

KAVI PARAMEŚVARA OR PARAMEṢṬHI

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In the history of Indian literature, there are many celebrated authors who are repeatedly remembered in subsequent works; but neither their works are available to-day, nor do we know any biographical details about them. Kavi Parameśvara or Parameṣṭhi is one of them. In this paper I propose to put together whatever bits of information have been available to me, especially from Kannada and Sanskrit literature.

Eminent Kannada poets like Ādi Pampa (c. 911 A. D.), Abhinava Pampa (c. 1100 A. D.), Nayasena (1112 A. D.) Aggala (1189) and Kamalabhava (c. 1235) respectfully refer to Kavi Parameṣṭhi along with Samantabhadra, the logician poet and Pūjyapāda, the grammarian.¹ Ādi Pampa, it may be noted, calls him *jagat-prasiddha*. Their verses are given below.

श्रीमत्समन्तभद्र —

स्वामिगळ जगत्प्रसिद्ध-कविपरमेष्ठि- ।

स्वामिगळ पूज्यपाद —

स्वामिगळ पदंगळीगे शाश्वतपदमं ॥

Ādipurāṇa (Mysore 1900) I. 15.

कविपरमेष्ठिगळ गुण

स्तवनंगळ पूज्यपादयतिपतिय गुण — ।

स्तवनंगळोर्मे नालगे —

गे बंद मानवन वाङ्मलं निंदपुदे ॥

Rāmāyaṇa I. 11.

श्रीमत्समन्तभद्र —

स्वामिगळ नेगळतेवैत्त कविपरमेष्ठि — ॥

स्वामिगळ पूज्यपाद —

स्वामिगळ पदंगळीगे बोधोदयमं ॥

Dharmāmṛta (Mysore 1924) I. 14.

¹ R. Narasimhachary: Karnāṭaka-kavicarita Vol. I. (Bangalore 1924), pp. 2, 4-5.

समनिके मन्मानसदोल
समंतभदांघ्रिनखरकातिजलं म — ।
त्तमलिन कविपरमेष्ठि —
क्रमक्रमलं पूज्यपादपदनखकुमुदं ॥

Candraprabha-purāṇam (Mysore 1901) I. 20.

भवहरसमंतभद्र
कविपरमेष्ठिगल पूज्यपादर कारु — ।
प्यवरेण्य दुग्धवाधियो —
ळविरतमिर्कैम्म चित्तमत्तमरालं ॥

Śāntīśvara-purāṇa (Mysore 1912) I. 20.

Then turning to individual references, Guṇavarma II (c. 1235 A. D.) tells us in his Puṣpadanta-purāṇa, I. 26 (Madras 1933) that Kavi Parameṣṭhi's mouth was beautiful with unparalleled speech, that he was praised by the learned, that he was almost the Para-brahman, and that he was no doubt a *purāṇa-puruṣa*:

निरुपमसरस्वतीसुं —
दरचतुरानन नशेषविबुधस्तुत्यं ।
परमब्रह्मनेनल् कवि —
परमेष्ठि पुराणपुरुषनैबुदु पुसिये ॥

Pārśvapaṇḍita (1205 A. D.) qualifies him as '*guṇa-jyēṣṭha*' or 'pre-eminent in virtues' in his Pārśvapurāṇa:

निष्ठापरत्वंदि पर —
मेष्ठिस्तवनमननूनमं माडि गुण — ।
ज्येष्ठनेनिसिर्प कविपर --
मेष्ठिगुणस्तवनमेमगे-दल् करणीयं ॥

Nemicandra (c. 1170) tells us in his Nemināthapurāṇa (Mysore 1914) (I. 15-16) that Kavi Parameśvara wrote a *purāṇa* glorifying 24 Tīrthakaras and that Brahman and Sarasvatī were waiting on his glory.

जिनर पुराणगळोळीं —
दने बरेदोडे बरेदेंवैरीभुवनं जी —
यने बरेदिसिदरिर्प —
लुनाल्कमं पागळे सुकविपरमेश्वरं ॥
सुकवि परमेष्ठिगल ना —
टकवेनिसिद भुवनवंद्यवरविद्याती —
र्थकरत्वपुण्यलक्ष्मिगे
सकळश्रुतदेवि यक्षि यक्षं बोम्मं ॥

Then, still earlier, Cāvṇḍarāya (978 A. D.) in his Ādipurāṇa (Bangalore 1928) clearly tells us that Kavi Parameśvara wrote a Triṣaṣṭi-śalākā-puruṣa-purāṇa:

चरितपुराणदोळोदने
बरेदर बरेदिकिकदर त्रिषष्टिशालाका — ।
पुरुषपुराणमं कवि -
परमेश्वररंतु जसके नोंतुरुमोळरे ॥

and in another context (p. 6) he declares that the *mahā-purāṇa* was composed formerly by Kūci Bhaṭṭāraka and Śrīnandi Muni, and that his work, namely, the Kannada Cāvṇḍarāya Purāṇa only follows the compositions of Kavi Parameśvara, who is called *jīṃgamatilaka*, Jinasena and Guṇabhadra:

विरचिसिदर मुने महा -
पुराणमं नेगळ्द कूचिमट्टारकरं ।
परम श्रीनंदिमुनी -
श्वरं तदनंतरं जिनागमतिलकर ॥
कविपरमेश्वर बरेदुदं जिनसेनमहामुनीशरी -
यवनिगे पेळदु माणे गुणभद्रमुनीश्वररेयेदे पेळदु प -
ल्लविसिदुदं त्रिषष्टिपुरुषप्रतिबद्धपुराणमं महो -
त्सवदोळे भव्यकोटिगरियल बरेदं गुणरत्नभूषणं ॥

Guṇabhadra,* at the end of his Uttarapurāṇa (middle of the 9th century A. D.) informs us that the Ādipurāṇa composed by his teacher Jinasena was based on the *gadya-kathā* of Kavi Parameśvara:

कविपरमेश्वर-निगदितगद्यकथामातृकं पुरोश्चरितम् ।

Jinasena (c. 837 A. D.) also respectfully mentions him as the compiler of the entire *purāṇa*, possibly under the title Vāgarthasamgraha:

स पूज्यः कविभिर्लोकैः कवीनां परमेश्वरः ।
वागर्थसंग्रहं कृत्स्नं पुराणं यः समग्रहीत् ॥

Ādipurāṇa I. 60.

Besides these literary references, the Humch inscription† of 1077 A. D. mentions Kavi Parameṣṭhi along with a host of Jaina teachers and authors.

* About Jinasena, Guṇabhadra etc. see, Premi : Jaina Sāhitya aurā Itihāsa, pp. 282, 497 ff.; also Hiralal : Dhavalā, Intro. Amraoti 1939.

† Epigraphia Carnatica VIII, Nagar No. 35.

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Thus we see that Kavi Parameśvara is being respectfully mentioned by various authors from the beginning of the 9th century almost upto the middle of the 13th century A. D. His personality stands before us as that of a famous, worthy authoritative poet with remarkable mastery over expression. He composed a *purāṇa* glorifying 63 Śalākā-puruṣas or celebrities of the Jaina church. Guṇabhadra says that it was a *gadya-kathā* and that it was used by Jinasena for his Ādipurāṇa. Jinasena calls it Vāgartha-saṁgraha; and Cāmuṇḍarāya used it for his Kannaḍa work. It is a high compliment to the scholastic greatness of Kavi Parameśthi that he is ranked with Samantabhadra and Pūjyapāda whose works have come down to us.

This is all that we glean about Kavi Parameśvara's personality from the casual references of subsequent authors, some of whom had actually used his work. His date is uncertain,*a But he definitely flourished earlier than Jinasena who finished his Jayadhavalā in 837 A. D.

As yet we have not been able to trace the work of Kavi Parameśvara in any Ms. library; but the chances of tracing it are not remote, because many collections in the South are not fully explored.

Lately, the section of Śāntipurāṇa from the Cāmuṇḍarāyapurāṇa has been published,† and we are lucky to find there that Cāmuṇḍarāya has given some quotations attributed to Kavi Parameśvara. I reproduce below the extracts almost as they are:

कविपरमेश्वरर वृत्त ।

रामत्वं गणधृत्वमप्यभिमतं लोकान्तिकत्वं तथा
षट्खण्डप्रभुता सुखानुभवनं सर्वार्थसिद्ध्यादिषु ।
इंद्रत्वं महिमादिभिश्च सहितं प्राप्तं न संसारिभिः
तत्प्राप्तो भवहेतुसंसृतिरुताच्छेदे कुतः संयमः ॥

कविपरमेश्वरर श्लोक ।

कषायोद्रेककालुष्यं व्रतदर्शनसत्तपः ।
दूषयत्यचिराद्राजन् ततः क्रोधादि वर्जयेत् ॥
त्यागेन लोभे क्षमया प्रकोपं
मानं मृदुत्वेन मनोहरेण ।

*(a) R. Narasimhachary would like to put Kavi Parameśvara between Samantabhadra and Pūjyapāda, and he gives to him a tentative date, viz. 550 A. D. This is just a conjecture; and the earlier limit of his date is not at all fixed. We want more evidence.

† Kannada Sāhitya Pariṣat Patrikā, vol. 29, March-June 1944, pp. 53, 58,

वृत्तेन मायामृजुनाभिवृद्धिं
 नरेन्द्र हन्यात्परलोककांक्षी ।
 स्थूलेषु दयां प्राणिषु करोति सूक्ष्मेषु विलसदनुकम्पाम् ।
 आरम्भाहतकर्मसु गृहाश्रमो निष्प्रतिज्ञानः ॥
 चरणादवनाल्लभया विप्रया नानादपि प्रजासुवदा ।
 तदवनये वर्धितां न चिरं संसारभाक् नृपती ॥ [?]*
 हिंसातः प्राणिनोऽन्यायाद्राजदण्डेन वारयन् ।
 संचिनोति व्रती पुण्यमहिसायाः समार्जितम् ॥
 अल्पानल्पापराधेषु तद्योग्यानपि दण्डयन् ।
 खचरेन्द्रमहापुण्यं समाधत्ते नृपः कृती ॥

गुदहिंसाव्रतमनरपि

तत्सुसाधुवचः सत्यं प्राणिपीडापराङ्मुखम् ।
 येन सावद्यकर्मणि न स्पृशन्ति भयादिषु ॥
 नाग्निर्दहत्युच्चशिखाकलापस्तीव्रं विषं निर्विषतामुपैति ।
 शस्त्रं शतद्योतविभूषणत्वं सत्येन किं ते न भवेदभीष्टम् ॥

गुदु सत्यव्रतमनरपि

परस्वार्जनमन्यायं प्रकाशस्तेनमुच्यते ।
 नृपते चोरयल्लोके वञ्चकस्तेन संस्मृतः ॥
 इह जन्मनि तद्राजन् व्यक्तमख्यातिवर्धनम् ।
 विचित्रदुःखसंपादि परत्र च विशेषतः ॥
 अधर्मसंग्रहोऽन्यायान् नृपस्यान्यस्वसंग्रहः ।
 प्रजाविद्वेषणीयश्च जायते येन कर्मणा ॥

गुदस्तेयव्रतमनरपि

परदारपरावृत्तो वर्तते यः क्षितीश्वरः ।
 समग्विहितकरकमलमुकुलैर्देवैरपि स प्रणमनीयः ॥ [?][†]
 स्वदारगतभ्येत्य मात्रयानुभवन्नृपः ।
 भवेद् स्वार्थपरः कामं जनानां चापदेशकः ॥

We are not in a position to state whether only the opening verse of the larger extract belongs to Kavi Parameṣṭhi or all the verses are to be attributed to him. All the quotations are in Sanskrit and in a metrical form. One verse is very obscure and one line metrically defective. Cavuṇḍarāya says that he has used Kavi Parameśvara's work; it is very good of him that he quotes by mentioning the author's name.

* This verse is apparently corrupt and obscure.

† Metrically defective.

Kavi Parameśvara's work, as the quotations indicate, was in Sanskrit and in verses. There is one difficulty in accepting this that Guṇabhadra has described Kavi Parameśvara's work as *gadyakathā*. Possibly it was in prose with some verses here and there, and for convenience Cāmuṇḍarāya might have quoted only the verses.

If not the whole work of Kavi Parameśvara, at least a couple of quotations are available to us. And I do hope, some day, like the *Varāṅgacarita* of Jāliḥ, Kavi Parameśvara's *purāṇa* would be discovered.

SAMARAMIYĀNĀ KAHĀ OF HARIBHADRA

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Uddyotanasārī, the author of Kuvalayamālā (completed on 21st March, 779, A. D.) was a disciple of Haribhadra; and any information he gives about his *guru* deserves our special attention. He speaks about his *guru* thus in the introductory verses of the Kuvalayamālā :*

जो इच्छइ भवविरहं भवविरहं को ण वेदए सुअणो ।
समयसयसत्थगुरुणो समरमियका कहा जस्स ॥

Clearly this is a respectful reference to Haribhadra† who is well-known as *virahāṅka* and who is proved to be the *guru* of Uddyotana. According to Uddyotana, then, Haribhadra composed Samaramiyānā kahā which has been all along rendered into Sanskrit as Samara-mṛgāṅkā Kathā.

The statement of Uddyotana is quite clear, and naturally various questions can be raised. Is it that Haribhadra wrote a Samara-mṛgāṅkā-kathā besides his famous Samarāditya-kathā; or is it that the phrase *samara-miyānā kahā* only refers to the present Samarāicca-kahā ? The first question has to be answered in the negative, because no other source, as far as I know, has attributed an additional work, Samara-mṛgāṅka by name, to Haribhadra. A comparison of the concluding verse of the Samarāditya Kathā, which runs thus,

जं विरइऊण पुण्णं महाणुभावचरियं मए पत्तं ।
तेण इहं भवविरहो होउ सया भवियलोयस्स ॥

with the verse of Kuvalayamālā, quoted above, hardly leaves any doubt that Uddyotana has the present Samarāicca-kahā in view. As long as we render the title in Sanskrit as Samara-mṛgāṅkā Kathā, we will be forced to find out how *mṛgāṅka* can mean *āditya*, and whether the Sanskrit language supplies any reference to the effect that *mṛgāṅka* did mean 'sun' as well, beside the normal meaning 'moon'.

* I have on hand a critical edition of this important Prākṛit campū based on the Ms. material so kindly entrusted to me by Shri Jinavijayaji, I am quoting this verse from a transcript.

† See Jacobi's Intro. to his ed. of the Samarāiccakahā, BI. No. 169, Calcutta 1926.

There is no doubt that Uddyotana has in view the present *Samarāiccakahā*, and as I shall show presently, the phrase *samara miyaṅkā kahā* signifies the same. But the various difficulties about this problem are due to the wrong Sanskrit rendering of this phrase, namely, *Samara-mṛgāṅkā kathā*. In my opinion, the real Sanskrit rendering should be *Samara-mitārka kathā*, which means the story of *Arka* or *Āditya*, limited, qualified or prefixed by *Samara*, i. e., the *Samarāditya-kathā*. The equation of *aṃka* with *arka* can be explained. In *Prākṛit* we have a similar phenomenon in *Karkotā-kamkoḍa* (Hema. VIII. i. 26); in the *Tiloyapaṇṇatti* both *akka* and *aṃka* are used for *arka* (see VII.295-96, 345-46); and the famous royal name *Vikramāṅka* is just a phonetic variation of *Vikramārka*, i. e., *Vikramāditya*. So we can safely conclude that Uddyotana's phrase *Samara-miyaṃkā kahā* is to be rendered into Sanskrit as *Samaramitārka kathā*, and it stands for the *Samarāditya kathā* of Haribhadra.
