CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION
To search for the so-called existence of a Vedic-school, in the current days of the 20th Century, is as if entering into a place which is full of darkness. The darkness is not due to the total absence of information but due to the negligence towards Vedic traditions caused by changed circumstances. On this account, however, a researcher should not give up the study about such a problem, for it throws light on the activities of Vedic religion, the mutual relations of the Vedic-schools, and the contribution of the relevant school to its Veda.

I for one undertook to study the problem about the existence of the school of Gautama.

In respect of the investigation of the existence of the school of Gautama, one has to admit that the literary evidence (i.e. the literature) attributed to Gautama serves as a lantern for a researcher in his endeavour. The literature attributed to Gautama comprises of the printed texts, the Ms, and of numerous references to the views of Gautama, which are scattered in various works. All these, in the first instance, assure the existence of the school of Gautama and then lead further to the query about the present position of the school of Gautama. This query pertains mainly to two questions;
viz. 1) whether even today there are any Gautamīyās in
different parts of India,  ii) whether these Gautamīyās
could provide some information regarding their school or
could with the help of their priests make available some
Ma-material which belongs to their school.

I tried my best to find answers to these questions.
I have made correspondence with Pandits of different parts
of India, some of them are :

1) His Holiness Shri Shankarachārya - Kāchi Kamakoti Mutt,
    Veda Rakkhaṇa Midhi-Trust, Madras 18.

2) Ithi Ravi Nambudri, Panjal, Cheruthuruthy, Kerala.

3) Shankaranarayana Srauti, Hospet, Karnataka.

4) C.R. Swaminathan, Deputy Educational Adviser,
    Department of Education, Govt. of India, Delhi.

5) Dr. Gaurishankara Achārya, Gurukula College, Jvalapur,
    Haridvāra, etc.

I went to stay at Madras, Adyar and Mysore, for consulting
the Mss (of the GĀS and the CCP) and during that while I
discussed the issue about the school of Gautama with the renowned
Sāmavedins there, namely Mr. Ramanath Dikshita, Mayuram of
Madras and Mr. Subrahmanya Shruti of Mysore, and with
some traditional priests who used to gather in the temples of Kapaleshwara, of Parthasarathi and of Mahalakshmi.

According to Mr. Ramnath Dikshita, even today there are round about 100 houses in the vicinity of Madras, which are of the Sāmavedins, but all of them belong to the Kaithuna-SV and yet follow the UŚŚ and the KhŚŚ. He says (and also states) that he has heard that somewhere there are a few Gautamīya-Sāmavedins. According to him, there are at Cokarna some Rāṇāyaniya-Sāmavedins.

According to Mr. Subrahmanya Shrauti, a leading Sāmavedin of Mysore, there are even today a few Sāmavedins around Mysore, these also belong to the Kaithuna-SV and follow the UŚŚ and the KhŚŚ and there are at Honavar and Tirunelveli some Rāṇāyaniyas.

Dr. V. Ragshavan in his article, "The present position of Vedic recitation and Vedic Śākhās" provides the information


2. Published by Veda Dharma Pariṇālaṇa Sabhā, Kumbhakoṇam, 1962, pp. 13-18
that the inscriptions of Vijayanagar and Tirunelveli refer to Rāṇāyaniyās and the Gupta inscription of the 5th Century mentions the Rāṇāyaniyās as prevailing in Mathura, Jaipur and Indore regions.

Unfortunately, the information obtained so far could not provide definite or satisfactory answer to my two fold query, that is to say none could give any definite information about the names and the places of the Gautamiyās. In spite of that one can assume that among the Rāṇāyaniyās of Gokarna Honavar, Jaipur, Indore and Mathura, some may be Gautama-Rāṇāyaniyās since Gautama is known as one of the sub-schools of the Rāṇāyani SV. In this connection, it is significant to note that: "Dr. Shrikrishna Sharma of Tirupati knows one Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar, coming from Shreerangam, who is a Gotamiya Sāmavedin, and claims to know Veya-Āranyā-Uaha-Rahasya-Mentra-Brahmana, Khādira-Grhya and Pitṛmedha-Sūtra of SV Gautama-Sākha."³

This information reasonably leads one to assume that there did exist the school of Gautama in some days of the

3. See "Non-Ṛgvedic Verses in the Sāmaveda"
Smt. S. M. Paranjape, Poona, Proceedings of All India Oriental Conference, 26th Session, Kurukshetra, 1974, pp. 264
past and in the march of time it has been gradually disappearing (almost lost!).

Wherever one mentions the School of Gautama one should know that the word school there refers to a Carana and not to a Ṣākhā. This would raise the question about the meanings of these two and in answer to it, one can say that a Ṣākhā means traditional text (recension) of the Veda, whereas a Carana means the groups of people studying that Ṣākhā. Hence, one can say that there existed (or exists) a Carana of Gautama belonging to the Rāṣṭrayāna-Ṣākhā of the SV, and the works attributed to Gautama can be said to belong to it, viz. the Gautama-Carana.

4. See Hist. of A. Skt. Lit. Max Müller, 1912, p. 64
   "In order to appreciate the difference between Ṣākhā and charana, it need only be remembered that we find 'sākham adhīte', he reads a certain recension of the Veda, but never 'charanam adhīte' still less 'pariṣadem adhīte' 'he reads a Charana or a Pariṣad'. Hence, it is clear that Ṣākhā means originally a literary work, and that Charana does not."

5. See Hist. of A. Skt. Lit. Max Müller, 1912, p. 69 and 64.

See SBE Vol. II Bühlcr-Introduction to Gautama p lii.
The numerous references to the views of Gautama quoted in the Lāśś, the DŚś and in the Nidāna Sūtra indicate that Gautama was definitely respected as an authority in the field of the Śāmavedic-Śrauta ritual. So also, in regard to the Grhya-ritual, Gautama is a respectable authority.

Ven. in his text and comm. of Grhyaratna cites the views of Gautama which pertain to various grhya-rites and sacraments such as Pāksayajña, Darśapūrnamāsa, Vivāha, Puṃsavana, Nāmekarna, Cauḍa, Upanayana etc. This undoubtedly points to the prevalence (in early days) of the Grhya-traditions of the School of Gautama. Furthermore, one finds Gautama’s prescriptions parallel to those in the KhGS, the DGS (and in some cases in the JGS and GoGS), all these together with the specific mention of Gautama at GoGS 3.10.4-6, indicate the existence of some Grhya manual of Gautama and brings out the importance or influence of the teachings of Gautama among the Śaiva-vedins.

The works GāS, the Gṛītṛaś and the GGP exhibit the authoritativeness of the teachings of (some ancient) Gautama in the field of Śaiva-vedic Grhya-ritual, as follows:

a) The GāS can be considered as a work which treats the simple or preliminary Grhya-ritual of the Gautama-Śaiva-vedins, since it prescribes the daily obligatory ritual for the householders.
b) The GPitṛś evidently marks out the importance of the teachings of Gautama among the grhya-traditions of the SV. From the point of view of subject-matter, it can be treated as a text pertaining to the grhya ritual, since it prescribes the rite of Pitṛmedha 'funeral', which is known as a part of the śrauta and of the grhya ritual as well. In connection with the GPitṛś, the more important fact to be noted is that even today the Śāmaedins in South India, follow this very text for the performance of the funeral rites (though they say they belong to Kauthuma Drahyāyana traditions). It could be mentioned here that one Mr. P. K. Aiyangar of Madras, who is a Kauthuma-Drahyāyana Śāmaedin and is a practising priest, informed me that while performing the grhya sacraments of the Śāmaedins at Madras, they (i.e. priests) follow the Śātyayana Karikā; however they perform their funeral rite according to the prescriptions of the GPitṛś.

The Gṛśa record the rites which have remained unstated in the Grhya-Sūtras, though they pertain to the grhya traditions of the respective schools. In the Gṛśas of the SV, viz. the KṛGṛ, the DGP and the GGP, the number of rites attributed to Gautama is larger than that attributed to any other authority and this indicates how he is a much more respectable authority than others. The rites prescribed in the GGP have importance from practical point of view, since -
1) There is a prayoga of the Śaṣṭyabdapūrtiśānti published by Mr. Ramanatha Dikshita, on the occasion of the performance of the 61st anniversary of Dr. V. Raghavan who also was a Sāmavedin. The Śaṣṭyabdapūrtiśānti is accompanied by the procedure of a Mrtyunjayasānti and both these sāntis are ascribed to Gautama. Further, the procedure of this Mrtyunjayasānti is given in prose and verse—this latter resembles the metrical portion 2.7 of the GGP (which is purely in verse).

ii) The priest Mr. P.K. Aiyangar told me that, while performing the rites of Āyuṣyahoma, Mrtyunjayasānti, Prathmārtavasānti etc., the priests follow even to this day, the prescriptions of Gautama.

All this points to the injunctive force of the teachings of Gautama in the context of the grhya traditions of the Sāmavedins, and also confirms that the (available) text of the GGP can be regarded as a major contribution of the Gautamas to the Grhya-ritual of the Sāmavedins.

6. सामवेदीय शास्त्राद्वितीयानवित्त: साहित्याचार्य रामनाथ दीक्षित, मद्रास, 1960.
we have so far noticed the relation of the school of
Gautama to other schools of the Sāmavedins. Now, it may be
observed if and how the Gautamas stand related to the schools
of the followers of the other Vedas. The texts of the
Gautamas which we have been able to collect to show that the
school of Gautamas shows its close relation with the schools
of the black V. The GāS presents its contents in a fashion
quite similar to that of the HGS. Also we noted in the
introduction to the GGP how that text exhibits its close
familiarity with the schools of the Taittirīyas, the Baudhāyanas
and the Hiranyakaśīns. It should indeed be a rewarding effort
if one undertakes a comparative and fuller study of the rituals
of these schools, since it would throw light on the mutual
relations of the ārya traditions and of the peoples of ancient
times. Such a study was, nevertheless, out of the scope of
the present work and has to be relegated to the future.

while concluding these remarks about the significant
contribution of Gautama to the Ārya ritual of the Sāmavedins
it is worth noting that one should be aware of the fact that
these different treatises of Gautama are definitely not the
compositions of one and the same ancient authority; but, to the
contrary, they are the works of different followers of
different times and places, who might have attributed their
works to their respectable ancestor or leader of the old times.
Hence, when one says 'Gautama's contribution' it means the
contribution of the school i.e. Ārya of the V, or the
contribution of the Gautamas.