kṛṣṇa also.
41. Bhagavanmānasapūjā:- In eleven stanzas Lord Kṛṣṇa is worshipped with mental offerings like āsana (seat), ācamanīya (water to drink), tāmbūla (betel-wine and pan), mālā (garland) and pāyasa (milk gruel). Lord is imagined as bearing flute surrounded by Gopikās.
42. Mohamudgara (Bhajagovindam )

This philosophical poem in twenty-five stanzas is considered generally as a devotional work. The literary relish in contents is so highly admirable that, one will, undoubtedly appreciate the poetic fancies lying hidden in the philosopher.

E.g. "Nalinīdalagatajalaṁ atitaraṁ  
tadvad jīvitam atisayacapalaṁ  
viddhi vyādhyabhimānagrastaṁ  
lokaṁ sokahataṁ ca samastaṁ".

43. Acyutāṣṭaka:- This devotional piece in praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa in eight stanzas is quite different from the Acyutāṣṭaka mentioned as the 37th one.

44. Annapūrnāṣṭaka praises Goddess Viśālākṣī of Kāśī.  
All the lines in the poem end in īkāra and are having a melodious construction, the recital of which reminds one of the musical tone of the ringing of bells.

E.g. "Bhikṣāṃ dehi kṛpāvalāmbanakarī kāśī-purādhīśvarī."

45. Mīnākṣīpañcaratna in five stanzas and

46. Mīnākṣīstotra in eight stanzas are eulogies of Goddess Mīnākṣī.

47. Dakṣiṇāmūrtistotra consists of nineteen stanzas, Śaṅkara pictures God Dakṣiṇāmūrti as sitting near the root of the Banyan tree wearing paraśumudrā (position of axe) on one hand, mṛgamudrā (position of deer) on the other hand, moon as crest and bearing lute in hand.

E.g. "ekena mudrāṃ paraśuṃ kareṇa  
kareṇa cā ) nyena mṛgaṃ dadhānaḥ  
cārusthitaṃ somakalāvataṃsaṃ vīṇādharaṃ ...."

48. Kālabhairavāṣṭaka:- The mention of Kāśīkāpurādhinātha in all the eight stanzas, shows that it refers to 'Kāśī Viśwanātha' (incarnation of Lord Śiva) whom the poet considers as Kālabhairava (god of destruction).

49. Narmadāṣṭaka:- Narmadā river which is at the confluence of River Ganges and River Gomaty, is supposed to give the effect of "Agniśomayajana" to the devotee who takes a plunge in its waters. Here the greatness of River Narmadā is brought out in eight stanzas.

50. Yamunāṣṭaka:- Here River Yamunā is praised in eight stanzas.

51. Manikarnikāṣṭaka:- Manikarnikāghat, which is having the holy power of removing the sins of man, is eulogised in eight stanzas. Even Gods, who are forced to take birth on earth, attain the greatness and holyness of Lord Nārāyaṇa by a dip in this ghat.

E.g. "Indrādayah tridāśāḥ patanti niyataṁ bhogakṣaye te punah jāyante manujāstato } pi pasavaḥ kiṭāḥ patāṅgādayah ye mātarmaṇikarnike tava jale majjanti niṣkalmaṣāḥ sāyuje } pi kirīṭakaustubhadharāḥ nārāyaṇāḥ syurnarāḥ."

52. Sivamānasapūjā is a minor work in five stanzas. The fourth stanza is quoted from Sivānandalaharī viz., ātma tvaṁ girijāpatih, saharāḥ prāṇāḥ ....."

53. Prātaḥsmaranastotra:- There is nothing notable in this devotional piece having three stanzas, when compared with the other works of Śaṅkara. It speaks of the veneration shown to Parabrahman viz., Smarana (rememberance), bhajana (meditation) and manana (thinking).

54. Jagannāthāṣṭaka is an āṣṭaka in praise of Lord Jagannātha of Puri.

55. Saṭpadīsastotra which is notable for its richness in prasa and yamaka is composed in six stanzas in praise of 'Lord Viṣṇu'

"Bhūṭadayāṃ vistāraya tārāya saṃsāra-sāgarataḥ (1)  
Uddhṛta-nagabhidanuja danuja kulamitra mitrasasidrṣṭe(4)  
Bhavalabdhimathana mandara paramaṃ daramapanaya tvaṃ me." (6)

56. Bhramarāmbāṣṭaka is in praise of the Goddess at ŚrīŚaila  
i.e., Bhramarāmbā. "Śrīśailasthalavāsiniṃ Śrīmātaram  
bhāvaye." There are some tantric indications in  
some parts of the poem.

E.g: "Ṣaṭcakrāntarasamsthitaṃ varasudhāṃ śadyoginīveṣṭitaṃ."(4)

57. "Śivapañcākṣaranakṣatramālāstotra:- The twenty-eight  
stanzas in the poem end with śivapañcākṣara (namah śivāya)  
The style is very simple, fluent and can be easily  
understood.

58. Dvādasalingastotra:- The twelve vyotirliṅgas situated  
in twelve temples, famous for bestowing their wishes  
to devotees are mentioned here. They are in

- (1) Somanātha temple (Saurāṣṭra)
- (2) Mallikārajuna temple (Śrī śaila)
- (3) Mahākāla temple (Avantī)
- (4) Omkāranātha temple (at the confluence of River  
Kāverī and River Narmadā in Mandhātrpura)
- (5) Nāganātha temple (Prajvalikā)
- (6) Kedāranāth temple (Mahādri)
- (7) Nāganātha temple (Ṣaḍaṅga)
- (8) Tryambakeśa temple (Sahyādri on the banks of river  
Godāvarī)

- (9) Rāmesvara temple (on the banks of River Tāmrāparnī)  
(10) Śiva temple (Tākinīsākinikā)  
(11) Viṣvanātha temple (Varanāsi)  
(12) Ghr̥sneśvara temple (Ilāpura).

59. Ardhanārīśvarastotra is a lengthy poem in 89 stanzas, praising the hermaphrodite form of Śiva and Śivā.

60. Śāradābhujāṅga, having eight stanzas is peculiar in its fluency of style.

E.g. "Lalāṭāṅkaphālāṃ lasadgānalolāṃ  
Svabhaktaikapālāṃ yasaḥsrikapolāṃ  
kare tvakṣamālāṃ kanatpratnalolāṃ,  
bhaje śāradāmbāṃ ajasraṃ madāmbāṃ."

61. Gurvaṣṭaka is composed, extolling the greatness of the preceptor showing the necessity for veneration due to him in ten stanzas.

62. Lalitāpañcaka is supposed to bless the devotee with learnedness, if recited in the morning. The poem depicts the Goddess in five stanzas.

63. Bhavanībhujāṅga expounds the tantric concept of the Goddess in seventeen stanzas composed in bhujāṅgaprayāta metre.

64. Saundaryalaharī is a devotional piece on Goddess Pārvatī. The whole poem is composed in Śikharinī metre in 100 stanzas.\*

\* Some manuscripts contain hundred and three stanzas.

It is important, both, as a stotrakāvya as well as an epitome of Śāktatantras. The poem plays a significant role in the practical side of life also. It is seen that the principles enshrined in S.L. are practised by people for the fulfilments of their various wishes. The reason for such high popularity for S.L. is that the text prescribes many modes of worship for various fulfilments which are very simple, and can be easily followed by common people. Even by a mere recital of the verses with concentration and true faith, one's desires get fulfilled. The recital of the text is considered auspicious, itself acting as a Kalpaka tree (wish-yielding) to devotees. Among the many modes of worship usually followed, tantric practice is also notable. It is said that hundred and three yantras are prescribed for hundred and three stanzas for various fulfilments. 103 yantras which are traditionally handed down, are extracted from 103 authoritative Tantras, most of which are, anonymous.

S.L., as a whole, is divided into three parts.<sup>55</sup> From stanzas 1 to 41 it is termed Āandalaharī, 42 to 91 Saundaryalaharī, 92 to 103 Svarūpalaharī. It is believed that Gaudapāda, the preceptor of Govindabhagavadpāda (Śāṅkara's preceptor) had composed a tantric work called Subhagodaya and

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that Śaṅkara had composed S.L. in paying homage to his preceptor's preceptor. <sup>56</sup>

Śaṅkara had great influence on the Saiva leaders (the term he used to denote Brahman is Śiva)<sup>57</sup> and had formed the Pratyabhijñā system (Advaita system arranged through Saivatattvas). This pratyabhijñā system has another portion called Śākta Advaita.<sup>58</sup> It was this system that Śaṅkara revived through S.L. The idea of higher conception of the Goddess is seen in Samaya worship, specified in S.L.

It must be noted that S.L. is rich in tantric principles as well as in devotional spirit and poetic relish. Devotional aspects are very well exemplified in the last few stanzas especially, which lead the devotee to the advaitic concept of the attainment of supreme bliss and realisation of Brahman. - "Parānandābhikhyāṁ rasayati rasam tvadbhajanavān" (S.L.99). The devotee after winning over Goddess Lakṣmī and Goddess Sarasvatī attains supreme bliss which is held as the super excellent in Upaniṣads 'Raso vai Saḥ'<sup>59</sup> The devotee who meditates on the Goddess enjoys Parānanda (supreme bliss) "Parānandābhikhyāṁ rasayati rasam tvad bhajanavān" - (99 S.L.)

56. See Rangaswami Iyengar - S.L., - Introduction.

57. 'Tadeko } vasīṣṭah Śivah kevalo } haṁ.' - Dasasloki - 1.

58. Venkiṭarāman - Śaṅkara and his Śāradāpīṭha in Śrṅgeri., p.64.

59. Taittirīyopaniṣad - 117

It is said that by ardent faith and incessant meditation one attains such an identity that he gets transformed as Goddess Herself. This arouses a suspicion in Śiva's mind, whether it is devotee or Goddess Herself. Śaṅkara says:-

"Harasya tvadbhrāntiṃ janayanti sma vimalāḥ  
bhavatyā ye bhaktāḥ parinatiramīṣāṃ iyamume" S.L.102

The easiness in <sup>the</sup> attainment of liberation is also described.

An aspirant desirous of liberation, wishing to say -

'Be thou kind enough to shower your merciful glance on me, <sup>60</sup> says only <sup>may I</sup> 'Be thou .....' (Bhavāni tvam).

Before completing the sentence, the Goddess presumes it to be "Bhavāni tvam ahaṃ asi" ie. another form of the great Upaniṣadic teaching:- 'Ahaṃ Brahmā  $\int$  smi' ('I am Brahman').<sup>61</sup>

The identity of devotee with Brahman is thus easily attained and the devotee enjoys supreme bliss all of a sudden through tattvajñāna by the grace of the Goddess.

60. "Bhavāni tvam dāse mayi vitara dr̥ṣṭiṃ sakaruṇāḥ  
iti stotuṃ vānchan kathayati bhavānitvamiti yah  
tadaiva tvam tasmai disasi nijasāyujya-padaviṃ  
mukunda-brahmendra sphuṭa mukutaṇīrājitapadaḥ."

S.L., 22

61. S.L., 22 - LAKṢMĪDHARA COMMENTARY; See Chapter VII. P. 361, 362