CHAPTER : II

DATE, HOME AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE IS.
The IS. is a part of the Lalitopākhyanā (LP.) which is one of the apocrypha of the Brahmanda Purāṇa. Since it is the apocrypha of the Brāhmaṇa Purāṇa, the date of the Brāhmaṇa Purāṇa cannot be accepted as the date of either the LP. or the IS. Thus, it is very difficult to get the accurate date either of the LP. or the IS. But on the basis of some available sources an attempt can be made to find out the approximate period of the work in question.

It has been stated in the first Chapter that in the colophon of the IS. it is declared that the IS. forms a part of the LP., the date of the LP., therefore, would decide the date of the IS. The date of the LP. which consists of (1) the LP., (2) the IS. and (3) the LT. (Lalita Trisati), is fixed in successive stages by Dr. B. Datta, in his learned article.

Dr. B. Datta puts forth following arguments: (1) The LP. is not included in different editions of the Brāhmaṇa Purāṇa (viz. Bangabasi ed., Javanese ed. etc.) and also it is not mentioned in any of the lists of content available in the different Purāṇas (like Agni, Matsya, Skanda and Siva). This apparently shows that the LP. by the time of compilation of the lists did not either form a part of, or was added to the Brāhmaṇa Purāṇa. But this is insufficient evidence to conclude that by the time the LP. was not composed as these editions are deficient in their complete volume.
The posterior date of the UP. can be accepted as belonging to the Brmd.P., which is supplied by Bhāskarārāya (Br.). He frequently quotes from the LP. under the name of the Brmd.P. This evidently proves that by the time of Bh. (1718 A.D.) the LP. formed an internal part of the Brmd.P.  

Again the three works; the LP., the LS. and the LT., appear to have been composed in the following order.

(1) The UP. (2) the LS. and (3) the LT. As, the introductory verses of the LS. declare "Kathita lahitādevyāscaritām paramādbhutaṃ..., which seems identical with the LP. Again the verses in the LT. "rahasyaśāma śāhasram api tvattāṁ śrutaṁ mayā...." narrate that the LT. existed prior to the days of Śaṅkarācārya as it has been commented upon by him. Hence date of the LP. would be earlier than the 850 A.D., the date of Śaṅkara. But this is possible only when we accept that Śaṅkara, the Vedāntin, is the same who wrote the commentary on the LT., with Śaṅkara who wrote the commentary on the Brahma-sūtras. But due to very great divergence in the treatment of the subject and the thought, the two authors appear not to be identical. Thus considering the above fact it appears that the date suggested above (i.e. 850 A.D.), cannot be the date of the LP.

(4) The 'Hayagrīva' Sākta Darśana and the 'Agastya Sakti Sūtras', which are assigned to Hayagrīva and Agastya respectively. As the LP. is a dialogue between them, it can be later than the former (i.e. LP.). Both the works (i.e. Ag. Sh. Su and H. Sā. D.) deal in Sūtra form with the subjects common to the LP. and hence
both the works appear to be the works in the same line of
tradition. They appear later than the LP. as they record LP.'s
teaching in nutshell and also supply some philosophical details
absent in the LP. These two (i.e. the LP. and the two sutra
works), seem to be identical as far as the ritualistic representa-
tions of school are concerned. Again these two works appear to
contain a summary of the principal tenets of the LP. in the
Sutra form.

Now though the "Hayagrīva śākta Darsana" is assigned to
a time before 8th century A.D. by Prof. Abhyankar, this date
seems to be earlier as we find a reference to the Bhāgavata in
the 'Agastya śakti Sūtra'. Hence the date of the LP. should
be yet later than the date of the Bhāgavata. The sūtras of
Agastya are not posterior but earlier to Hayagrīva's śākta Darsana
as the Agastya śakti Sūtra is more religious and the later is
more philosophical in treatment. It is found that philosophical
basis of a particular sect is always developed later than the
sect which is established more after its rituals. Thus, Agastya
śakti Sūtra, the work dealing with religious aspect preceeds the
Hayagrīva śākta Darshana.

Further the mention of Hayagrīva (i.e. Hayānana) as a teacher
in Agastya Śakti Sūtras should not finally decide its date
later than the Hayagrīva Śākta Darsana. Because Hayagrīva
in the Agastya Śakti Sūtra is shown to be a teacher practising the
philosophy of indifferentism. Hence Hayagrīva of Śākta
Darsana who is identified with Hayagrīva, the preacher of the LP.
who was identical with Janārđana Viṣṇu need not be identical
with the former (i.e. Hayagrīva mentioned in Agastya Sakti Sūtra). Thus these two sūtras relate the tradition of the two locutors of the LP. Thus Agastya Sakti Sūtra appear to have been written after the narration of the LP. If this postulation is accepted then the date of the LP. need not be earlier than the 10th-11th cent. A.D., especially when a later date in view of the date of the Bhāgavata is possible for the Agastya Sakti Sūtra.

Dr. B. Datta also states some internal evidences for the date of the LP. They are as follows:

1. The name Lalitā as also Tripura occurs among the different names of Bhadrakāli, who appeared before Rama Jamadagnya, while he was fighting with Her devotee Suchandra. The mention of the epithet Lalitā in this context makes upto surmise that the author of the Bhārgavopākhyāna was familiar with the LP. of Brāhmaṇḍ. or was acquainted with the Lalitā cult. The chapter mentioning Lalitā in the Bhārgavopākhyāna was perhaps added to it only after the LP. was finally appended to and accepted as an integral part of the Brāhmaṇḍ.

2. The author of the LP. refers to the Candikā Saptasati which should be identified with the Durgā Saptasati of Markand. This Devī Mahātmya is precisely dated to the 5th or 6th cent. A.D. by Hazra. Thus if both are identified, this could by far serve as the anterior date for the composition of the LP.

Further the number of vidyās referred to in the different texts of Tantras have the tendency of gradual increase in their number. Thus we find that the 'Nityasodāsikārāṇa' mentions...
eight vidyas and the 'Yogini hṛdaya' makes the total nine. In Jñanarnava the number is increased up to twelve vidyas. The LP. refers to ten vidyas and it should, on that score, be supposed to occupy a place between the Yogini hṛdaya and the Jñanarnava. But it is again difficult to date these two books. However the anterior date of the Yogini hṛdaya would be fixed by the Nityāsodasikārṇava, which is believed to be the forerunner of the Yogini hṛdaya, as the former mentions one vidyā less than those mentioned in the latter. The Nityāsodasikārṇava is dated 9th cent. A.D.14 The Yogini hṛdaya on the whole is an ancient work and cannot be dated much later, approximately a century later, the Nityāsodasikārṇava. The date of Jñanarnava appears to be the 13th cent. A.D. to 15th cent. A.D. Hence the date of the LP. falls somewhere between the 9th and the 12th cent. A.D. Gopīnātha Kavirāja, too, assigns the same probable date to this work.

(4) Again, the LP. recounts the ten incarnations of Nārāyaṇa which are said to have come out of fingernails of Lalitā, to fight against those demons who were created by Bhanda. They are

(1) Ādikarma, (2) Mahāvaraha, (3) Nṛsimha, (4) Vāmanā, (5) Rāma-Jāmadagnya, (6) Rāma, - Dāsarathī, (7) Tālaṅka, (8) Vasudeva, (9) Saṅkarasana, (10) Pradyumna, (11) Aniruddha and (12) Kalaka. Though they number 12, they should be recounted as ten only after tradition. In that case we have to recount the Vasudeva-Vyuha of last four as two only, by including the second and fourth into first and third.

Now this Vyūha theory of was actually promulgated by the Pañcarātra school of Vaiṣṇavism. It is not mentioned in the Visnu
Parāna. First of all it is traced to Narāyanīyopakhyāna of the Mahābhārata and is also mentioned in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. Moreover, the Ahirbudhanya Sāmhitā clearly mentions the Vyūha-Theory with sectarian details. According to Dr. K.D. Pandey the Vyūha-Theory appears to be a part of the Pañcarātra school and also accepted by the Purānas.

Thus this theory seems to be fully developed by the time of the Ahirbudhanya Sāmhitā (8th cent. A.D.) and it could have been adopted a century or two later by different works of other cults. Thus the date of the LP. may coincide with the date of the Pañcarātra school i.e. 11th to 13th cent. A.D.

The most important evidence to assign LP. to 11th to 12th cent. A.D. is supplied by Dr. B. Datta as follows:

(5) The LP. narrates that the gods prayed to the Goddess Lalitā to stay permanently at Kāñcī. The Goddess agreed with alacrity to their proposal and three shrines were erected, for Brahmā and Sarasvatī to the South, for Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī to the North and Central being for Lalitā Mahēsvara. Now if this event of erecting the temple for permanent stay of Lalitā at Kāñcī is taken to be identical with the erection of an Amman shrine at Ekamresvara, the site of Kailāśaṭhā temple at Kāñcī by Rajaṛāja, the cola emperor (985-1014 A.D.), then some precise date for the composition of the LP. can be determined and this also can further explain the purpose of the composition of this work. In this way, Dr. B. Datta assigns LP. to the 11th to 12th cent. A.D.
It has already been stated that the IS. forms an integral part of the LP. Again, we find an internal evidence in the 4th chapter, V.v.20. There it is mentioned, "Tattu sahasranamadhyaye vaksyami....". On the basis of all these arguments we can affirm that IS. formed an integral part of the LP. Thus the above date can be accepted as the date of IS. too.

Home and Authorship of the IS.

As far as the authorship of the IS. is concerned there is no direct evidence, but the detail study of the LP. and IS. leads us to conclude that the author of IS. belonged to Kāncī.

The text of the LP. specifically records that the Upākhyāna was related by Hayagrīva to Agastya at Kāncī. This shows that the author of the LP. was probably a permanent native of Kāncī itself or else he had settled down there.

That he was the local man of Kāncī is again pointed out by extraordinary praise and respect that he showers on river kampa.

On the basis of all such evidences it can be said that the author belonged to Kāncī.

Further the detail study of the Ākhyāna as well as the IS. shows that the author was the master of poetic art and also an ardent devotee of the Goddess Lalitā. He has given detailed exposition of the Śrī Lalitā Cult. Moreover, in the IS. he has summarised almost all the fundamental doctrines of the Lalitā-cult (i.e. Śrīvidyā cult). In want of the internal evidence we can't express our decision about the authorship of the IS. But as the IS is an apocrypha of the LP, it can be surmised that the author-
of the LP. may be some Śaṅkarācārya or his competent follower at the Kāñci-pītha. There is a tradition to corroborate this conclusion. In the South there are three main Pithas.

(i) The Goddess Kāmākṣī at Kāñci-pītha, who is called Maharājñī or Rājarājesvarī.

(ii) The Goddess Mīnākṣī at Mādura, who is called Mahātrīnī or Śyāmala.

(iii) The Goddess Akhilāndesvarī at Tīrūvannaiṅka, who is called Dandini or Dandanaṭha.

Now the ear ornament (Tāṭāṅkas) of Akhilāndesvarī is of a special significance as Ādi-Śaṅkara is known to have performed Tāṭāṅka Pratisthā with the Śrīcakra on it (Tāṭāṅka). Moreover, recently in 1909 A.D. H.H. Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī of Kāñci-Kamakoti-pītha had performed the Tāṭāṅka pratisthā again in connection with Mahākumbhābhiseka of Tīrūvannaiṅka temple.²²

This shows the connection of Kāñci-pītha with the cult of the Goddess Lalitā. Hence it will not be far from it to connect the authorship of the LP. and the IS. with the pontiffs of this pītha.
REFERENCES


2. Gonda, Purana, II, p. 266.

3. Vide, Bhāskararāya, ISNB, NSP, pp. 29, 41, 42, 44, 46, 50, 69, 85, 97, 103, 107, 116, 123, 137, 162, 169. He frequently quotes LP. under Brahmanda P.

4. ISNB, NSP, V.1-8.


6. Vide, Sudhakara Chattopadhyaya, TSAI, P. XV of the date of Saṅkara.

7. Vide, Sakta Darśana of Hayagrīva, XV, 3(13).

8. Ibid., p. 93, Agastya Sakti Sūtras, 95.


12. Nityasodasikarnava, Patala I, V.V.97, 98.

13. Jnanarnava, Patala XII.


