I.7. STUDY OF GṆĀNA PĀDA
I.7. STUDY OF JNAṆĀPĀDA

The Jñānapāda or Vidyāpāda comes after the Yogapāda and contains 221 ślokas in 8 prakaranas. The important topics like the nature of ultimate realities, process of realisation of final emancipation, its nature, nature of individual soul. Supreme Soul and the primacy of dīkṣā are discussed here.

Examination of Patī, Pasū and Pāśā concepts: Saṅmukha asks Śiva:

"Maheśvara, I want to know about the distinct nature of Patī, Pāśā, their association. Are Pāśas anterior to Jīva? What, indeed, are Pāśas? What is known as 'mala' (taint)? How is the individual soul fettered? Who is Patī, associated with Lordship? Who is Śiva bereft of Lordship?‘ It may be observed that the queries made by Saṅmukha in the form of questions embrace all most all philosophical aspects of Āgama. And if these are answered to, the nature of these ultimate

1. SJC. Vidyā, śl.1-3, p. 14
realities will be clear, leading to final emancipation.

Following is the answer of Śiva:

Pasū is the self (soul). He is dependent; he is consciousness (characterised by awareness and activity). He is impure, unintelligent, ever undergoing transmigration, not capable of independent will and action.¹

Now the question arises that if he is consciousness (like Pati), how did he come to be associated with the nature of Pasū? To this replies Śiva: Because of beginningless Pāśa.

As the goldness remains hidden in copper, the nature of Śiva remains hidden in the soul.²

Just as copper treated through alchemy becomes gold, the self by virtue of Jñāna attains the nature of Śiva.³

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¹ SJO. Vidyā. Ś1. 4, p. 15
² Ibid. Ś1. 6, p. 19
³ Ibid. Ś1. 6, p. 19
Aghorasiva's commentary on this is worth noting. He very carefully comments on the attainment of Śivatva, Śivahood is not attained by mere Jñāna. Dīksā is indispensable and the term Jñānam itself refers to Dīksā only. The independent and the distinct view on the attainment of Śivatva may be noticed here. He gives utmost importance to dīksā and goes on to identify Jñāna with Dīksa.

But, prior to the attainment of Jñāna, the individual soul, because of neuroscience is, as it were, one with the Pāsa like ghee in the milk.

Jñāna can, no doubt, remove Ajñāna but the veil caused by mala has to be removed and this is done by Dīksā only. The commentator affirms that it is only Dīksā that dispels the entire bondage. 'ato dīksaiva sarvabandhanivṛttīhetuh

1. Jñānasabdasya dīkṣa vācakatvamācārairapyuktam,
   SJO, Vṛtti, p. 20.

2. SJO. Vṛtti see p. 23.
He is doubted that since Dīksā is action (karma) how can action (karma) lead to liberation (Mokṣa). This has been answered to in verse I.4. As the physician removes the poison from the system through the potency of mantra and dhyāna, the preceptor acting as the medium of Śiva united with Śakti brings about the dissolution of Pāśa through Dīksā.¹

Though mala is beginningless, it is not eternal.

Verse I.10: Even as the poison is kept in check by the potency of mantra, medicine, meditation etc., the pāśas that cause bondage are kept in check (or nullified) by Dīksā.²

A further doubt may arise at this point: In view of the fact that mala is 'anādi' it is only one. If there is only one 'mala entity', when in the case of one advanced soul, the mala is neutralised by Dīksā and the soul attains liberation, all the souls must simultaneously attain liberation inasmuch as the only mala

¹ SJO, V.I. Sl. 8. p. 23
² Ibid. p. 25
has been nullified. The question is answered away in the same way as in the Advaita Vedānta. Although mala as such is only one, it has manifold parts and each soul is veiled by a separate part of mala. A soul gets liberated, only if the part of mala pertaining to it is nullified and not otherwise.

With the removal of the veiling pāsas, the omniscience and omnipotence latent in each soul become manifest and liberation is not a state in which there is transformation of soul or annihilation.

With the help of a beautiful and fitting illustration this fact is clarified: When the ores are burnt, the impurities in them get destroyed. Likewise, the preceptors destroy the impurities - Ānāvam and Karma.

Though the third impurity 'māyā has not been separately mentioned, it has to be also included.

With regard to pāśa, its beginningless association with pāśa and the mode of its removal have been dealt with.
The pāsas mentioned above can again be classified as Sahaja pāśa (natural bonds), Āgaṅtuka pāśas (adventitious bonds) and saṃsarga pāśas those arising out of association. The pāsas pertaining to the primordial elements - tanmātras - are very subtle, all pervasive and bind all souls. The pāsas that arise from the indriyas and the cosmic elements are adventitious. They come and go and hence are called as transient.¹

The sahaja and āgaṅtuka pāsas produce the pāsas called saṃsargika pāśas which cause auspicious or inauspicious deeds to be done. These acts generate merit or demerit causing happiness and sorrow. Further they lead to the unending chain of saṃsāra, as puṇya and pāpa lead to rebirth and the man born into earth again performs good or wicked deeds giving rise to puṇya or pāpa again.²

But neither the Prakṛti of Sankhya or Karma of Pūrvamīmāṃsā independently acts to bring about the birth of a soul with the attendant pāsas. It is the Will of

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¹ SJU. V.1. Sl. 12, 13, 14. p. 28, 30.
² Ibid. V.1. Sl. 15, 16, p. 30, 31
Īśvara acting in concert with the rectified karmas of the souls that manifests creation and again it is his will and the extinction of karmas that cause dissolution.

The sloka reads: Īśvarovyañjakastesām... and the commentator invites attention to the use of the expression vyāñjakah and remarks that the āgama supports only Satkārya-Vāda.¹

Although Purusa - the individual soul - is a non-doer (akartā) and is all-pervasive (Sarvaga) due to the blemishes caused by attachment and the attributes of prakṛti, he undergoes bondage even as a father has to undergo punishment because of son's wrongs. The soul has to suffer bondage because of attachment etc.² The same fact is emphasised by the help of a further illustration.³

1. Abhivyañjaka Padena satkāryapakṣa eva atrābhhyupagata iti sūcayati - SJO. Vṛtti. p. 31.
2. SJO. Vidyā I. Sl. 18-19. p. 35.
3. Ibid. Sl. 20, p. 36.
The commentator notes that Īśvara is not in anyway responsible for the bondage of the soul. In fact He resorts to creation to enable the souls to unfetter themselves.¹

Having spelt out the distinct nature of Pasú, Pasá and Pati, it remains to be told how pāśa can be brought to an end. "The pasas are beginningless. The souls subject to the pāsas are also beginningless. The annihalator of these two is also beginningless and he is Pati".²

The God Sadāśiva who is responsible for the creation and destruction of the universe is the Pati mentioned above. He is of the nature of Mantra. He is Mantra embodied and He is the deity presiding over all mantras.³ He is always worshipped through the letters and words known as 'Varna' and 'Pada'.⁴ He is the substrata

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1. SJO Vṛtti on Vidyā I. Sl. 20, p. 37
2. Ibid. Sl. 21, p. 38
3. Ibid. Sl. 22, p. 39
4. Ibid. Sl. 23, p. 41
of the world and he remains seated in Yogic posture. He is gross and subtle. He is bestower of all desired objects. He is characterised by both knowledge and activity.¹

Śiva is beyond this Pati. He transcends mantras. He is bereft of words and letters. He is untainted, blemishless and without any support. He is all-knowing, all pervading, tranquil, the self of all, all-facing, beyond sense-perception, very subtle, eternal and imperishable. He is the Supreme Lord, imperceptible and unparalleled. He pervades the inner and outer universe - as oil in the sesam.²

MODE OF REALISATION OF THE SUPREME SELF

The second chapter deals with the instruction for the realisation of the supreme self.

Śiva says "O Guha I shall discourse to you about

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1. SJO. Vidyā. I. Sl. 24. p. 42
2. Ibid. Sl. 25, 26, 27, p. 43
different means by which the transcendental and unconditioned reality is attained and by knowing which perfectly one attains to Śivahood. This has not been told by me to anyone else. This secret, unknown to adherents of other schools, is transmitted through the line of preceptors and disciples for the sake of emancipation of humanity from samsāra.¹

Do thou contemplate with an one-pointed mind. "I am verily He who is the allpervading Lord, who permeates all entities, is beyond the reach of the mind and the word and who transcends the empirical categories".²

"I am without doubt that pure consciousness, eternal and unchanging, undifferentiated and uncharacterised and that has no cause or parallel; that which is immutable, tranquil, unthinkable and unquestionable. I am that transcendental Śiva, who is the personification

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¹ Yena Vijñāyate samyak yad jñātvātu śivo bhavet, SJO, Vidyā II, Śl. 2.
² SJO, Vidyā II. Śl. 5. p. 48
of all mantras and is also beyond the mantras. All this world—sentient and insentient—is pervaded by me. I am the supreme Lord and all emanate only from me. This entire world composed of innumerable objects and the cosmic bodies abide in me. Whatever world is seen or heard of is pervaded by me.¹

He who contemplates out of delusion—I am the self which is different from Siva, the Supreme Self—shall never attain Sivahood.²

Do thou discard the notion of separateness as in the thought, 'I am different from Siva'.

Instead contemplate always upon the non-difference thus: He who is Siva is myself 'yah sivah so'hameva'.

He who is stabilised in this 'advaitic' contemplation perceives the Lord abiding in all beings and everywhere and there is no doubt about it.

1. ŚJÖ. V.ÍII. ŚL. 4-11; pp. 48-56
2. Ibid. Śl. 12, p. 56
The yogi, who remains established in the contemplation of the Self as the Absolute, becomes omniscient. I am He who is known in the scriptures as unborn, incorporeal and attributeless and there is no doubt.

The self that has not realised is Pasu, the soul-in-bondage; the self realised as eternal and pure being, is Śiva only and there is no doubt about it.

Therefore, the self-in its transcendental and immanent form, in its gross and subtle form - should be required into and known perfectly by a wise person. The transcendental form is the form attained during liberation; the conditioned form of self is seen in the various created beings. Again the gross form of the Lord is the one perceived in meditation.

Where is the need for me to dilate further as all talk only deepens the delusion?

1. SJO. V.II. Ś1. 13, 14, 15. pp. 57-59.
2. Ibid. Ś1. 16; p. 60.
3. Ibid. Ś1. 19. p. 61
4. Ibid. Ś1. 20. p. 62
Whatever is contemplated as the nature of the self appears as its nature by virtue of the force of contemplation.¹ Thus has been expounded the nature of self in a nutshell. Knowing that Self is really all, the wise one properly contemplates the all-pervading Being.²

To the wise one, who has attained the knowledge of the self, various yāgas and deities mentioned in the Vedas hold no attraction. They keep away from him. They are intended only for those immersed in samsāra. As for those who are drowned in the ocean of samsāra and who seek to save themselves from it, nothing else is the saviour than the self-knowledge. He who knows the self as the supreme, he effortlessly attains liberation whatever be the condition of life. There is no greater attainment than the Knowledge of the Self. The Self is the Supreme and do thou contemplate as such.³

¹. ŠJo. V. I. Sl. 21; p. 62.
². Ibid Sl. 81. p. 62.
"Neither Prāṇa nor apāna constitutes the Self. The Self is all-knowing and all-pervading-contemplate as such. The attributeless Supreme is neither inside nor outside, neither near nor far. Let thy mind be directed towards it.

The Self is above, below, inside, outside. It is the manifest and the unmanifest - do thou contemplate thus. It is not at all the void or the non-void; It is both the void and the non-void. In reality, the Self is bereft of all these characteristics - do thou contemplate thus. Contemplate the Self as untainted, ungrounded, bereft of form and colour, blemishless and beyond the gunas. Contemplate the Self as pure, eternal, existing without support, unknowable and incomparable.¹

After renouncing all actions and discarding desire and attachment do thou contemplate on the Self abiding in the Self through Self.²"

¹ Sū. V.II. Śī. 28-32; p. 63-65
² Ibid. Śī. 33; p. 66
Let the wise man discard all notions relating to one's place, caste, status etc., and contemplate on the Self.¹

Let him not consider 'this is the mantra,' 'this is the deity,' 'this is contemplation' and 'this is penance' and leaving all these thoughts, let him resort to the contemplation of Self.

The commentator Aghorasivacarya says that if the self is realised, the deities are also spontaneously realised without requiring any independent effort.

"tatsaksatkarenaiya itayadevatadi sarvastu
saksatkarah ayathena bhatiti yuktameva." ²

By negating all entities like body etc., let him merge the mind in the Self and think nothing else. The 2nd line of this verse resembles the Gītā verse³ The reality is not an object of the mind nor it is

1. ŚJC. V.11 Sl 35; p. 67
2. Ibid. Sl. 36. p. 67
entirely unthinkable. Without any sense of identification, let the seeker contemplate with fervour on the Self. ¹

He should withdraw the mind from the sense objects and on the lines instructed by the preceptors contemplate on the Self. The bliss that results from the experience of the contemplation of the transcendental Self is unvitiated by doubt and it is supreme and unexcelled.

When mind discards all attachment to the object and cognises the transcendental Self, that supreme bliss is attained. The 'Unmani' state mentioned in the verse is explained by the commentator. Aghoraśivācārya as the state in which mind dwells on the super-sensible Śiva. He can pursue Yoga in any place or time and the rules pertaining to the caste etc., also do not bind him. Even if the cows are having varied colours, the milk of all of them is only white; the wisdom of the seers is uniform like milk.

¹ SJO. Vidyā II Ś 38. p. 68
In this context, as the text repeatedly stresses on the importance of Jñāna, the commentator raises the question that if Jñāna is itself capable of ushering in liberation, Dīkṣā (initiation) is superfluous and answers that although Jñāna brings about the extinction of all karmas, the 'mala' is a 'dravya' (a material substance) and this cannot be extinguished except through 'Dīkṣā', whenever occasion arises.

yadyevām jñānamātrādeva moksasyāt dīkṣānarthakya
prasngah, tanna, sarvakarmaksaye'pi malasya
dravyatvāt dīkṣā karmanā vinā na ksayo'stity'uktam.¹

This entire chapter of the Jñānapāda, entitled appropriately as Śivātmāsāksatkāra prakaranam, has been interpreted by the commentator Aghorasiva as prescribing advaitic mode of contemplation only as an effective means of upāsanā. The commentator labours to establish that the text is not advocating ontological oneness of the self and Śiva. He maintains that Paśu and Pati are eternally distinct and non-acceptance of such a view

¹. SJO. Comm. II. p. 72.
would go against the main teaching of Sarvajñānottara and in fact, of all Āgamas.

**SIX FORMS OF SELF:**

The rest of the portion of Jñānapāda of Sarvañānottara comprising of 86 slokas deals with Bhūtātmā (Cosmic self) Antarātmā (Inner self), tātvātmā (Universal self), Jīvātmā (Individual self), Mantrātmā (Mystic self) and paramātmā (Supreme Self) and portions dealing with these six forms of self may be regarded as constituting the chapter entitled "Sadātmā Prakāram" (Chapter on six forms of self)

**BHŪTĀTMĀ:**

There are six forms of self called Bhūtātmā, Antarātmā, Tātvātmā, Jīvātmā, Mantrātmā and Paramātmā and there is no higher form than that of Paramātmā. The self manifesting in the aggregate of the elements prthvī (Earth), Āpa (Water) Vāyu (Air), Tajas (Fire) and Ākāsa
(ether) is called as Bhūtātmā.

\[
\text{Paramārthataḥ pāncabhuatikametaccarīram.}
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\[
\text{bhūtātmā tatrasthah purusa upacārayambhūtātmayuyate.}^1
\]

The next ten verses deal extensively with the union of 'male' and 'female principles', the formation of embryo, its gradual and progressive manifestation, the pressure of the three guṇas sattva, Rajas the Ṭamas and their characteristics much on the lines described in this cosmic forms is called the Bhūtātmā.\(^2\)

**ANTARĀTMA**

The subtle sound that exists within a man and which assumes in conjunction with the inner and outer movements of prāṇa the form of speech, is termed as Antarātma (inner self). According to Aghoraśiva, the

1. Sū. Vṛtti. p. 84 on Śī. 93
2. Sū Vidyā III. Śī. 1-10
subtle sound known as 'Nāda' is the Antarātmā. It is from this Nāda, all languages - Sāmāskṛtam, colloquial and regional tongues-proceed in an ordained manner. Cows and other animals, birds and snakes in fact all creatures invariably use Nāda.¹

TATVĀTMĀ

The five subtle elements, mind, Ahaṅkāra, Buddha, the three guṇas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, Avyakta, Purusa, Kalā, Kāla (time Suddhavidyā, Īśvara, Sadāśiva, Bindu (Sakti) imperishable till disolution or liberation.

Arnsterārabhya ākalpam moksāntam vā avasthānamityāha²

The self that wrongly identifies itself with the aggregate of these tattvas is called Tatvātmā.

tena ca atyantam samsēṣat tadavivekena tatra ātmabuddhim kurvan ātmāpi upacārāt tatvātmā ucyaTE ³

¹ SJO, Vidyā V. pp. 99-100
² Ibid. p. 106
³ Ibid. p. 105
This Tattvātmā pervades the cosmos. These constitute the 'pāśas' termed as 'Malas'. They are very subtle and all pervasive. They abide in all creatures.

There is no higher wisdom than this mode of classification (Prakriyā): There is no higher Reality than Śiva; There is no greater Yoga (mode of contemplation) than that which leads to the realisation of self and there is no greater happiness than that of tranquility.

When a particular tattva manifests, Jīva undergoes the experiences pertaining to that tattva: that tattva preponderates over other tattvas and the Jīva wholly gets identified with it. Repeatedly, the soul experiences one tattva after another tattva and in that condition also he is all-pervasive. He also acquires the attributes of the presiding deity of the Tatva that manifests. If he attains the condition of bliss in that state, he will abide in that state and perform the duties appropriate to it. After thus ascertaining through experience that all tattvas constitute bondage, the wise man must discard them all and dwell on Śiva. Abiding thus in Śiva, the wise man does not succumb to delusion again,
even at the last moment of his life and he surely attains liberation. The nature of the Supreme Self is again explained; the indwelling self is omnipresent, subtle, ancient, eternal, imperishable, pervading in all the tatvas, unmanifest and ever-existing. As opposed to these, the bound souls, called pasu, is dependent, fettered, tainted by Mala, unintelligent, and inert. The attributes of Śiva, called 'śiva-dharma' are opposed to the pasu-dharma described above, and the latter assumes various manifestations.¹

JIVĀTMA

The Individual soul by virtue of the veil caused by Mala, is known variously as self, creature, humen being, indweller, purusa, Pudgala, Jīva, Kapāli, ksetrajña etc. All attributes inhere in self by virtue of its association with various activities. The self attains various bodies and transmigrates through all kinds of birth. As long as wisdom does not dawn, He undergoes deluded birth and gets submerged through ajñāna

in the ocean of grief and sorrow. After attaining wisdom, he quickly experiences supreme peace. In that condition, all the griefs come to an end.  

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**MANTRĀTMA**

Śiva proceeds to explain to Guha, the Mantrātma who is capable of dispelling all grief and wiping away all sins. The deities presiding over various mantras exist everywhere — among devas, asuras, yaksas, kinnaras, pitris, sidūhas, Vidyādaras etc.,. To the first letter of the tānja, must be added the sixth and fourteenth letters (अ) and with 'bindu' added on to it, this will constitute the mantra relating to that tānja. The mantras that begin with ॐ(ॐ) and end with 'namah' (नम:) should be made use of while offering worship to the deities. The mantras that end with 'svāhā' (स्वाहा) should be utilised for 'homas'.

The mode of worship prescribed for Śiva should be adhered to for the worship of all tatvas. That which

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1. **ŚJō. Vidyā.** Sl. 1-4, pp. 113-115.
forms the mantras of a tatva in the twofold aspects of the name and named, the gross and the subtle and the transcendental is called as Manträtmä. The gross form leads to perfection at the verbal plane; the subtle form confers yogic excellence; the transcendental form ushers in liberation. The Manträtmä is only one and by association with various tatvas it assumes many forms even as a lamp is considered one or many depending on the reflecting device adopted. Whoever wants to realise a manträtmä must contemplate the self to be the manträtmä.

The form, the propitiatory rite, the manner of worship etc., prescribed for a mantra by the scripture should be adopted and the realisation attained. The Manträtmä so contemplated upon leads to the attainment of all desires. The practising Sādhaka becomes all-knowing and all-pervasive.¹

PARAMÄTMA:

Finally, the Lord teaches about the supreme

Paramātma (supreme Self) that is beyond even the Mantrātma; that which is blemishless and without a substratum, and also without name and form. He is all-knowing, all-pervading and is universal-self. He is unparallelled and super-sensible. In whichever form He is conceived and contemplated upon, He is cognised as possessing that form. Everything exists in the self and it can bestow everything. That is how, He is manifesting in the six forms (Bhūtātma etc.) mentioned above, though He is really one.

He is known as Bhūtātma by virtue of association with Bhūtas (element); as tattvātma while abiding in tatvas; as Mantrātma while visualised through mantras; antarātma while existing in the form of Nāda; jīvātma, while in association with the gunas of prakriti, he experiences pleasure and pain, and when he is freed from all such association, He is known as Paramātma. Omnipotence is the greatest attainment and the men of contemplation attain that state.

When through his effort one gets detached from
the tatvas, he attains the non-dual oneness. There is
only one Supreme Self and by virtue of association
with different intellects, he gets different forms and
names, though he is beyond all names and forms. When
the enlightenment takes place, the self manifests all
its eternal attributes. The self is the supreme and
the self is the knowable. All the empirical objects
are only projections of the self.

The self is imperishable and is beyond the
existent and the non-existent. After discarding all
actions through the practice of yoga and after resolving
all doubts through discrimination, pursue the contemp-
lation of the self. Leaving aside the past tendencies
and abiding in non-dual state, contemplate on the
Supreme Self. With the mind rendered subtle and pure
and unvitiated by doubt, the seer sees the Lord in the
self and attains supreme beatitude. All the various
modes of realisation and mantras and tantra form of
worship and the whole world, he sees in the self. He
becomes all-knowing, all seeing, pure and all-pervading.
He becomes liberated and enjoys the imperishable bliss.¹

¹. SJO. Vidyā VIII. pp. 128-138.