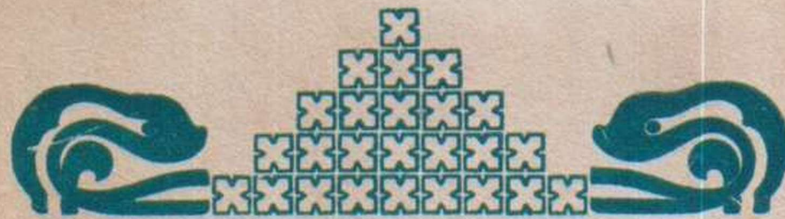


श्री:

**THE TRUTH ABOUT
THE KUMBHAKONAM MUTT**



PART 1 & 2

श्रीः

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE KUMBHAKONAM MUTT

PART I

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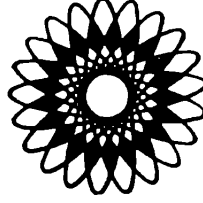
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FOREWORD

The great Acharya Adi Sankara occupies the foremost place among those Acharyas, who are, by their oral teachings and erudite writings, responsible for establishing on firm footings the pristine Vedic Religion against the onslaughts of Buddhism and Jainism. To ensure the permanency of his work, he established Maths in the whole of India, which were put under the charge of his own eminent disciples. The presiding head as well as the disciples of the Kumbhakonam Math have been carrying on a vigorous propaganda both in the south and in the north of India that theirs was the central Math of the great Acharya himself, while the other Maths—in the east at Puri the Govardhana Math, in the west at Dwaraka the Sharada Math, in the north in the Himalayan region the Jyotir Math and in the south at Shringagiri the Shringeri Sharada Math — were established to be the seats of his four celebrated disciples. These four Mathas are the spiritual sentinels keeping sleepless vigil to guard, preserve, maintain and enhance the essential traditions of spiritual life in India.

In the present work – “The Truth about the Kumbhakonam Math” - the learned writers, Shri R. Krishnaswami Aiyar and Shri K. R. Venkataraman, have made a genuine attempt to examine the Problem afresh and have marshalled a huge mass of hitherto inaccessible materials towards the final solution of the problem. I have gone through the book very carefully and have been impressed by the force

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of arguments presented here. In the first part of the work p p. 1-188, Shri Krishnaswami Aiyar tackles the main problems and analyses the various threads of the story and exhibits with unassailable facts and figures how the belief in the antiquity and authenticity of the fifth Math of Kamakoti is a pious myth. He has discussed at length the non-authenticity of the various Sanskrit Texts relied upon by the advocates of the theory for the support of their views (pp.10-71) and has proved to the hilt how the conception of the fifth mahavakya (pp. 111-116), the exclusive existence of the Yoga Linga at Kumbhakonam Matha (pp. 123-143), the idea of dual Sarvajna Peetha one at Kashmir and the other at this Math (pp. 144-155) and the very bold hypothesis of the fifth Math (pp. 166-178) are unreliable fantasies created with a sinister motive to foster the reputation of the Math as the sole representative of the Great Acharya.

The second part of the book deals mainly with the historical aspects of the question. Shri K. R. Venkataraman, the writer of this part, has creditably performed his responsible task of historical scrutiny of the Copper plate Grants and other materials presented by the protagonists of the Math (pp. 195-224). He has collected with judicious care a large number of opinions and statements on the problem and has attempted to join the loose threads (pp. 246-248) in a very admirable way. Thus both the writers, as it is apparent to every discerning critic, have taken great pains to examine the problem from its very inception and to expose the gradual layers in the building up of this grand edifice. We bestow our high praise for this self-imposed task of these scholars, for their dis-interestedness, for their accurate tackling of the problem from

(iii)

different sides, for their conclusion based upon historical analysis and probing and for the truth they have established. They merit high encomiums from every sane critic for this noble task of solving this problem to the satisfaction of learned scholars.

I had occasion to examine this question in the pages of my Hindi volume entitled "Acharya Shankar", published by the Hindustani Academy, Allahabad, Second Edition, 1963 and recently translated into Kannada and published by the Kavyalaya Publication, Bangalore, 1965. I had already ventured my opinions on this problem which have been published by Shri J. V. Raja Gopala Sharma in his voluminous work in Hindi called "Jagadguru Shankara Mutha-Vimarsh" on pp. 580-581 (published from Madras, 1963). I am extremely delighted to find that the problem has been analysed, examined and brought to a conclusion from different angles in a very learned way by both the scholars in the present volume.

One word more. Now I really wish that this bitter controversy which is raging very fiercely in the press and on the platform both in the south and in the north of India should come to a halt. To every pious Hindu both the Maths of Shringeri and of Kumbhakonam are places of homage and devotion. The venerable heads of these Maths on account of their lofty spiritualism, their great learning of Vedantic lore and their pious ideal life, create genuine love in our heart for the ideals of Vedic Religion and Vedantic Philosophy so beautifully expressed by the Great Shankaracharya in his works and in his life. We

(iv)

should appreciate the noble truths of Vedic Religion and should try to live our lives accordingly. It is no time for wrangling, much less religious wrangling. With this noble request I close this foreword and hope that spiritual light will dawn upon the adherents of both the parties so that they will close up the ranks and will see the truth as expressed in the pages of this highly learned work.

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti

13—11—1965, }
Varanasi - 2. }

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PREFACE

When I jotted down the materials mentioned in this book, I had no idea that it would ever become necessary to give them publicity. It seemed to me that the claims made by the Kumbhakonam Mutt to antiquity and supremacy were so patently absurd and silly that they were not worth refuting. I found however that, thanks to the methods of propaganda adopted by that mutt and its adherents, to the backing they secured somehow or other from people who ought to know better and to the almost criminal indifference of those who were in the know, unwary people ran the risk of believing in those baseless claims. I felt it then my duty to place before the public the relevant factors in a booklet entitled "The Kumbhakonam Mutt Claims." It was intended only to furnish the necessary information to earnest seekers of truth and was not meant for anybody who was indifferent to it or was wilfully blind to it. It is only natural that such a publication should meet with resentment from those who were interested in bolstering up those claims but the resentment chose to show itself not in any honest attempt to refute my statement but only in vulgar abuse.

The reception however which the book had from impartial quarters and the insistent demand for a fresh amplified edition resulted in my carefully revising the matter which only emphatically confirmed my previous statements. My esteemed friend Sri K. R. Venkataraman,

Retired Director of Public Instruction, Pudukota State, has been kind enough to supplement my conclusions by his valuable historical notes which form Part II of this publication. I am sure that the public will be eagerly looking forward to his promised book on *Kanchi Kamakshi Devi*.

I have mentioned, on pages 130 and 131 of this book, as an 'undisputed' fact that a Sphatika Linga was installed at Chidambaram by Sri Sankara, basing my statement upon the general belief that it was so. Such an installation is not found in the Siva Rahasya or in any other 'authority' other than the Markandeya Samhita. I have referred on pages 18 and 134 to the utter unreliability of this Samhita. I have received from quite an un-expected quarter a confirmation on such un-reliability. Sri V. S. Vaidyanatha Dikshitar, one of the trustees of the Chidambaram Temple and Secretary of the Sri Nataraja Vidya Sabha there, writes to me on 15—6—65 that the Linga at Chidambaram is a very ancient one and that some people, with a view to enhance the fame of Sri Sankaracharya, have invented the story of its installation by him. In proof of his statement, he has sent me a copy of "Sri Kunchitanghrastava" said to have been written by Umapati Sivacharya. In commenting on stanza 276, the editor points out the spuriousness of Markandeya Samhita. The editor mentions in his note on stanza 295 that Sri Sankara was born at Chidambaram itself, in Angirasa Gotra, and belonged to the Dikshitar community and so on which statements it is unnecessary to discuss in this context.

As a sample of what the Kumbhakonam mutt people do, I may mention the case of some Pandits who

were hastily sent for and asked to sign in a piece of paper by some persons deeply interested in that mutt but at that time quite unsuspected by them. When they learnt later on that it contained some unwarranted eulogies about that mutt they immediately repudiated it.

To what length they are prepared to go is patent from the bold statements of a Pandit advocate of that mutt that some matter will have to be added to or substituted even in its own publications to make them consistent with their pleas and that there are documents which supplement or are improvements on former publications. This is a clear warning to the public to be very watchful when sought to be fed with such new fare

It was very gratifying to note that such propaganda did not influence any genuine scholar and that Sri Baldev Upadhyaya of Varanasi wrote to Sri J. V. Rajagopala Sarma as early as 29—2—60, “I fully agree with your views that the great Acharya established only four mutts. The idea of a fifth mutt at Kamakoti appears to be a later concoction made by some interested persons, In my standard book in Hindi on the life and teachings of Acharya Sankara, I have given the history of all the five peethas but I still believe that the original establishments were four and four only”.

When Sri Sarma learnt that Sri S. Ramachandra Sastry was preparing a Kannada translation of that book, he was anxious that the reader should not be misled by Sri Upadhyaya's dealing with all the five mutts and accordingly wrote both to Sri Ramachandra Sastry and to Sri Upadhyaya. The former replied on 15—2—64 “Personally I also feel that the claims of the Kanchi mutt are fantastic and fanciful. There does not seem to be any original evidence to confirm the claims of the mutt. Further, there cannot be any controversy because after all Kanchi mutt is only a subsidiary mutt of Sringeri Sharada Peetha. It cannot be called an Amnaya Peetha.” Sri Upadhyaya

immediately wrote to Ramachandra Sastry himself on 20—2—64 requesting him to add at the end of the translation a copy of his letter dated 29—9—60 to Sri Rajagopala Sarma “because it clearly embodies my views about the genuinely established mathas of Adi Sankaracharya. Without it my statements in the book might be misunderstood by its readers. I hope you would appreciate my anxiety for statement of truth in a matter which is highly controversial.” Though the translation was published only in August 1964, for some reason or other Sri Upadhyaya’s request was not complied with.

It is no small satisfaction to me that when I took the liberty of approaching Sri Upadhyaya for a preface to this book he readily consented and has favoured me with such a critical, informative and appreciative analysis emphatically confirming my statements. In recording my grateful thanks to him, I hope with him that this book will put an effective stop to untenable claims and that all sincere followers of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada will close up the ranks and jointly work for the realisation of the ideas of Dharma so beautifully enunciated and preached by that Great Acharya.

I am quite aware that the treatment given here may seem inadequate requiring further amplification. The reader who is anxious to have more details may usefully refer to the original works themselves or to more voluminous books like Sri J. V. Rajagopala Sarma’s *Srimat Jagadguru Sankara Matha Vimarsa* and *Kashi Me Kumbhakona Math Vishayak Vivada*.

I may add that any supplementary information and sincere criticism of the contents of this book will be quite welcome but not any praise or abuse of the authors for this is purely a impersonal publication.



॥ श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः ॥

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE KUMBHAKONAM MUTT

PART—I

CHAPTER—I

INTRODUCTION

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya was a unique figure in the history of the world. He re-established the religion of the Vedas on a firm basis in our land. He, though born in the south-west corner of India, toured the whole of this country from Kailasa to Kanyakumari and from Kaskmir to Kamarupa and demonstrated the cultural unity of this sacred land in spite of the diversity in its population and the multitudinous variety of its languages. He uprooted the non-Vedic creeds and practices which had corroded into the pure religion of the Veda. He refined and established on a firmer basis the ancient modes of worship and showed that they were not conflicting with one another but were in fact all necessary steps towards the realisation of the Upanishadic goal of Oneness with the Absolute Reality. He defined and preached that supreme goal for all humanity and demonstrated, both by his life and his teachings, that it was quite possible for all earnest aspirants to reach that goal even in this life. He has left a vast mass of literature, philosophical, polemic, devotional and soul-elevating, for the uplift of the earnest

seekers of truth in the generations to come. He gave an additional charm to the divine language of Sanskrit in his handling of it and added strength and incisiveness to logic when he wielded it as a weapon of defence or offence or as a means of persuasion.

Not satisfied with all that he had done during his life-time of barely thirty-two years, he established in the four corners of India four Mathas of apostolic succession with the glorious intention of perpetuating for all time the truths which he preached and practised and for taking care of the spiritual interests of the people of the country. They are the Sarada Matha at Sringeri for the South, the Kalika Matha at Dwaraka for the West, the Jyotir Matha at Badari for the North and the Govardhana Matha at Puri Jagannath for the East. These seats were assigned to his four well-known disciples Sri Suresvaracharya, Sri Hastamalakacharya, Sri Totakacharya and Sri Padmapadacharya.

As time went on and owing to the vastness of the country and the inconvenience in a single person touring over extensive tracts for the purpose of spiritual ministration to the people there, several local preachers came into prominence. When they happened to be Sannyasis, they were able to easily enlist the support of the people around them. The Sastras in proclaiming the greatness of Sannyasa say that the mere act of renunciation according to the prescribed method makes the body of the Sannyasi an embodiment in human form of Lord Vishnu Himself. This spirit of veneration is so ingrained in the hearts of the people of our land that they look upon all Sannyasis with great respect and serve them with great reverence. When a Sannyasi has, spiritual attainments or his deep learning or his occult powers or his

persuasive tongue or by other means, secured a large gathering of devoted admirers, he necessarily commands greater respect and wields a greater influence. Either on his own initiative or at the desire of his devotees he is tempted to build a Matha for himself and the further temptation to perpetuate that Matha as a permanent institution easily assigns to him the Headship of that Matha. When this additional qualification for popular appeal is had, the reverence that he commands is necessarily increased. It is this ordinary trait of the people that is responsible for many a Sannyasi, who had been at first leading a life of quiet seclusion, becoming later on sensitive to popular adoration, founding Mathas of their own and claiming to be Peethadhipatis also.

The name of Sri Sankaracharya has always had a fascination of its own and to claim *kinship* with him either by being born in the province where he was born or by having a Gotra or a Veda or a Sutra common with him is certainly a matter for pride for most of us. It is not possible to claim him as an ancestor as he happened to take Sannyasa in his eighth year. If some plausible claim could be put forward to spiritual descent from him it would certainly add to the prestige of the claimant. But it is ordinarily forgotten that all orthodox Sannyasis, belonging to any one of ten orders, are and must be the spiritual descendants of Sri Sankaracharya, and it is thought necessary to connect themselves with some wellknown Matha founded by him. This idea is at the bottom of many of the later Mathadhipatis coming forward to claim such spiritual descent through the four original seats founded by Sri Sankara. That is, not content with claiming spiritual descent for themselves, they want a lineal descent for their Mathas also. These Mathas would have been first called Branch Mutts, owing allegiance to the

parent Mathas, as otherwise they would have no claim to derive authority from Sri Sankaracharya. This allegiance would easily become purely nominal and in course of time they could claim to be independent but the original Mathas could not possibly be ignored; and it was not a fair step to claim that they themselves were the rightful successors to those original Mathas but ousted from them by fraud or force by the predecessors of the present incumbents. Anyhow they were content to trace the spiritual ancestry of thier mutts to the recognised four Mathas founded by Sri Sankara in the four corners of India.

The Kumbhakonam Mutt however is not content with such a claim but would pitch it higher by claiming descent, not from those four recognised Mathas assigned to the four Sishyas of Sri Sankara, but from Sri Sankara Himself direct. That Mutt wants it to be believed that Sri Sankara founded and presided over a fifth Matha at Kanchi, that Matha was a *central* Matha and that the accepted four Mathas were all *Sishya* Mathas under the control of the *central* Matha. It is further claimed that the Matha at Kumbhakonam is only a continuation of that Kanchi Matha as it had to move to the banks of the river Kaveri during the political troubles of the 18th century. It is for competent scholars to probe into the matter and decide as to how far these claims are tenable on historical grounds; but their tenability however can easily be tested even by examining the *authorities* put forward by that Matha.

The present occupant of that Matha is no doubt not the originator of these claims but is a staunch supporter of them and is certainly responsible for advertising them and for the fast increasing mass of literature which are being published in English and the several languages of India in support of the same with his "kind permission" or

“dedicated to him” or with his active support. He has been taking great personal interest in the matter and engaging himself in extensive and intensive propaganda even in North India for recognition of his claims. During his tour there, he has carefully collected some *Vyavastha Patrikas*, *Anumodana Patrikas* and *Swagata Patrikas* at the instance of some influential and obliging disciples of his, who happily for him and thanks to the English education can be found in any part of India, setting out not only these unique claims but even those very “authorities” on which they are based. It is strange that with his keen intellect he is not able to see the shallowness of those claims or the hollowness of the “authorities” set up in support of such claims. Evidently the blinding power of self-interest knows no exception. It is not for us to gauge, much less to belittle, his spiritual attainments, nor do we lag behind anybody in our appreciation of the strenuous efforts he has been making to uphold the standard of Dharma even in these difficult times. We feel at the same time that his usefulness to the religious public will be greatly enhanced if he does not stress upon or give his support to such untenable claims and if he does not give room for the impression that even his efforts in religious propaganda are motivated by a desire to advance those claims by enlisting popular support.

It is our intention to place before the public the facts and considerations which will show the untenability of those claims so that truth may not be allowed to be shrouded or distorted or smothered by persistent but baseless propaganda intended to confuse and mislead the minds of unthinking credulous public. We pointed out their baselessness and the unwise nature of such propaganda years ago in an article* in the Madras Tamil Daily,

* SWADESAMITRAN, 8—8—1935.

In the several versions of Sri Sankaracharya's life published under the auspices of the Kumbhakonam Mutt it is admitted that for acharya vichara a mutt at Dwaraka in the West, another mutt at Kadari in the North, another at Jagannath in the East and another at Sringeri in the South were established. If so, the Kumbhakonam mutt people have no ground to question the fact that all persons in the south inclusive of Kanchipuram and Kumbhakonam are Sishyas of Sringeri. There is therefore no justification at all for charging any particular persons as a Sishya of the Sringeri mutt. This distinction is but the result of some believing and saying that they are not Sishyas of Sringeri mutt.

A correspondent says that the Acharya of the Sringeri mutt does not relish any enquiry into the relative status of mutts. This dislike is natural to all pious people. If this policy is not proper, it will be proper to advise those who have started it to desist from it; it is not proper to advise those who point out the baselessness of the controversy that they should not so point out..... Those who do not like this controversy, if they have any influence, must ask the Kumbhakonam mutt people to stop their propaganda.

One correspondent writes that in the Kumbhakonam mutt Publications there is not a single word derogatory to the Sringeri mutt. Is it necessary to call another a rogue for making the remark derogatory?

- (1) The Sringeri mutt is subject to the supervision of the Kumbhakonam mutt.
- (2) Suresvaracharya was never in the Sringeri mutt; he was not a Paramahansa Sannyasi at all.
- (3) Visvarupacharya who was appointed to the Sringeri mutt was an incarnation of God Yama; if it was Prithvidhavacharya, he was an incarnation of Mrityu.
- (4) The Sringeri Mutt had been extinct for a long time.
- (5) Though there is a Vidyasankara temple at Sringeri, he was not in the Sringeri mutt but was only in the Kumbhakonam mutt.
- (6) Vidyaranya also never presided over the Sringeri mutt, though there are grants of some villages to Vidyaranya from the Vijayanagar Kings and though those villages are still in the possession of the Sringeri Mutt. He also was not a Paramahansa Sannyasi. He was a Sishya of the Kumbhakonam mutt and was deputed by the latter to revive the Sringeri mutt.
- (7) The Sringeri Acharyas can be called only "Gurus." The title of "Jagadguru" belongs to the Kumbhakonam mutt only.

These and similar statements are made by the Kumbhakonam mutt. Are they not derogatory of the Sringeri mutt?

“Swadesamitran” dated 8—8—1935, but during recent times the propaganda has only increased. Some seemingly impartial gentlemen have advanced the strange plea that a refutation of those claims will not be seemly as it will create a split in the camp of the followers of Advaita. Evidently these gentlemen want us to ignore, that is, to leave uncontradicted all the literature that has been published hitherto or is being published in support of such claims. If anything is unseemly, it is in setting up of such claims and reiterating them, in season and out of season, and certainly not in controverting them. Such a plea is as absurd as to ignore Ravana’s action and accuse Sri Rama of disturbing the peace of Lanka. It will certainly be inconvenient and unpalatable to some persons to have those claims challenged but the cause of truth must not be jeopardised by any feeling of false delicacy. On the other hand, every endeavour should be made to examine the materials on which such fanciful claims are made and to

The Acharya of the Kumbhakonam mutt himself presents to several persons and to several libraries such controversial publications; several such books are published with his permission and are dedicated to him; he accepts welcome addresses where these controversial points are specifically referred to: in his own lectures on the life of Sri Sankaracharya he emphasises these points. How then can it be said that he does not interest himself in such propaganda ?

Another correspondent says that such propaganda are based on the authority of **Siva Rahasya** and that an Advaiti who accepted its authority ought not to demur to them. If **Siva Rahasya** is accepted as an authority, it can only mean that what is found there is authority and certainly not that everything said to be found there is also authority. Further just as Sri Sankaracharya is mentioned there, there, is a whole chapter, chapter 17, dealing with Haradattacharya. Reference to the recent Appayya Dikshita also is found there. It is for the readers to decide how much of authority can be ascribed to the passages of this sort.....

It is not correct to say that title of Indra Sarasvati is the monopoly of the Kumbhakonam mutt. This is not dilated upon here as it is not relevant now.

The only way of warding off objections is to stop raising novel and baseless contentions. It is therefore the duty of all pious people to desist from advising the disciples of the Sringeri Mutt and on the other hand to see that no contentions likely to lead to controversies are allowed to rear their heads.

enquire if they have any justification behind them. It is urged further that normal etiquette requires that no fact should be stated even if it is true, if it happens to be unpleasant to some who hear it. It certainly does not lie in the mouth of those who state what is both untrue and unpleasant to urge this moral principle just to smother truth.

Still more recently the advocates of the Kumbhakonam mutt have thought it necessary to intensify their propaganda by starting a journal "Kamakoti Pradipa" specifically for the purpose of justifying and advertising those claims and have enlisted the services particularly of an eminent Pandit who has been persuaded to lend the weight of his eminence and his dialectic skill to this cause. We can well understand their vexation and resentment when their pet bubble is pricked before their very eyes and so the desperate attempts that they are making to stitch it. The Pandit who has agreed to be the tailor in this futile task is using all his skill in fallacious logic, deliberate misinterpretation, meaningless verbiage, irrelevant arguments and finally even vulgar abuse. In spite of these formidable weapons, it is pitiable to find that he has to descend still further to the level of saying that "Heaven" means the "Himalaya" and that "Kashmir" means "Kanchi". Though we may have occasion in the sequel to deal with some of his statements we do not propose to spend our time and energy in refuting all his effusions or doggedly fanciful propositions which rest only upon his assertiveness. Nor is it our purpose to take up the several statements seriatim in the various publications of the mutt including those by Atreya Krishna Sastri, N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu, N. Venkataraman, N. Ramesan, R. Ganapati and others down to the effusions

in the journal mentioned above or in the several testimonial Patrikas which the mutt has collected during its extensive tour. No intelligent reader will find any difficulty in seeing through them and in realising that they are but attempts to confuse the public and to blind it to truth. We propose therefore to confine the scope of this critical note to pointing out the unreliability of the so-called "authorities" on which all these publications are based.

CHAPTER—II

PURANIC SUPPORT

Before considering the validity of the claims put forward by the Kumbhakonam mutt, it will be useful to consider the various “authorities” on which those claims are sought to be based. They generally fall under three classes:

- (1) Puranic literature
- (2) Contemporaneous literature
- (3) Later literature

We shall take them up for consideration in the same order.

It seems to us that the devotees of Sri Madhva-charya first started the idea of claiming for his advent sanction in the Rig Veda and that the admirers of Sri Sankara did not want to lag behind them in finding out passages in the Rig Veda and in the Sri Rudradhyaya of the Yajur Veda which could be interpreted as referring to their own Acharya. The further step of introducing into the voluminous mass of Puranas passages extolling Sri Madhva and condemning Sri Sankara or extolling Sri Sankara and condemning Sri Madhva and so on, according to the whims of the persons' predilection for a particular Acharya, was quite easy. But the votaries in their enthusiastic attempt to raise their Acharyas to such a high level forgot that they were really undermining the authority of the Puranas and other Scriptures into which those pet references found their way. The greatness of the Acharyas does not stand in need of any Puranic support. Such support wherever available does not in the least help to show off their greatness but has the decided effect of detracting from the authority of the Purana wherein it

appears. It is not necessary for our present purpose to canvass the authenticity of the passages now said to be found in the Vayu, Kurma, Saiva, Bhavishyottara and other Puranas or the propriety of the interpretation put upon the passages in the Rig Veda and Sri Rudradhyaya for they are only of a general nature setting forth the divine nature of Sri Sankara and do not in any way advance the peculiar claims of the Kumbhakonam mutt.

The mutt claims Puranic support from two works known as *Siva Rahasya* and *Markandeya Samhita*. It is well known that Sage Vyasa is credited with the authorship of 18 Puranas and also of 18 Upa-puranas. But strangely enough neither of those two works finds a place in any of these 36 Puranas. It is equally well known that *Skanda Purana*, one of the main Puranas, is the most voluminous, so much so it was possible for any small village of quite a recent origin to claim antiquity for it on the strength of a *Sthala Purana* said to be included in the *Skanda*. Similarly this *Siva Rahasya* was first claimed to have been a part of that *Skanda Purana*, but has been since raised to the status of an *Itihasa* evidently to clothe it with an authority equal to *Srimad Ramayana* and *Srimad Mahabharata*. Curiously enough it contains reference not only to Sri Sankaracharya but also to Haradattacharya and others even down to the quite recent Appaya Dikshita.

The *Siva Rahasya Khanda* is a well known genuine portion of *Sankara Samhita* in the *Skanda Purana* and has long ago been printed in Grantha script with the blessings of Mahamahopadhyaya Raju Sastrigal, the famous scholar of Mannargudi in the Tanjore District. It was not therefore possible to claim that the *Siva Rahasya* was identical with that publication; it was not possible also to give it a status as an independent Purana as all the ancient Puranas and Upa-Puranas had all been numbered and classified so that this could not find a place in their midst. Its sponsors were unwilling to class it with the *Atma Purana* of Sri

Sankarananda for then it could not claim to have the sanctity of being the production of ancient Maharishis. To give it therefore the status of an *Arsha Grantha*, it had to be a third *Itihasa*. But the Ramayana and Mahabharata though *Itihasas* were the productions of human authors though they were the eminent Rishis, Valmiki and Vyasa. But for the *Siva Rahasya* no human author is mentioned with the obvious intention of raising it to a higher level of authority than even the well known two Epics. Mr. N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu in his *Sri Sankaracharya and His Kamakoti Peetha* says on page 10 that Sri Sankara proceeded to Kailasa in his human form, praised Siva and received from Him the *Siva Rahasya* among other things and returned to this world. Evidently Lord Siva had a ready made *Siva Rahasya* with Him and handed it over to Sri Sankara so that the latter might use it as a credential to prove that he was really an incarnation of the Lord Himself! Anyhow this statement makes it clear that the work was not known to this mundane world till Sri Sankara brought it down from the celestial regions.

A learned Pandit has taken pains to point out that Sri Kamalakara Bhatta has quoted, in his *Nirnaya Sindhu*, *Siva Rahasya* on three or four occasions, and therefore its ancient character stands proved. But he forgets that Sri Kamalakara Bhatta quotes from the works of his own elder brother, father and grand-father who cannot certainly be considered *ancient* authors and that he does not refer to *Siva Rahasya* as an ancient work. Further the mere fact that *Siva Rahasya* is older than Sri Kamalakara cannot in any way prove that the passages now quoted as from *Siva Rahasya* are genuine. We are not concerned at all with the abstract questions whether a *Siva Rahasya* has existed for some time past but only with the question whether those passages have been there.

The learned Pandit seeks to prove the genuineness of those passages from the fact that they have been quoted in Achyutaraya's *Advaitarajya-Lakshmi* commentary on Madhava's Sankara-Dig-Vijaya in A. D. 1824. Curiously enough, though Achyutaraya is commenting upon Madhava's text that Sri Sankara departed from this world for Kailasa from Kedara, no attempt is made to reconcile this text with the questions wherein Sri Sankara is said to have passed away at Kanchi. This introduction of the *Siva Rahasya* passages which are quite at variance with the original text commented upon is on the face of it very suspicious and is evidently made not with a view to elucidate the text but only with a view to give currency to those passages. Atmabodhendra who is said to have commented upon the Kumbhakonam mutt *Gururatnamalika* in 1720 A. D. refers to a version of *Siva Rahasya* in which some slokas referring to the installation of Sri Sarada at Sringeri are found but does not accept that version as correct. That is, he wants these slokas to be deleted. We find that those slokas *are* deleted in Achyutaraya's commentary. This shows that this commentary was published along with the older *Dindima* commentary of Dhanapati Suri just to confirm the Kumbhakonam mutt version. It is interesting also to note that a Grantha edition printed long ago at Madras contains about 16 stanzas more than what are to be found in the Kumbhakonam mutt version and the publisher has pointed out that the omission is deliberately made with ulterior motives. Any how it is quite clear that there were various versions even before Atmabodhendra. The learned Pandit has chosen also to rely upon some "admissions" by the Sringeri Mutt's agent or disciples. Such "admissions" are quite irrelevant when we have to decide upon the genuineness of an alleged "authoritative" treatise. The learned Pandit further suppresses the fact that though the said "admissions" refers to a *Siva Rahasya* their readings are at variance with the Kumbhakonam versions as they are obviously based on an untruncated and unamended text of *Siva Rahasya*.

The *Siva Rahasya* may be an old enough work and may have gained some popularity and even authority in course of time, sufficient enough to be quoted by later authors. We are not concerned with those aspects but only with the question whether some of the passages said to be found there are genuine and whether, even if they are so found, is it possible to attach any historical or factual importance to any mention of later events in them.

In the particular chapter dealing with Sri Sankaracharya, his birth and achievements are said to be described by Lord Siva Himself to Parvati. The Lord says:

शृणु देवि भविष्यःसद्भक्तानां चरितं कलौ ।	Sloka 3
भविष्यति महादेवि शङ्कराख्यो द्विजोत्तमः ।	15
उपनीतस्तदा मात्रा वेदान् साङ्गान् ग्रहिष्यति ।	16
तदा मातरमामञ्ज्य परिव्राट् स भविष्यति ।	19
तेषामुद्धोधनार्थाय तिष्ये भाष्यं करिष्यति ।	24
अद्वैतमेव सूत्रार्थं प्रमाणेन करिष्यति ।	25

“O Devi, hear the story of the good devotees who will be born in Kaliyuga ”

“O Devi, Best among Brahmanas will be born, one Sankara by name ”

“After Upanayana by his mother, he will learn the Vedas with their auxiliaries ”

“Taking leave of his mother, he will become a Sunnyasi ”

“For the proper understanding of them, he will write a Bhashya in the Kali yuga ”

“He will show with authority that Advaita alone is the purport of the Sutras ”

A few passages later however, the Lord curiously enough forgets that he was speaking about the future and adopts the *past* tense.

Sri Sankara is said to have praised Lord Siva and then

इति शङ्करवाक्येन विश्वेशाख्यादहं तदा ।

Sloka

प्रादुर्बभूव लिङ्गात् स्वादलिङ्गोऽपि महेश्वरि ॥ 35

तमब्रुवं महादेवि प्रणतं यतिनां वरम् । 37

स शङ्करो मां प्रणनाम मस्करी । 45

“Thus by Sankara’s words, I then *appeared* out of the Linga called Visweswara though I am without symbol.”

“O Great Devi, I *said* to that best of Sannyasis who was prostrating before me ”

“That Sannyasi Sankara *prostrated* before me ”

स काञ्च्यामथ सिद्धिमाप ।

“Then he *attained* siddhi at Kanchi ”

Though the last sentence has several variants like :

ततो लोकमवाप शैवम् ॥

ततो नैजमवाप लोकम् ।

स काञ्च्यामथ सिद्धिमवाप शैवम् ।

the past tense is common to all of them. The change from the future tense in the beginning of the chapter to the past tense, the distant past, towards the end betrays a clumsiness inconsistent with its genuineness and betrays also the subconscious feeling of the author that he was really speaking about a distant past.

An attempt is made to justify this past tense as being *arsha*. It is well known that if we find in the Puranas any disregard of the rules of word-formation and the use of tenses it is usually justified as *arsha* just as the “historic present ” is very often even in ordinary literature used to signify past events. The Rishis are of equal status with the Grammarian Panini and are not bound by the rules formulated by him;

and Panini himself exempts Rishis from his jurisdiction. All this is no doubt true. It is equally possible that a modern writer may use ungrammatical forms or confuse the tenses *deliberately* with a view to give his writings an *arsha* sanctity. This may well have been the case with the author of the *Siva Rahasya* passages in question. But the suggestion that he forgot that he was speaking about the future and unconsciously betrayed himself in using the past tense is certainly a more charitable view.

In justification of the use of the past tense in place of the legitimate future tense, the Pandit referred to above draws our attention to chapter 9 of *Srimad Ramayana* where a similar indiscriminate use of the past tense for the future is said to be found. Unfortunately, the passages do not help him in the least. Sumantra tells King Dasaratha what Sanatkumara said to the Rishis long before. When Sumantra reproduces verbatim the words of Sanatkumara as a direct quotation, he uses the future tense.

	Sloka
ऋश्यशृङ्ग इति ख्यातस्तस्य पुत्रो भविष्यति ।	4
वक्ष्यन्ति ते महीपालं ब्राह्मणा वेदपारगाः ।	12
पुरोहितममात्यांश्च प्रेषयिष्यति सत्कृतान् ।	15
वक्ष्यन्ति चिन्तयित्वा ते तस्योपायांश्च तान् क्षमान् ।	17

“ A son well known as Rishyasringa *will* be born to him ”

“ Brahmanas well versed in the Vedas *will* tell the King ”

“ He *will* despatch the priest and ministers well honoured ”

“ After thinking over, they *will* tell him the effective methods ”

that this incident was witnessed not only by the Devi but by the *four* sishyas of Sri Sankara also as they were all with him at that time.

Sloka

शिष्यैश्चतुर्भिश्च युतं भस्मरुद्राक्षभूषणम् ॥

38

This and other passages may have to be referred to later on in another context also. But it is unnecessary to discuss any further their authenticity or their value as “historical evidence.”

The other “ancient” authority advanced by the Kumbhakonam mutt as of Puranic status is a *Markandeya Samhita*. It is not clear whether it is claimed to be a *Purana* or another *Itihasa*. But it is clear that it is not any portion of the well known 18 Puranas or of the 18 Upapuranas. It is said to consist of 100 Khandas and the passages relied are said to be from the 7th and 3th Pariskanda of the 72nd Khanda. We are not aware on what basis the Swamiji of that Mutt says that it forms a portion of *Brahmanda Purana* and that Sri Sankara’s story is in the Third Pariskanda. When the whole work is only imaginary, it is certainly not difficult and is certainly safe to give such exact references. A mere reading of these passages will convince any one that they bear on their very face intrinsic proof of their partisan authorship negating any claim to be classed with “ancient” literature. It is well for the mutt that recent publications do not cite those passages in full for the language, the metre and the contents betray clearly their wanton fabrication. I may cite two sample stanzas wherein respectively those who do not respect the heads of the “Kanchi Peetha” are condemned and those who revere them are promised all kinds of bliss.

श्रीकांचीकामकोटीनिलयशशिकदोत्तंसपूजाधुरीणं

पारीणं श्रीकलायाः परमगुरुपदाधीश्वरं योगिराजम् ।

ये वा नार्चन्ति भूमौ शुभतः परमद्वैतसिद्धान्तमार्गो-

द्योतं श्रीराज्यसिंहासनपदमहो पामरास्ते पतन्ति ॥

कांचीपीठाधिपं ये यतिगतिमखिलाचार्यमाखण्डलश्री-
 संपन्नं पन्नगारिध्वजविधिहरिभिर्भाव्यमानं शरण्यम् ।
 ते सातत्यं रमन्ते कलशजलधिजायुरारोग्ययुक्ताः
 स्थानेष्वानन्दभूमस्वनवगतशुभैश्वर्यभाजो महीपाः ॥

It would appear from these passages that the Sannyasi head of that mutt is verily an object of worship not only to the people of this world but even to Vishnu, Brahma and Indra ! To make it clear that this eminence is not confined to Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada the incarnation of Lord Siva, it is specifically mentioned that it is meant to apply generally to the “ Sannyasis presiding over the seat of the Great Guru. ” It is surprising that the author of such passages did not in the least realise the profanity of such claims.

CHAPTER—III

CONTEMPORARY SUPPORT

Coming to authorities less ancient but “contemporaneous” with Sri Sankaracharya, we are told there are three of that sort.

(1) The first of them is Mathamnaya Setu said to have been written by Sri Sankaracharya himself. A mere reading of it will show that it cannot possibly be attributed to that great Acharya. He is said to have proclaimed

कृते विश्वगुरुब्रह्म त्रेतायामृषिसत्तमः ।

द्वापरे व्यस एव स्यात् कलावत्र भवाग्रहम् ॥

“Brahma was the Jagadguru in the Krita Yuga, the best of Rishis (Dattatreya ?) in the Treta and Vyasa in the Dvapara, In the Kali age now, I am such.”

The spirit of bravado which pervades such a statement is inconceivable of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada. It is sufficient to point out here that this *Mathamnaya Setu*

materially differs from the *Mathamnayas* current throughout India. That the work was brought into existence just to claim for the Kumbhakonam mutt supremacy over the recognised four mutts is quite obvious from its wording. The patent object of such a claim so high-pitched was to get for that mutt at least a recognition as an institution founded by Sri Sankara but the attempt was so clumsy and barefaced that no one took any serious notice of it till the present occupant of that mutt chose to advance that claim once again and secure the support of people subject to or amenable to his influence. No sensible reader will need any argument to realise the baselessness and the absurdity of the claims set out therein. This will have to be referred to again later.

(2) Chitsukha is said to have written a life sketch of Sri Sankara called '*Brihat Sankara Vijaya*'. He is different from the famous Advaita author of that name. This Chitsukha is credited with a prefix Sarvajna and is said to have been born in the same village as Sri Sankara and lived with him throughout his life from birth to death and is therefore claimed to be the most competent person to speak with authority about Sri Sankara.

The commentary on *Gururatnamalika*, the main plank of the Kumbhakonam mutt, describes this Chitsukha thus:—

अनुक्षणं उपवरिताचार्यचरणाः सर्ववृत्ताः तसाक्षिणः

सहजवत् एकाग्रहारोत्पन्ना अजीवं अविग्रहजुषः श्रीसर्वज्ञ -

चित्सुखाचार्याः स्वकृतौ बृहच्छंकरविजये

and quotes several passages said to be found in his work. It is really unfortunate that the mutt has not taken care to preserve this valuable "historical" document when it was so easily available to the commentator to quote from. It is unfortunate also that the several Sankara Vijayas do not mention at all any such intimate friend and follower who did not leave the Acharya's presence even for a second. It would seem that, when Sri Sankara gave up everything and took Sannyasa, he did not give up this village-mate of his, who was evidently calmly looking on when Sankara was in

the grip of the crocodile and appealing to his mother for permission to take Sannyasa. Even Lord Visveswara who was certainly a *Sarvajna* does not seem to have noticed the presence of this gentleman when He appeared out of the Linga at Kasi for the *Siva Rahasya* refers only to the “four sishyas” and makes no mention of him.

This close intimate of Sri Sankara would have it that Sivaguru himself performed his son's upanayana and taught him the Vedas, thereby contradicting not only Madhava but even the *Sivarahasya*, *Vyasachaliya*, *Keralia Sankara Vijaya* and Anandagiri. He is quoted by the mutt Atmabodhendra as saying (p. 26)

शिवगुरुरूपनीय शंकरायै

निगममशेषमथाध्यजीगपत् तम् ।

Chitsukha is again relied upon by Atmabodhendra for the claims of the mutt to a “*Moula Amnaya*” a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi, and the nomination of Sarvajnatma for that mutt, all of which will be duly considered in the sequel.

(3) Anandagiri or Anantanandagiri, as he is variously called, is the author of a *SankaraVijaya* and he also claims to be a Sarvajna and a direct disciple of Sri Sankara.

N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu in his *Sri Sankatacharya and His Kamakoti Peetha* identifies him with Totakacharya, calls his work the *oldest* on the subject and says that it is unpublished. He evidently did not know that it had been published long ago at Calcutta from an old manuscript. N. Venkataraman in his *Sri Sankaracharya and his successors at Kanchi* rightly characterises that work as *valueless and obviously a forgery*,

According to this omniscient Anandagiri, Sri Sankara was born at Chidambaram of Visishta the wife of one Visvajit, flatly contradicting not only all the other

Sankara Vijayas but even the *Sivarahasya* and the *Markandeya Samhita*. In spite of its patent unreliability, the Kumbhakonam mutt is not willing to give it up as it mentions that the Acharya relinquished his body at Kanchi. An “embellished” परिष्कृत्य edition with significant omissions and additions is also in print in Telugu script. The language and the contents of either version bear such clear traces of recent fabrication by unskilled hands that for some time the reliance upon it was being relaxed till quite recently when it is again trotted out as a very authoritative treatise but with readings varying from those two editions also.

The latest book by N. Ramesan supports the authenticity of Anandagiri's work and relies upon the observation of Prof. H. H. Wilson which he quotes as follows:—

“It bears internal evidence of being the composition of a period not far removed from that at which he (Sankara) may be supposed to have flourished and we may, therefore, follow it as a very safe guide.”

His interpretation of “he” as Sankara is his own and has no warrant in the original where it properly applies only to Anandagiri himself.

According to Sri Ramesan, the allegation of the Kumbhakonam math that Sri Sankara was born in 509 B. C. is not correct and he must be assigned the 1st century B. C. or the 1st century A. D. Anandagiri's composition cannot possibly be of a date “not far removed” from that of Sri Sankara as it definitely refers to Sri Ramanujacharya the great Vaishnava Acharya of the 12th century and also to Sri Madvacharya of a later date and quotes from a work of Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha of the 14th century A. D. If Sri Ramesan had read Anandagiri's book, or if his attention had been drawn to these references, he would certainly not have interpreted the “he” in Prof. Wilson's statement as referring to Sri Sankara.

Further, it is patent that Sri Ramesan did not care to verify the quotation supplied to him by somebody else as from Prof. Wilson's book. The actual words used by the Professor are :—

“ Some of the marvels it records of Sankara which the author professes to have seen may be thought to affect its credibility, if not its authenticity, and *either Anandagiri must be an unblushing liar or the book is not his own.* It is however of little consequence, as even if the work be not that of Anandagiri himself, it bears internal and indisputable evidence of being the composition of a period not far removed from that at which he may be supposed to have flourished; and we may therefore follow it as a very safe guide *in our enquiries into the actual state of the Hindu Religion about eight or nine centuries ago.* ”

The italics are mine. This fuller passage clearly shows that the Professor did not in the least attach any historical or factual importance to Anandagiri's work but chose to rely upon it for a very limited purpose. To clip the passage before and after and offer the truncated portion to the public is, to say the least of it, not fair.

The quotation is all the more misleading when this clipped passage is quoted in Appendix B of his book (p. 160) in proof of the authenticity of Anandagiri's work by two Vaishnava “research scholars” and they rely upon this passage for their concluding on the authority of Anandagiri that Kanchi was the place of “the last residence and siddhi of the great Acharya.” Evidently they also did not care to look into Prof. Wilson's book at all for they would have found then that the Professor had not left the matter in any doubt but had definitely stated that Sri Sankara died at Kedarnath in the Himalayas. It is highly to be regretted that they should have lent their names to such publications. As the statements made by them in the Appendix are only a replica of what is stated in the main body of the book which again is only a

re-statement of what the Kumbhakonam mutt people have been saying for some time past, it is not necessary to refute them in detail when we are exposing the entire baselessness of the claims of the mutt.

Doctor Burnell the eminent Sanskritist who was the District Judge of Tanjore and edited a Catalogue of Manuscripts says about this Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya*:

"This seems to be quite a modern work written in the interests of the schismatic Mathas on the Coromandal coast which have renounced obedience to the Sringeri Matha where Sankarachariar's legitimate successor resides."

The only explanation that is offered for this definite statement of Dr. Burnell is that he might have been cheated by somebody else into saying so.

This Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya* is now put forward as the ancient (प्राचीन) and big (बृहत्) *Sankara Vijaya* from which Madhava made a summary. The learned Pandit who advances this theory forgets that the mutt literature hitherto has definitely stated that *Brihat Sankara Vijaya* is by "Chitsuka" and that *Prachina Sankara Vijaya* is by "Muka Sankarendra". I do not see how he can now give the go-bye to those alleged "authorities" and transfer their distinctive epithets to Anandagiri's work. It is worth noting that the Pandit is positive that the opening sloka in Madhaviya

प्रणम्य परमात्मानं श्रीवीद्यातीर्थरूपिणम् ।

प्राचीनशंकरजये सारः संगृह्यते स्फुटम् ॥

is quite a latter addition by some interested persons and that the Pandit at the same time relies upon this sloka for proving that there was a *Prachina Sankara Vijaya* which he wants us to believe was Anandagiri's. Madhava does not make any reference at all to Anandagiri. If reference is made to Anandagiri in the commentaries on the Madhaviya, it can only show that by the time the

commentaries were written an Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya* had gained some currency. Even then, this does not prove the genuineness of the version now being put forward by the Kumbhakonam mutt.

Atmabodhendra does not refer to Anandagiri by name but refers to a work called "Acharya Vijaya" On page 23 he quotes it thus

तथा चोक्तं आचार्यविजये—श्रुत्याचारं परित्यज्य.....इत्यादि
and again on Page 25

आचार्यविजये च " तृतीये वर्षे चौलकर्म पञ्चमे मौञ्जीबन्धं
विध्युक्तितश्चक्रुः विप्रौघाः "

As these passages are found, though with slight variations, in all the versions of Anandagiri, there can be no doubt that he means by Acharya Vijaya the work of Anandagiri. As Anandagiri's statement that Sri Sankara was born at Chidambaram is opposed to all other authorities and also to established tradition, a new reading is now put forward replacing that statement by one that says that Sri Sankara was born at Kalati and that his father was Sivaguru. But it is quite clear that this reading was not in existence when Atmabodhendra wrote. Atmabodhendra would have it that Sivaguru passed away only after the upanayana of his son and, in saying that the Acharya Vijaya also is wrong when it says the contrary, quotes the passage

तृतीये वर्षे चौलकर्म पञ्चमे मौञ्जीबन्धं विध्युक्तितश्चक्रुः विप्रौघाः

as from Acharya Vijaya. It will be noted that this passage only says that Brahmanas performed the upanayana and does not specifically say that Sivaguru was dead at that time. We have definite passages in the new reading that Sivaguru passed away before the upanayana, that his wife performed his obsequies with the help of kinsmen and that she had the upanayana of her son performed thereafter.

उपनीतिमकृवैव ममार महितः पिता ।
 तस्योर्ध्वदेहिंक सावी चकार ज्ञातिभिः समम् ॥
 अथोपनययामास माता तनयमात्मनः ।

If these stanzas were in existence then, how happens it that Atmabodhendra did not quote them but quoted a far less clear passage? This shows beyond doubt that the new reading is an attempt at "improving" the earlier Anandagiri. Further, if Anandagiri was really the prime authority for all later treatises, as is now alleged, will Atmabodhendra have so lightly brushed it aside as unreliable?

Thanks to the kindness of a friend at Banaras, a true copy of the manuscript of the new reading of Anandagiri said to be in the possession of the Taraka Mutt there has been made available. It may be interesting to know how or when it got into that Mutt Library and how it was unearthed after the advent of the Kumbhakonam mutt Swamiji to Banaras but it is not necessary to embark on any such enquiry as the book as it is bears ample evidence of being a later fabrication. Instead of 'improving' the older Anandagiri, it has only emphasised its absurdities and has even added to them. The alterations found in the new reading, instead of proving its being the older and true version, are so clumsy that even the cursory reader can easily recognise the really older text peeping through. Another unimpeachable evidence that these versions are wanton variations from the latter is the fact that Dindima, the commentary on Madhaviya, written at the end of the 18th century quotes only the latter and not the improved versions. In view of the importance now being attached to Anandagiri, I shall do well to allot a separate chapter for exposing its absurdities. I am quite sure that anybody who reads it through will agree entirely with the statement of N. Venkataraman that it is "valueless and obviously a forgery". But the name Anandagiri has a fascination of its own as it was borne by Anandajnana, the well known writer of the glosses on Sri Sankara's Bashyas, who was a Sishya of Suddhananda. It is really surprising

that Anantanandagiri, the “unblushing liar” of Prof. Wilson, is taken by some as identical with that great scholar. We are not concerned with the question whether there was at any time any ancient Anandagiriya Sankara Vijaya. It is sufficient for our present purpose to point out that all the versions now available are unreliable though in varying degrees.

From what has been stated hitherto it will be clear that the “ancient authorities” relied upon by the mutt are neither “ancient” nor “authorities” but are only self-serving statements not entitled to any credence.

CHAPTER—IV

ANANDAGIRIYA

Anantanandagiri, the author of the book usually called Anandagiriya Sankara Vijaya, proclaims himself at the very start as the disciple of Sri Sankara by whose grace he has himself become omniscient. When he says definitely

नमामि शंकराचार्यगुरुगदसरोरुहम् ।
 यस्य प्रसादान्मूढोऽपि सर्वज्ञोऽहं सदाऽस्म्यलम् ॥
 अनन्तानन्दगिरिः अहं अप्रतिहताज्ञस्य भगवतः
 शिष्यः गुरोः अवतारप्रयोजनं वर्णयामि । (ch. 1)

there is no justification for interpreting it to mean that he was not a direct disciple but was only in the line of disciples. At the end of the book also he mentions Sri Sankaracharya as “my Guru.”

इह तु सकललोकैः सेव्यमानो गुरुर्मे विदितसकलवेदः
 शंकराचार्यनामा । (ch. 74)

The matter is placed beyond doubt when he includes himself among the disciples who addressed Sri Sankara (ch. 66)

कदाचित् शिष्याः अनन्तानन्दगिरिमुखा नत्वा इदमूचुः ।

If then he was a disciple of Sri Sankara himself, how happens it that he is able to refer to Sri Ramanujacharya whom he calls Lakshmanacharya and who is, according to him, an incarnation of Sesha and who really lived in the 12th century many centuries after Sri Sankara? How is he able also to quote Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha's work written in the 14th century. He must have been verily a sarvajna to see into the future centuries ahead.

The opening chapter is in the nature of a Table of contents. The second chapter recounts the usual story of Narada reporting to Brahma the degenerated state of Vedic observances in this land at that time and of the appeal to Lord Mahesvara and of the latter's promise to incarnate on earth to resuscitate our religion. On this assurance Brahma returns to his abode. From here onwards the Calcutta edition and the new manuscript vary in their respective accounts of the birth of Sri Sankara. The Calcutta edition says that there was a Brahmana couple at Chidambaram, Sarvajna and Kamakshi by name, that they had a daughter Visishta who was given in marriage to Visvajit, that Visvajit left her and went away to the forest for doing penance, that she was ever worshipping Chidambaresa, that He entered her body through her mouth, that she thereupon became 'pregnant' that the Brahmanas there had the necessary rites performed from the third month of pregnancy treating Chidambaresa as her lord and that a child was born in the tenth month. (Appendix A)

The manuscript however says (Appendix B) that in the Village of Kalati in Kerala there was one Sivaguru, a great scholar famous as "Vidyadhiraja", that Lord Mahesvara entered the body of his wife who in proper time gave birth to a child, that the father passed away before he could perform his son's Upanayana and that it was later on done by the

mother. In the middle of this description, it is mentioned that the father, remembering the boon of the Lord and knowing the shortness of the child's life, did not say a word as he thought of the omniscience and other good factors mentioned by the Lord

शंभोर्वैरमनुस्मृत्य पिता शिवगुरुः किल ॥
 आयुषो हस्ततां जानन्नपि नोवाच किंचन ।
 सर्वज्ञत्वादिसुगुणान् शंभूक्तान् तस्य संस्मरन् ॥

But in the previous slokas there is absolutely no mention of any granting of boons, of the shortness of the life period or of the omniscience etc. This clearly shows that the entire set of stanzas is an adaptation from other sources and is not a part of the original text. Further as the upanayana and even the education of the boy are mentioned in this context itself, the mention of the choulam in the third year and the upanayanam in the fifth year in the next chapter is quite meaningless. Such mention proves beyond doubt that these slokas are later fabrications just to bring Anandagiri in line with the other Sankara Vijayas.

As the Calcutta edition says definitely that the Brahmanas treated the Lord Chidambaresa as the 'Yajamana' when performing the rites and that the lady was ever worshipping Chidambaresa, there may be some propriety in saying, as it does, that the boy resembled Chidambaresa चिदम्बरेश इव विराजमानः । The word Chidambaresa signifies the Lord of Chidambaram where she lived. The Kalati lady however never lived at Chidambaram nor worshipped "Chidambaresa". And yet the manuscript also says that the child was like "Chidambaresa". This only shows that the persons who substituted the slokas at the end of chapter 2 and substituted Kalati for Chidambaram forgot to correct the wording in Chapter 3. The omission to correct it proves beyond doubt that the original text mentioned Chidambaram and not Kalati.

The Kumbhakonam mutt says that the Sankaracharya said to be born at Chidambaram was not the original Sankara but a later successor of his in that mutt. It goes further and says that the father was not away at the time of the birth but had really died three years before. We are grateful to that mutt for not assigning such posthumous birth to Sri Sankara. We cannot complain if it finds pleasure in including in its line of succession a child so born.

A wonderful thing in Anandagiri is that Sri Sankara began to preach Advaita to a host of disciples even before he took Sannyasa and a more wonderful thing is that in the course of that preachings he refers them to his own books.

एतद्विषयप्रपञ्चस्तु बहुधा मदीयेषु ग्रन्थेषु दर्शितः

The new reading makes this statement more absurd by amplifying it so as to include the Bhashyas also in these books.

एतद्विषयप्रपञ्चस्तु बहुधा मदीयेषु ग्रन्थेषु भाष्यादिग्रन्थेषु दर्शितः

The Calcutta edition mentions that after preaching to and blessing the Sishyas Sri Sankara in his eighth year took Sannyasa and had his Upadesa from Govindapada. It does not mention the place where he took Sannyasa.

**एवं अनेकप्रकारेण बहुशिष्यान् धन्यान् कृत्वा अष्टमे
वयसि प्राप्ते श्रीमद्गोविन्दयोगीन्द्रस्य सदुपदेशात् परम-
हंसाश्रमस्वीकारं कृतवन्तः श्रीमच्छंकरभगवत्पादाचार्य-
सर्वज्ञाः**

The new manuscript would like to mention that place as Vyughrapura evidently meaning thereby Chidambaram. It is not improbable that the Calcutta edition meant also the same place and that the omission to name it was due to the fact that the upadesa was at the same place as the place of birth, namely, Chidambaram. When however the place of birth was shifted from Chidambaram to Kalati in the

new reading, it became necessary to say that Sri Sankara went from Kalati to Chidambaram. Opportunity was availed of to introduce the traditional version that Sri Sankara took Apat Sannyasa when his foot was caught by a crocodile and had upadesa from Govindapada later on at a distant place. We have thus the new amplified reading

एवं अनेकप्रकारेण बहुशिष्यान् धन्यान् कृत्वा अष्टमे
वर्षे प्राप्ते निजग्रामसमीपवाहिन्यां नद्यां ग्राहग्रहवशात्
संन्यस्य कालट्याख्यात् निजग्रामात् निर्गत्य श्रीमद्व्याघ्र-
पुरमागत्य तत्र गोविन्दयोगिसदुपदेशात् परमहंसाश्रमं
स्वीकृतवान् श्रीशङ्कराचार्यः ।

Are we then to take it that the mutt has abandoned the well accepted version that Sri Sankara met Govindapada on the banks of the Narmada, a version which is found in the mutt's Gururatnamalika itself and in all the later publications of the mutt including the books of Atreya Krishna Sastri and N. Ramesan? Are we to take it also that the mutt is discrediting its own special authority called Patanjali Charita which says that the meeting place was Badarikasrama? Evidently the object of the new reading is to associate every important event from birth to death including this upadesa with places near Kumbhakonam.

The absurdity of Anandagiri reaches its climax in its description of the interview of Sri Sankara with Sage Vyasa. The latter comes in the garb of an old Brahmana and starts a discussion about a particular Sutra in the Brahma Sutras. As Sri Sankara finds the old man a strong opponent, he is said to have got angry and himself gave a blow on the cheek of Vyasa! Not content with this he is said to have ordered his sishya Padmapada to push the old man down face downwards and throw him out by

his foot! The author of the new reading is so enamoured of this incident that he retains the description intact. Vyasa afraid of being kicked out moves away himself!

न हि निराश्रयाः प्राणाः क्वचित् तिष्ठन्ति गच्छन्ति वा
जीवतोऽदर्शनात् इत्याग्रहेण जल्पतो वृद्धस्य कपोलताडनं
आचकार । परं पद्मपादं निजशिष्यं इदमाह-एनं परपक्षभ्रेष्ठं
वृद्धं अधोमुखं पातयित्वा पादाग्रावलम्बनात् दूरं त्यज इति ।
स तु गुरुमिः एवमुक्तो तूष्णीमास । यतिराङ्वाक्यश्रवणात्
स्वयमेवाशु दूरमगमत् ।

Fortunately for Vyasa, Padmapada kept quiet as he recognised the sage in the old man. Even then Sri Sankara would not believe unless Vyasa appeared in his own form. When he accordingly showed his own form Sri Sankara prostrates before him but curiously enough does not express a single word of regret at his own insulting behaviour. He wants the Sage to witness his own departure from this world as his period of life has expired. The Sage desires that Sri Sankara should stay on in this world for propagating the truth of Advaita and calls down Brahma from the Satya Loka. Brahma blesses Sri Sankara to live on as long as he likes. Vyasa takes the water of sacred Ganges, sprinkles it on Sri Sankara and blesses him to live on for a hundred years. It passes one's understanding why Vyasa had to bless him again after the world creator himself had done it.

यावदिच्छाब्दं उर्यी हि स्थित्वा पश्चात् गमिष्यति ।

are Brahma's words.

इति ब्रह्मवचः श्रुत्वा व्यासः काशीकृतालयः ।

करेणानीय गङ्गाम्बु जीव त्वं शारदां शतम् ॥

इत्युक्त्वा प्रोक्षयामास शङ्कराचार्यमुत्तमम् ।

It is equally un-understandable how in spite of this double blessing Sri Sankara lived only for thirty-two years. What about the hundred years mentioned by Vyasa ?

After meeting Kumarila Bhatta, Sri Sankara starts towards the north with the intention of meeting Mandana Misra. His disciples come with him and musical instruments and professional singers trumpet forth his greatness though the disciples are content with the clapping of hands.

ढक्काशङ्खतालध्वनिभिः जयशब्दैः वन्दिमागधसूतस्तवैः
पद्मपादादिशिष्यकृतकरतालैः दिक्करिकर्णकृहरवधिरत्वं
संपादयन्तः श्रीपरमगुरुप्रमुखाः

It will be noted Padmapada is mentioned here among the sisbyas. The person responsible for the new reading has “improved” this by adding the name of Suresvara also, forgetting that Suresvara was to come into existence only after the defeat of Mandana Misra and his Sannyasa under the name of Suresvara.

ढक्क तालशङ्खध्वनिभिः जयशब्दैः वन्दिमागधसूतस्तवैः
पद्मपादसुरेश्वरादिशिष्यकृतकरतालैः दिक्करिकर्णकोटरबाधां
संपादयन्तः श्रीपरमगुरुप्रमुखाः.....

Prof. Wilson treats Anandagiri as a possible authority on the nature of the religious sects that prevailed at his time. Such an opinion is merely the result of the Professor’s evident want of closer contact with Hindu society. If he had such contact either with the people or with their literature he would have readily seen that most of the sects which Anandagiri speaks of never existed, except in his imagination for the purpose of making his book bulky and seemingly erudite. A mere enumeration of them as mentioned by him will be quite enough to make this clear.

No.	Name	Chapter	No.	Name	Chapter
1.	Saivamata	4	30.	Kubera	32
2.	„ Ekadesi	5	31.	Indra	33
3.	Bhagavata	6	32.	Yama	34
4.	Vaishnava	7	33.	Varuna	35
5.	Pancharatra	8	34.	Vayu	„
6.	Vaikhana	9	35.	Bhumi	„
7.	Karmahina Vaishnava	10	36.	Tirtha	„
8.	Hiranyagarbha	11	37.	Sunya	36
9.	Agnivadi	12	38.	Varaha	37
10.	Soura	13	39.	Loka	38
11.	Ganapati	14	40.	Guna	39
12.	„ Ekadesi	16	41.	Sankhya	40
13.	„ Uchchishta	17	42.	Yoga	41
14.	„ Navanita	18	43.	Peelu	42
15.	„ Svarna	„	44.	Karma	43
16.	„ Santana	„	45.	Chandra	44
17.	Sakti	19	46.	Angaraka	45
18.	„ Ekadesi	20	47.	Budha	„
19.	„ another	21	48.	Guru	„
20.	„ „	22	49.	Bhrigu	„
21.	Kapalika	23	50.	Manda	„
22.	„ Ekadesi	24	51.	Rahu	„
23.	Charwaka	25	52.	Kshapanaka	46
24.	Sougata	26	53.	Pitru	47
25.	Jaina	27	54.	Sesha	48
26.	Bouddha	28	55.	Garuda	„
27.	Mallari	29	56.	Siddha	„
28.	Vishvaksena	30	57.	Gandharva	50
29.	Manmatha	31	58.	Bhutavetala	51

If the status of a sect were to be given to all those who worship any particular aspect of God or any particular power of His, even then the number of sects will be infinite; if we come lower down to those who have faith in the lesser Gods and even in lesser semi-celestial or malignant beings, the number will be more infinite. It may be that Kubera, Yama, the planetary deities and others in Anandagiri's list are objects of worship on particular occasions but to raise such worship to the status of a "Mata" which Sri Sankara felt called upon to refute is, on the fact of it, absurd. It is the refutation of these "Matas" that occupy the major portion of the book.

Evidently to prove that Sri Sankara was verily a Shanmata Sthapanacharya, the Establisher of the Six Faiths, he is said to have sent out his several sishyas in the several directions of land to establish such faiths for the benefit of

those who were not competent for the highest stage of Advaita realisation. Any casual reader will realise that this story is purely imaginary and has no basis in fact. The absurdity is heightened by the fact that Anandagiri mentions Lakshmanacharya and Hastamalaka as going out to preach Vaishnava cults. It is well known that the followers of Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhva claim that they are respectively the incarnation of Adi Sesha and Vayu. The Calcutta edition therefore mentions that they were so born. I do not know why the new reading says that they are the incarnations of Sesha and Vasuki. "Vasuki" is evidently a mistake for "Vayu". Anyhow the description of their mission makes it clear that Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhva are alone meant by Anandagiri.

महीपूर्वभागं लक्ष्मणाचार्यः किल दिग्विजयं कृत्वा
कांश्चित् ब्राह्मणादीन् छिद्रोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रधारणशङ्खचक्राङ्गभासुर-
भुजयुगलान् कृत्वा बहुशिष्यसमेतः पुनरागत्य परमगुरुचरणं
नत्वा तदनुज्ञावशात् मतविजृम्भणहेतुकं भाष्यादिग्रन्थ-
चयमकरोत् ।

हस्तामलकस्तु भूमध्यात् पश्चिमखण्डदिग्विजयं कृत्वा
पञ्चमुद्राङ्कितविराजितान् भगवदष्टाक्षरमन्त्रजपासक्तान्
कांश्चीत् ब्राह्मणादीन् कृत्वा रजतपीठस्थलेषु कृष्णादिप्रतिष्ठां
कृत्वा स्वकृतं विज्ञापयितुं पुनः परमगुरुं प्राप ।

It is absurd to say that Sri Ramanuja preached at the instance of Sri Sankara and that Sri Madhva also not only preached but established Sri Krishna at Udipi at his instance. The very fact that in their works they have taken cudgels against Sri Sankara is enough to falsify this story apart from the glaring anachronism. It is still more absurd to say that they were made Sannyasis by Sri Sankara himself and this was just before they were sent out by him to propagate Vaishnavism.

“ समीचीने लक्ष्मण, हस्तामलक, युवां ब्रह्मचारिणौ
किल, मतकल्पनाय स्वीकुरुतं ” इति । तौ अत्यन्तसंतोष-
चित्तौ तदानीमेव परमगुरुरूपदेशवशात् सन्यासिनौ
भवतः स्म ।

And yet we are asked by the Kumbhakonam mutt to accept Anandagiri as a “very safe guide” on the authority of a passage misquoted from Prof. Wilson. Even according to Anandagiri, Hastamalaka was a sishya of Sri Sankara even before the latter started on his tour of conquest and is mentioned along with Padmapada and others (ch. 4). Did he remain a bachelor till almost the end of Sri Sankara’s life?

Anandagiri would have it that it was from Kanchi that Sri Sankara despatched the sishyas and that they all returned there to report about the successful carrying out of the missions entrusted to them. But in the concluding chapter he forgets the latter position and says that Sri Sankara passed away after sending away his Sishyas to various parts; can it be that Sri Sankara sent them away again so that he might pass away quietly? The method of his passing away, as described by Anandagiri, is a very curious one unknown to the Sastras. He is said to “have dissolved his physical body into the subtle body and become *Sat*, then dissolved the subtle body into the causal body and became *Chit* of the size of a thumb, then got the full bliss in the presence of God and then became Consciousness pervading the entire universe and he remains as such even now”

ततः परं सर्वज्ञः सकलगुरुः आचार्यः स्वशिष्यान्
परमतकालानलादीन् यतीन् तदन्यांश्च तत्र तत्र विषयेषु
प्रेषयित्वा स्वयं स्वेच्छया स्वलोकं गन्तुमिच्छुः काञ्चीनगरे
मुक्तिस्थले कदाचिदुपविश्य स्थूलशरीरं सूक्ष्मे ऽन्तर्धाय
सद्रूपो भूत्वा सूक्ष्म कारणे विलीनं कृत्वा चिन्मात्रो भूत्वा
अंगुष्ठपुरुषः तदुपरि पूर्णं अखण्डमण्डलाकारं आनन्दं
ईश्वरसंनिधौ प्राप्य सर्वजगद्व्यापकं चैतन्यमभवत् ।
सर्वव्यापकचैतन्यरूपेण अद्यापि तिष्ठति ॥

It is not clear why he became the universal consciousness when he intended only to return to his own loka. The later sentences describe how his body was interred in a pit, the final rites and the feeding of Brahmanas on a lavish scale. The new reading chooses to omit these sentences evidently out of the apprehension that the ordinary reader may be curious to know where that pit was at Kanchi and why the place of interment has not secured the fame and sanctity as the last resting place of the great Teacher. To obviate such inconvenient questions, the mutt is now giving out that he simply disappeared without leaving any mortal remains behind.

Not satisfied with giving a birth place and also a place of Upadesa at Chidambaram and assigning to Kanchi a standing as the place from which Sri Sankara sent out his disciples and where he passed away, the authors of the improved versions have sought to introduce into Anandagiri the story of the five Lingas brought by Sri Sankara from the Lord of Kailasa Himself and the founding of a mutt at Kanchi with Suresvara as its Head necessitating the assignment of somebody else for Sringeri. That these new factors are not found in the Calcutta edition but are deliberate fabrications just to invest the mutt with an air of importance and ancientness will be shown in the proper context in the later chapters. It is not necessary to deal with them now.

The considerations which we have drawn attention to here will convince any impartial reader that Anandagiri on the whole, and the improved versions in particular, are all quite unreliable and have to be thrown aside if anybody wants to get at the real life history of Sri Sankara. It may be that there was once a genuine Anandagiriya Sankara Vijaya from which Dhanapati Suri the author of the Dindima Commentary on Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya was able to quote extensively as he does in his commentary particularly on ch. 15. But the versions now put forward are only parodies of the same though they may contain some passages

taken from it or some extracts from it. Their partisan nature is so patent that they have to be discarded as “valueless and obviously a forgery” as characterised by N. Venkataraman in his book on the “Kanchi” succession.

CHAPTER—V

KAVYA SUPPORT

(1) Ramabhadra Dikshita the author of the well known Drama *Janaki Parinaya* is said to have written a Kavya called *Patanjali Charitam*. It has been published in the Kavyamala series at Bombay from a manuscript sent from the Tanjore District. It recounts a folk-tale that Sage Patanjali took his original form of the thousand headed Adishesha and taught his Vyakarana Mahabhashya simultaneously to a thousand sishtyas seated on the other side of a curtain dropped between himself and the sishtyas to save them from his venomous breath, that curiosity impelled them to lift the curtain with the result that all of them were reduced to ashes, that a disciple who had gone out without the sage’s permission returned soon after this incident and was cursed by the teacher to become a Brahmarakshasa but was assured redemption when he taught to a competent disciple what all he had learned, that such a disciple was found in one Chandragupta who after his studies under the Brahmarakshasa married maidens from each one of the four castes and begot respectively four sons, Vararuchi, Vikramaditya, Bhatti and Bhartruhari.

This tale, which ascribes to the disciple the name of Gupta which will not fit in with his caste as a Brahmana, attributes to him marriages outside his own caste which are expressly prohibited in the Dharma Sastras for Kaliyuga, describes him as secretly teaching the Vedanga Vyakarana to

his Sudra-born son though he knew that it was not sanctioned by the Sastras and makes Vararuchi and others who evidently belonged to different epochs of time not only contemporaries but even brothers, is accepted as history. A poet is certainly quite free to weave a poem out of anything but it does not mean that we must accept his poem as a historical document.

Further, we are asked to accept on the authority of the Kumbhakonam mutt that it was that Brahmarakshasa that became Goudapadacharya later in life! Unfortunately this Kavya itself negatives such an identification. It definitely says that after teaching the disciple the Brahmarakshasa gave up his terrible form and got a celestial form and ascended to heaven.

अथ ... रक्षोवपुरपहाय स दिव्यमूर्तिरासीत् ॥ V, 34

व्रज सुखमवनौ कुरु प्रचारं

भुजगकृतेरिति तं स शेषशिष्यः ।

दिवमगमदुदीर्य सोऽपि बद्ध्वा

वटदलसंचयमंशुके प्रतस्थे ॥ V, 35

Then he left his Rakshasa form and got a celestial form. That disciple of Sesha after telling him "Go forth happily and propagate the work of Sesha in the world" went to heaven. The other also bundled up in his cloth the leaves of the Banyan tree (on which he had written the Bhashya with his finger nail) and left the place.

The Brahmarakshasa's study of Vyakarana itself was incomplete. Even granting that he was a perfect master of that science, there is no indication at all that he had any kind of spiritual learning or even spiritual leaning. Even if he had, in as much as he went to heaven immediately after teaching Chandragupta, when had he the occasion at all to learn Vedanta? When had he the time

or the opportunity to become such a profound scholar as Goudapadacharya? To get over this definite statement in this Kavya itself, a learned Pandit has recently come forward with a strange and bold suggestion that the word "heaven" does not mean heaven but only the "Himalayas" which may be compared to heaven! What prevented Ramabhadra Dikshita from mentioning the Himalayas explicitly and made him use the word "heaven" if he meant only the Himalayas and why did he leave it to a modern Pandit to explain his meaning to the world some centuries later? It is to be much regretted that Pandits of this stamp are not above the temptation to lend their names to such absurd suggestions.

In-support of this suggestion that Goudapada was the Brahmarakshasa who was the disciple of Adishesha, the Pandit relies upon *Vyasachaliya Sankara Vijaya* which work we shall consider later on. Assuming for the moment that that work is a genuine one, we shall try to understand the passages quoted by the Pandit and deliberately sought to be misinterpreted.

व्यासः पराशरसुतः किल सत्यवत्यां
तस्यात्मजः शुकमुनिः प्रथितानुभावः ।
तच्छिष्यतामुपगतः किल गौडपादो
गोविन्दनाथमुनिरस्य च शिष्यभूतः ॥ IV, 63

"Vyasa was the son of Parasara by Satyavati. His son was the Sage Suka the famous Seer. Goudapada became his sishya. And Sage Govindanatha was his disciple."

शुश्राव तस्य निकटे किल शास्त्रजालं
यश्चाभृणोद्भुजगसङ्गतस्त्वनन्तात् ।
शब्दाम्बुराशिमखिलं समग्रं विधाय
यश्चाखिलानि भुवनानि विभर्ति मूर्ध्नि ॥ IV, 64

“ He learnt the group of Sastras from him *who* went to the Lord of the Serpents Ananta and learned from him the entire ocean-like Vyakarana on a stipulation and *who* bears on his head all the worlds.”

The Pandit wants us to relate the “ *he* ” to Govindapada, the first “ *him* ” and the first “ *who* ” to Goudapada and the second “ *who* ” to Ananta ignoring entirely the *and*. These two slokas of “ *Vyasachaliya* ” are identical with slokas 105 and 106 of *Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya*. Chap. V. The latter have been commented upon by Dhanapati Suri. His commentary on the second sloka is as follows :—

तस्य गोविन्दनाथमुनेः समीपे शास्त्रकदम्बं श्रीशंकर
शुश्राव । यश्च गोविन्दनाथः शेषालयं गतो “ भवदीयं
शास्त्रं भूतले प्रवर्तयिष्ये ” इति संकेतं विधाय शब्दशास्त्र-
समुद्रं शेषादशृणोत् । यश्चानन्तो निखिलानि भुवनानि
शिरसा धारयति ॥

“ In the proximity of that sage Govindanatha, Sri Sankara learned the group of Sastras which Govindanatha went to the abode of Sesha and on the arrangement ‘ I shall spread your sastra on earth ’ learnt from Sesha the ocean of the science of sounds and who as Ananta is carrying on his head all the worlds. ”

This can only mean that either Govindanatha, as Govindanatha, went to the abode of Sesha and learnt the science, or Govindanatha in his previous incarnation as Patanjali went to that region to learn the science from Sesha. There is no room at all for introducing Goudapada in this context. To enable him to do so, the Pandit says that the clear and definite sloka of Madhava that it was Patanjali or Govindanatha that went there, namely,

उरगपतिमुखादधीत्य साक्षात्
 स्वयमवनेर्विवरं प्रविश्य येन ।
 प्रकटितमचलातले सयोगं
 जगदुपकारपरेण शब्दभाष्यम् ॥ V. 96

“Who entered the hole in the earth and learning directly from the mouth of the Lord of Serpents published on the earth the Sabda Bhashya and also Yoga for the benefit of the world”.

is due to a “misconception” on the part of Madhava. To support this theory again, he has to misinterpret also a sloka found in his own authority *Sankarabhyudaya*. It places beyond all doubt that it was Govindapada that went to the lower world.

शिष्यं शुकर्षिशिष्यस्य गौडपादयतीशितुः ।
 गोविन्दभगवत्पादं गुरुमग्रे ददर्श सः ॥
 पातालतलमाविश्य फणाघरशिखामणेः ।
 येन व्याकरणं कृत्स्नं योगेन सह साधितम् ॥
 तस्य प्रसादमासाद्य तत्तादृशश्रयानिधेः ।
 संन्यासगृह्यविहितं सर्वं कर्मचरत् सुधीः ॥ I 53-55

“He saw before him the Gurú Govindabagavatpada who was the sishya of the Saint Goudapada the Sishya of Rishi Suka and who entered the region of Patala and obtained the entire Vyakarana along with Yoga from the best of Serpents. By the grace of that store of mercy, he learnt all the rules relating to Sannyasa and observed them.”

The pandit wants the description in the second sloka to be applied not to Govindapada but to Goudapada. But it will be readily seen that the second and third slokas go to-

gether. Even the ordinary rules of syntax seem to have no weight with him.

Apart from the fact that there is no tradition or evidence to show that Goudopada ever went to Patala or learnt from Sesha, there is the positive evidence of the *Patanjali Charita* itself that he never went there and never had any need to learn. If he were the disciple turned later on into a Brahmarakshasa, it was on the earth that he learnt Vyakarana from Sesha, and not in the under world. As he had to go away in the middle of the exposition, it might be urged that to learn the remainder of the Sastra he had to pursue to Patala. Did he go there as a Brahmarakshasa? The *Patanjali Charita* is explicit that soon after cursing him Sesha cooled down and

व्याकरणमहाभाष्यं मत्कृतमखिलं मत्प्रसादात् ते ।

स्फुटं यथेष्टं ग्राहीत्युक्त्वा तमृषिस्तिरोदधे सहसा ॥ V, 24

“Saying to him ‘The entire *Vyakarana Mahabhashya* written by me will flash to you by my grace. Go as you please’ he disappeared immediately.”

If the disciple who so favoured with the knowledge of the entire Sastra by a flash, there was certainly no need for him to seek Sesha again in another world. As already stated, he went to heaven as soon as he ceased to be a Brahmarakshasa.

Further, Madhava’s passage and the *Sankarabh-yudaya* passage club Yoga with Vyakarana. It is only Patanjali that was proficient in both, wrote the *Yoga Sutras* and the *Vyakarana Mahabhashya*. The passages necessarily apply only to Patanjali who in a later incarnation was known as Govindapada and cannot apply to Goudapada equates him with Patanjali who learnt from

Sesha in the latter's abode and with Ananta the supporter of the worlds.

A minor objection is raised that, if Patanjali or Govindapada is to be taken as the person who went down to learn from Sesha, it will amount to saying that he went to learn from himself for they were all identical in essence. If this objection had any validity, Sri Sankara could not have been blessed or commanded either by Lord Visvesvara at Kasi or by Lord Siva at Kailasa; Arjuna could not have gone to Svarga and been honoured by Indra. Yudhishtira could not have gone to Heaven and been welcomed by Dharmaraja. Such an objection entirely ignores the nature of Avataras.

It is allged further that it was the Brahmarakshasa's disciple that became later on known as Govindapada, It has been pointed out before that his very name Chandragupth is inconsistent with his being a Brahmana and that his action in marrying wives from the four castes and his clandestinely teaching his Sudra-born son are inconsistent with the Sastras. It is but blasphemy to equate him with Govindapada. It would certainly be a very pititable state if the saintly author of the *Mahabhashya* himself had to learn fragments of it from a disobedient Sishaya of his own, whom he himself had cursed to assume the form of a Brahmarakshasa, that he had to note down these fragments]also on banyan leaves with his finger-mud to the dictation of the Brahmarakshasa, that he was foolish enough to sleep with the]bundle of those leaves for his pillow, that a lamb or a calf nibbled at it and pulled it away, that he had to be content with what portions he could rescue out of its mouth and that the *Mahabhashya* had remained incomplete in the portions eaten away by that animal. If this disciple was capable of turning out to be a Govindapada, would he not have easily supplied the eaten away portions,

even if he were not an incarnation of Sesha himself. It may be an interesting tale good enough for children but nobody with any regard for the Sastras or respect for the saintly personages involved can accept it as truth. In fact nothing can be profaner than such patently absurd concoctions. Yet the present Acharya of the Kumbhakonam mutt chooses to rely upon his mutt literature and preaches such tales as history to a credulous audience.

Quite abruptly and without any previous reference to him in the prior portions of *Patanjali Charita*, Sri Sankara is introduced in the 17th stanza of the last and 8th Sarga and the next two slokas are copies of slokas 87 and 20 of *Madhaviya Sankara Viyaya*, chapter V. Similarly slokas 45 and 46 correspond to the latter's chapter VI, slokas 54 and 55 the eleven slokas 60 to 70 are the same as the latter's chapter VI, 57 to 59 and chapter V, 91 to 95 and 98 to 101. The Pandit is doggedly assertive that it was Madhava that had stolen from *Patanjali Charita*. I need but refer to a single fact to show that his assertion is baseless and that really the plagiarism is the other way out. I have already stated that, according to the *Patanjali Charita*, except the Brahmarakshasa Sishya all the others were burnt to ashes and that the further propagation of the *Mahdbhasya* was only through that Brahmarakshasa Madhava does not accept or recount that story. According to him, Sesha seeing that his thousand-hooded form was an object of fear to his Sishyas assumed a human form on earth with a single face as Patanjali and taught his disciples.

दृष्ट्वा पुरा निजसहस्रमुखीमभैषु-

रन्तेवसन्त इति तामपहाय भूयः ।

एकाननेन भुवि यस्त्ववतीर्य शिष्यान्

अन्वग्रहीन्ननु स एव पतञ्जलिस्त्वम् ॥ V, 95

"Seeing that long ago the Sishyas were afraid of your form with a thousand mouths, you relinquished it and

then descended on earth with a single face and blessed the Sishyas. You are certainly the same Patanjali."

No question on of *being afraid* can arise if the Sishyas were instantaneously reduced to ashes nor any possibility of their being blessed thereafter. Evidently the person responsible for grafting this *Madhaviya* sloka intact into the *Patanjali Charita* as ch. VIII, 66th slaka, did not notice that it was inconsistent with the story in an earlier chapter. The Pandit with rare resourcefulness interprets this stanza as "you Govindapada who *in your Purnastama was born as Chandragupta* and blessed the sishyas are Patanjali himself"; the portion shown by me in italics has no warrant in the original.

In spite of the various bristling inconsistencies the Pandit wants his interpretation to be accepted throwing overboard the straightforward natural meaning of the passages and his own "authorities" which he relies upon for other purposes.

It is not necessary for us to show that Ramabhadra Dikshita did not write this Kavya. It does not matter in the least who wrote it, It is sufficient for us that there is ample material from which we can conclude that the statements there are unworthy of being treated as history and that the passages which are common to it and to *Madhaviya* fit in with the latter and not with the former. The entire life of Sri Sankara after his meeting Sri Govindapada is condensed in a single stanza at the end of the Kavya.

गोविन्ददेशिकमुपास्य चिराय भक्त्या
तस्मिन्स्थिते निजमहिम्नि विजित्य
अद्वैतभाष्यमुपकल्प्य दिशो विजित्य
काञ्चीपुरे स्थितिमवाप स शंकरार्यः ॥ VIII, 71

"After serving Guru Govinda long and with devotion and when he having freedom from embodiment resumed his own glory, that Sankararya wrote the Advaita Bhashya, conquered the directions and got a stay at Kanchipura."

This conciseness is itself suspicious as the author of this passage seems more anxious to drag in Kanchi than to describe Sri Sankara's greatness. Another curious circumstance is this. It is well known that Sri Sankara took *apat Sannyasa*, was in a hurry to regularise it by taking *upadesa* from a competent Guru and hastened to feet of Govindapada. In this *Patanjali Charita* Govindapada is not on the banks of the Narmada but at far away Badarikasrama; Sri Sankara goes to him very leisurely *after* visiting Kasi and getting from Lord Visveswara there the ability to comment on the *Vedanta Sutrās*. I shall have to refer to this Kavya again later on.

(2) The case of *Sankarabhyudaya* attributed to Rajachudamani Dikshita is more interesting. We are not concerned with the question whether the Dikshita was a great man or whether he did or did not write a *Sankarabhyudaya*. The only relevant question is whether the *Sankarabhyudaya* put forward by the mutt is a genuine work and whether, even if it is, it can be relied upon as a historical work. It was published in the Sanskrit Journal *Sahridaya* years ago. It is not clear wherefrom the manuscript was obtained but it is known that the 7th and 8th sargas were supplied by the Kumbhakonam mutt. The Kavya is evidently incomplete. The correspondence between the slokas in this work and those in *Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya* is not only striking but painfully astonishing. 3 slokas in Sarga 1, 44 in Sarga 2, 33 in Sarga 3, 66 in Sarga 4, and 3 in Sarga 7 are found in *Madhaviya*. Thus the Slokas in common amount to 145 in all. It is quite patent that this Kavya was published years after the *Madhaviya* just to discredit the authenticity of the latter. Still more recently a *Sankara Bhagavatpada Saptati* has been published from the "Miscellaneous papers" said to have been found in the Tanjore Sarasvathi Mahal Library, which also reproduce very many slokas from the *Madhaviya*; the existence of another *Saptati* is also postulated. The evident object of these new moves is also the same. But even any ordinary reader can

easily judge for himself in which the slokas fit in naturally with the context and who had copied from whom. The observations made above apply equally to the *Vyasachaliya Sankara Vijaya*, another recent publication which we shall now take up for consideration.

CHAPTER—VI

VYASACHALIYA

A *Sankara Vijaya* attributed to one Vyasachala has recently been published by the Madras Manuscripts Library. In the introduction thereto, the Curator has, for reasons best known to himself, taken pains to recount the story of Sri Sankara as propounded by the Kumbhakonam mutt and *not* as told in that publication. The author is claimed to be the same as Mahadevendra Sarasvathi the 52nd Acharya of that mutt from 1498—1507 A. D. He is said to have performed severe penance in a cave in a mountain called Vyasachala and earned that name for himself. Even the *Gururatnamalika* does not assign this alternative name to Mahadevendra Sarasvati who is mentioned in its 82nd sloka ; Atmabodhendra also does not mention this in his Commentary thereon. The Editor rightly adds a note “it is rather strange that Vyasachala who was a head of the Kanchi Kamakoti Matt has not even mentioned by name that Math the life of the founder of which is described in this work.” This can only mean that Vyasachala was not the head of that Math or that there was no such Math at all when “Vyasachala” wrote.

In proof of its "ancient" character the Charator puts forward some considerations which however will not bear the slightest scrutiny. First, he mentions that *Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya* attests it in a verse in its introductory chapter

व्यासाचलप्रमुखपूर्विकपण्डितमा-

भृत्संभृतोच्चतरकाव्यतरोः सुगूढात् ।

विद्वन्मधुव्रतसुस्वोरुरसानि सर्वा

ण्यादातुमर्थकुसुमान्यहमक्षमोऽस्मि ॥

Unfortunately such a stanza is *not* found at all in any of the printed editions in the several scripts of India till now nor in any of the manuscripts in the land including a very old cadjan manuscript in my own possession which I secured years ago from the heirs of a learned scholar of old. A modern Pandit urges that this sloka and also another

यत्नादुदल्पधिषणासृणिना ग्रहीतुं

शक्यं तदत्र सरसं सकलं गृहीत्वा ।

कांचिन्महेश्वरगुरुस्मृतिभिन्नमोहः

संक्षेपशंकरजयस्रजमातनोमि ॥

are found in manuscript D. 12174 of the Madras Government Manuscripts Library, and that the omission of these two slokas must be due to the carelessness of the copyists and that the omission of the Commentators also to comment on these two slokas must be due to the omission in the texts supplied to them. When we remember that one of the Commentators was from Maharashtra and the other was from the Punjab, and that *Madhaviya* has been in print for more than a century without these slokas, the explanation offered by the Pandit is too big a pill to be swallowed by ordinary people. The more reasonable explanation will be that persons bent upon launching the *Vyasachaliya* as an *ancient* work have introduced these

slokas into an existing manuscript or got up a manuscript with these slokas and taking advantage of the fact that the Government was keen upon collecting manuscripts for their Library thought it a good opportunity to give it a berth in that Library. It is well known that the existence of a manuscript in any modern library is no proof at all of its genuineness or of its ancient nature.

Secondly, the Editor says that Govindanatha in his *Sankaracharya Charita* “refers to Vyasachala with great respect” in the stanza :

सर्वागमास्पदं वन्दे व्यासाचमिमं कविम् ।
बभूव शंकराचार्यकीर्तिकलोलिनि यतः ॥

As a third reason, the Editor points out that the *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya* “praises the poet Vyasachala in high terms.”

अयुन्नतस्य काव्यद्रोव्यासाचलमहीम्हः ।
अर्थप्रसूनाय दत्तुमसमर्थोऽहं द्रुतम् ॥

Evidently the Editor who advances these as *two* independent authorities is not aware of the fact that the *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya* is the same as Govindanatha's *Sankaracharya Charita* and that both these slokas are contiguous slokas 6 and 7 in chapter I of the same book. If Vyasachala was a Sannyasi or the head of a Mutt, Govindanatha would not certainly have called him Vyasachala *Kuvi*. It is interesting to note that the two slokas stated to be found in the new Madhaviya manuscript are only a paraphrase of the latter sloka of Govindanatha and evidently based upon it also:

It is clear from a reading of Govindanatha's work that he has his own version to give of Sankara's life according to

his own taste for he would have Sri Sankara depart from this world at Tiruchur in the Kerala State and would ascribe to even Padmapadacharya, accepted on all hands to be a native of the Chola country, a village called Kunda in that state itself. That is, he adapts the story to his local patriotism. A deeper study will make it clear that his reference to Vyasachala Kavi, an earlier biographer of Sri Sankara, cannot be to the author of the *Vyasachaliya* now published but only to the Vyasachala Kavi who was identical with Madhava the author of *Madhaviya Sankara Viiaya* as will be shown presently. The new *Vyasachaliya* does not mention anywhere that Visvarupa was an Avatara of Brahma; it is specifically stated in *Madhaviya*. When Govindanatha also identifies Visvarupa as an *amsa* of Brahma, it necessarily follows that he had only Madhaviya in his mind and not the *Vyasachaliya* now seeing the light of day.

विधातुरंशभूतस्य विश्वरूपस्य ... IV, 28

विरिञ्चांशो विश्वरूपो V, 42

विश्वरूपं विरिञ्चांशं ... V, 64

It will be well to remember in this context that according to the *Vyasachaliya*, Mandana Misra was a person quite different from Visvarupa and that according to the Kumbhakonam mutt Visvarupa was an incarnation of Yama and Mandana Misra of Brahma! According to the *Madhaviya* however, Mandana Misra is identical with Visvarupa and is thus an incarnation of Brahma. Govindanatha does not mention the name of Mandana Misra; he calls however Visvarupa as an incarnation of Brahma and the husband of Sarasvathi in her human form. If the Kumbhakonam mutt suggestion were to be accepted, we would be faced with the absurd idea of a Sarasvathi incarnate being the wife of a Yama incarnate. It is patent therefore that if Govindanatha follows any authority it is only Madhava whom he calls Vyasachala Kavi.

The fourth reason to support the authenticity of *Vyasachaliya* is stated by the Editor to be “the greatness of the work is expressly stated by Madhavacharya in the first sarga itself” and he quotes the sloka

नेता यत्रोल्लसति भगवत्पादसंज्ञो महेशः
 शान्तिर्यत्र प्रकवति रसः शेषवानुज्ज्वलाद्यैः ।
 यत्राविद्याक्षतिरपि फलं तस्य काव्यस्य कर्ता
 धन्यो व्यासाचलकविवस्तःकृतिज्ञाश्च धन्याः ॥

This “reason” is based upon an entire misconception of the context in which this sloka appears and of its real meaning.

“Blessed is Vyasachala Kavi the author of the Kavya where the hero is Bhagavatpada, the leading sentiment is *santi* and the result is the eradication of Ignorance ; and blessed are those who study it.”

Both the Commentators on this sloka are agreed in saying that Madhava refers to himself here as Vyasachala Kavi. The Curator and the Pandit mentioned above would have us throw overboard those Commentaries and accept their ipse dixit that it refers to a Vyasachala Kavi who preceded Madhava. But the very next stanza and those following it show beyond any possibility of doubt that the Kavya referred to in this stanza is Madhaviya itself.

तत्रादिम उपोद्धातो द्वितीये तु तदुद्भवः ।
 तृतीये तत्तदमृताब्धोऽवतारनिरूपणम् ॥

 षोडशे शारदापीठवासस्तस्य महात्मनः ।
 इति षोडशभिः सर्गैर्व्युत्पाद्या शांकरी कथा ॥

“In that Kavya, the first chapter is introductory and in the second the birth of Sankara and in the third the

descent of the several Gods are described.....
 ...His residing at Sarada Peetha is in the sixteenth chapter. Thus in sixteen chapters the story of Sankara is to be delineated." [The *Vyasachaliya* now published has only 12 chapters. The words "In that" can therefore possibly refer only to the *Madhaviya* which has 16 chapters, and cannot relate to the new *Vyascchaliya*]

That the author of *Gururatnamalika* and its Commentator Atmabodhendra identified Vyasachala with Madhava is beyond possibility of contradiction. Sloka 20 of *Gururatnamalika* refers to Lord Visvanatha appearing before Sri Sankara in the garb of a Chandala

कुहनान्त्यजविश्वनाथसृष्टः...

The Commentary has

कुहनान्त्यजेन कण्टकाण्डालरूपिणा विश्वनाथेन
 विश्वेश्वरेण सृष्टः, सृजिः प्रेरणार्थः, प्रेरित इति यावत् । . .
 विस्तृतमिदं वशासाचलीये —

सोऽन्त्यजं पथि निरीक्ष्य चतुर्भिः
 भीषणैः श्वभिरनुव्रतमारात् ।
 गच्छ दूरमिति तं निजगाद
 प्रयुवाच स च शंकरमेनम् ॥

... ..and so on; in all 28
 Slokas ending with

एवमेनमनुगृह्य कृपावान्
 आगमैः सह शिवोऽन्तरधत्त ।
 विस्मितेन मनसा सह शिष्यैः
 शंकरोऽपि सुरसिन्धुमयासीत् ॥

This Visvesvara incident does *not* find a place in the “*Vyasachaliya*” and these slokas are *not* found here. These slokas are found however in *Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya* chapter VI in the same order. Thus it is clear that when Atmabodhendra says that the slokas are from *Vyasachalya* he means only *Madhaviya* and that he takes Madhava and Vyasachala as identical and thereby confirms the accuracy of the Commentaries on the *Madhaviya* when they say that Vyasachala is Madhava himself. To get over this patent fact, the Pandit naively suggests that these slokas may be inserted in the next edition of *Vyasachaliya*! though they are not found in the manuscripts, including those supplied by the Kumbhakonam mutt itself.

The *Gururatnamalika* would have it that Sri Sankara's father performed his son's Upanayana and then alone died (sloka 18). Atmabodhendra in trying to support this statement relies upon ‘*Brihat Sankara Vijaya*’ and *Prachina Sankara Vijaya* and throws overboard not only *Acharya Vijaya*, *Siva Rahasya* and *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya* but also *Vyasachaliya* which all are quoted as saying that the father died before he could perform the Upanayana of his son. He quotes *Vyasachaliya* thus :

व्यासाचलीयेऽपि —

शिवगुरुः स जरन् त्रिसमे शिशौ

अमृत कर्मवशः सुतमोदितः ।

उपनिनीषितसूनुः पि स्वयं

न हि यमोऽस्य कृताकृतमीक्षते ॥

This quotation is word for word identical with *Madhaviya* chapter IV, sloka 11. The corresponding passage in the new *Vyasachaliya* is chapter XI, sloka 116 and it reads

त्रिसम एव शिशोजैनको जरन्
 अमृत कर्मवशः सुतमोदितः ।
 उपनिनीषितसूनुमपि स्वयं
 न हि यमोऽत्र कृताकृतमीक्षते ॥

It is quite patent that Atmabodhendra is really quoting from the *Madhaviya* and not from the work now published as *Vyasachaliya* and that for him *Madhaviya* is *Vyasachaliya*; in other words, Vyasachala is Madhava and not distinct from him. I shall have occasion to refer to another “quotation” of his from *Vyasochliya* in a later context and so I do not take it up now.

Now coming to the contents of the new book, it may be stated at the very outset that it has about 513 slokas in common with *Madhaivya Sankara Vijaya* ! An analysis of its contents will make it clear that it is purely a clumsily cooked up affair-

Chapter 1 opens with the statement that a Brahmana was born at Kalati in the Kerala country. Slokas 2 to 42 are all copies of slokas 6 to 46 in *Madhaviya* chapter 2. It is interesting to note that the name of that Brahmana appears for the first time only in *Chapter 4* and that the name of his father is quite casually mentioned in sloka 20 of chapter 1. This curious phenomenon is due to the patent fact that the slokas have been bodily removed from their natural context and introduced here. The natural context is seen in the *Madhaviya*. There Lord Vrishabhachalesvara is described in slokas 1 and 2 and the village Kalati in sloka 3; then in sloka 4 we are introduced to the scholar Vidyadhiraja and in sloka 5 to his son Sivaguru. When these slokas are left out, we are kept in suspense for a long time to know the name of the Brahmana referred to in the opening stanza itself.

In sloka 42 (*Madhaviya* II, 46) Sivaguru's wife tells her husband that for getting a son Lord Siva may be wor-

shipped. In the *Madhaviya* in the very next sloka 47 she instances the case of Upamanyu who attained the grace of Lord Siva by his penance

भक्तैषितार्थपरिकल्पनकल्पवृक्षं
देवं भजाव कमितः सकलार्थसिद्ध्यै ।
तत्रोपमन्युमहिमा परम प्रमाणं
नो देवतासु जडिमा जडिमा मनुष्ये ॥

This is reproduced as the 1st sloka in chapter 4 of “*Vyasachaliya*” thus

एवं फलप्रदमुनीश्वरमीश्वराणां
ईशं भजाव किमितः सकलार्थसिद्ध्यै ।
तत्रोपमन्युमहिमा परमं प्रमाणं
नो देवतासु जडिमा जडिमा मनुष्ये ॥

The intervening *two full* chapters containing 22 + 117 = 139 slokas are entirely taken up in recounting the story of Upamanyu. To devote two chapters out of a total of twelve, to this subject is on the face of it absurd and in any case quite disproportionate to the main topic of the book. A wife may certainly remind her husband about Upamanyu but to assume that Sivaguru described before as a very great scholar was ignorant of this story and that his wife thought it necessary to illuminate him does credit to neither of them. It may well be that the author had written out these slokas himself or came across them as an independent small poem and thought it proper to put them in “*Vyasachaliya*” which he was forming out of *Madhaviya*. No other explanation is reasonably possible.

Chapter IV slokas 3 to 30 are reproductions verbatim of *Madhaviya* Ch. II, 49 to 65 and 71 to 75 and 79 to 84. In slokas 15 and 16 the mother is said to have suffered from the pregnancy

हा हन्तगर्भधरणं खलु दुःखहेतुः ।

In sloka 19, that is, after two slokas, it is said “How can there be any pain in bearing the resplendent Siva? I mentioned so in conformance with human experience”.

मानुष्यधर्ममनुसृत्य मयैदमुक्तं

काऽपि व्यथा शिवमहोदधरणेन बध्वाः ।

This idea logically follows sloka 16. In fact the two slokas are contiguous in *Madhaviya*- But in the reshuffling the order has been changed disturbing the natural sequence.

In the same Chapter sloka 49 to 61, 63 and 64 are identical with *Madhaviya* V, 68 to 80, 105 and 106. Again slokas 71 to 76, 80 to 82, 85 and 86 are the same as *Madhaviya* VII, 23 to 28, 39, 40, 44, 57 and 58.

It is a well known tradition that Sage Vyasa came in the form of an old Brahmana and had a discussion for a long time with Sri Sankara till Padmapada sensed that the old man was not an ordinary man but was Lord Vishnu himself incarnate as Vyasa and put a stop to the dispute by proclaiming “what are we poor folk to do when Vishnu and Sankara themselves are disputing about the nature of the absolute Truth?” This *Vyasachaliya* would have it that Padmapada came to Sri Sankara only *after* the latter’s meeting with Vyasa. It omits therefore the dispute altogether. Padmapada is introduced in slokas 87 to 92 corresponding to *Madhaviya* VI, 1 to 5 and 14. Sri Sankara’s presence at the death of his mother is advanced to a very early period and is described in slokas 95, 96, 99, 101 to 104 which are *Madhaviya* XIV, 30, 35, 42, 48 to 50.

Sri Sankara’s trip to Prayaga and meeting Kumarila Bhatta there are described in chapter 5; slokas 3, 5, 9 to 31,

35 and 36 are *Madhaviya* VII, 64, 66, 72, 79 to 100, 114 and 115. In this context it is necessary to note that according to “*Vyasachaliya*” Mandana is quite a different person from Visvarupa who became later on Suresvara. Kumarila directs Sri Sankara to go to Visvarupa at “Magadha” and win him over at any cost (slokas 34 to 56). Mandana is by the side of Kumarila himself and approaches Sri Sankara

एतावदुक्त्वा विरराम शंकरं

स भट्टनामा मरणाय दीक्षितः ।

तत्पाश्चर्वती विदितार्थसंग्रहः

स मण्डनाख्योऽभिजगाम शंकरम् । (37)

In the beginning of chapter 6, Sri Sankara goes to the house of Visvarupa and is very respectfully received by him. He sits down to take his food and Visvarupa's wife Ubhaya Bharati serves him the food

अन्नं धृतं पक्ववेशेज्जातं

तथोपदंशान् गुडवैकृतानि ॥ (Sl. 8)

भक्तानि चिक्षेप वगमिधानं

यस्या वभूवोभयभारतीति । (Sl. 9)

but it is only after 70 slokas that she pours water in the palm of Sri Sankara. The intervening slokas 9 to 42 and 44 to 77 describe the birth and marriage of that lady and are verbatim copies of *Madhaviya* ch. III, slokas 10 to 77. In the latter work the first 8 slokas deal with the descent of some Gods as the disciples of Sri Sankara and in the 9th Sarasvati is described as having incarnated as Ubhaya Bharati and the slokas following the same quite fit in with the context. It is quite inappropriate to insert the slokas in between the serving of food and the pouring of water. Again slokas 84 to 87, 91 to 95 and 97 to 101 correspond to *Madhaviya* VIII, 45 to 48, 61

to 65 and 67 to 69, 72 and 73. Sloka 104 (*Madhaviya* X, 76) mentions that Sri Sankara taught him the Upanishadic passage about the nature of Atma and “then said again”

आचार्यवर्यः श्रुतिमस्तकस्थं

तदादिवाक्यं पुनराबभाषे ॥

but curiously enough what he said is relegated to the next chapter where slokas 1 to 27 are identical with *Madhaviya* X, 77 to 103 wherein Suresvara expresses his gratitude to Sri Sankara. He has just become a Sannyasi and a sishya of Sri Sankara and yet Vyasachaliya would have it that Sri Sankara asked him to write a Varttika on his Bhashya and that Suresvara said “I *have seen* your Bhashya so full of logic and deeply significant sentences. I have not the capacity but shall try to write the book with your grace,” Slokas 28 to 30 of chapter 7 (*Madhaviya* XIII, 2 to 4). As *Madhaviya* has द्रष्टु instead of दृष्टु in the last of these stanzas, the passage there means “I have not the capacity even *to see* your Bhashya so full of logic and deeply significant sentences; yet I shall try to write the book with your grace“. This incident cannot possibly have taken place at the time of Sannyasa. *Madhaviya* version which ascribes a later date to it is alone reasonable. Slokas 37 to 71 are the same as *Madhaviya* XIII, 6 to 14, 40 to 48, 51 to 61 and 64 to 70.

In sloka 72 is introduced the Tirtha Yatra of Padma. pada which is an independent topic by itself. Sloka 72 to 101 are reproductions of *Madhaviya* XIV, 1 to 26, 28; and 56 to 58. Sloka 102 is a paraphrase of *Madhaviya* XIV 59. Sloka from 103 to the end of the chapter. 42 slokas in all, are devoted to the *Mahatmya* of Kanchipura. Sloka 1 and 2 of chapter 8 are paraphrases of *Madhaviya* XIV, 60 and 61. The slokas 3 to 10, 19, 20, 36 to 70 and 74 to 93 are *Madhaviya* XIV, 62 to 71, 74 to 90, 92 to 105, 107 to 110, and 114 to 133.

Slokas 84 to the end, 97 slokas in all, are about the installation of a Linga at Ramesvaram.

Slokas 1 to 28 of Chapter 9 are also occupied with *Setu Mahatmya*. Slokas 29 to 33 are the same as *Madhaviya* XIV, 138 to 142. But the story in "*Vyasachaliya*" stops abruptly with the uncle of Padmapada giving him poisoned food to muddle his brains for ever. It would appear therefrom that Padmapada not only lost his book but also his capacity to write it out again. If it were so, we could not have the *Panchapadika* now. It would have been well if *Vyasachaliya* had copied out the other slokas also from *Madhaviya* wherein Padmapada is said to have obtained the grace of Sri Sankara and also wrote out the book again thanks to the retentive memory of the latter.

The episode of the Kapalika is abruptly brought in sloka 35; slokas 38 to 49, 52 and 54 to 61 are *Madhaviya* XI 13, 16, 17, 19, 27, to 32, 37, 38, and 44 and 60 to 67. The next 21 slokas are in praise of Vishnu and His ten Avataras and sloka 83 is *Madhaviya* XI 74. In the next sloka the story of Totakacharya is taken up abruptly; and slokas 84 to 88, 95 and 96 are the same as *Madhaviya* XII 70 to 74, 84 and 85. It is blandly stated that his Bhakti ripened into verse.

Chapter 10 is concerned with the attempt of the disciples to treat Sri Sankara for his disease of fistula. Slokas 1 to 3, 5 to 12 and 17 are the same as *Madhaviya* XVI 4 to 15. With great difficulty the disciples obtain the permission of their master to bring doctors to cure him and think that

निर्बन्धतो गुरुवरः प्रददावनुज्ञां

दिग्भ्यो भिषग्वरसमानयनाय तेभ्यः ।

नत्वा गुरुं प्रतिदिश प्रययुः प्रहृष्टाः

शिष्या प्रवासकुशला गुरुभक्तिभाजः ॥ 12 (XVI, (14)

प्रायो नृपं कविजना मिषचो वदान्यं

वित्तार्थिनः प्रतिदिनं कुशला जुषन्ते ।

तस्मादमी नृपपुरे विनिरीक्षणीया

इत्येव चेतसि मनोरथमादधानाः ॥ 17 (XVI, 15)

competent doctors can be found only in the Capital towns of Kings. Between these two stanzas, which naturally fit in in *Mdahaviya*, four stanzas, three describing the sunrise and one the sunser, are quite irrelevantly introduced in the *Vyasachaliya*. The most pitiable part of the book starts with sloka 18 where the disciples are evidently made to forget the mission on which they start and are said to ascend the Sahya mountain to admire its scenery, In sloka 34 the sea is introduced. A description of spring begins in sloka 41 and its reaction on the minds of erotic young people is described with great gusto. Summer comes in with sloka 62 and as its attendants the author takes great pleasure in describing water sports, drinking, amorous advances, the beauty of the evenings and moonrise and so on till the end of the chapter. The next chapter takes up the Rainy season, Autumn, *Hemanda* and *Sisira* till sloka 78

एवं क्रमादार्तवमीक्षमाणाः

सोऽन्वेषमाणो यतिनां निकायः ।

समानयद्देशिकवर्यपाश्वे

भिषग्वरान् शास्त्रवणान् प्रवीणान् ॥

“The group of Sannyasis thus looking at the seasons in order searched and brought near their master skilful physicians well versed in that science.”

Evidently the disciples who set out in search of a doctor to heal their ailing Guru looked upon their journey as a holiday trip free from the restraint of the Guru's presence

and so enjoyed themselves in crude erotic musings for well over a year oblivious of their master's sufferings. These interludes and strayings which take up 117 slokas in chapter 10 and 77 slokas in chapter 11, totalling 194, are all not only inapt and out of all proportion in a life sketch of Sri Sankara but betray that the entire work is a clumsy and absurd concoction at the hands of some incompetent person who does not hesitate to steal slokas from others and pass them on as his own and who, if one may judge his character from his "own" contributions, is sex-mad and can never understand, much less appreciate, the greatness and dignity of Sri Sankara and his worthy disciples. Though the disciples are said to have decided to search for a doctor in the palaces of Kings, they are not described as going anywhere near a king. It will be seen in contrast how the *Madhaviya* continues the narrative. After so deciding, they search about and bring some doctors from a King. The deciding and the bringing are in consecutive slokas 15 and 16 of Chapter XVI, It will be noted that *Vyasachaliya* Chapter 11 s78) is an echo of the latter verse of *Madhaviya*

तेऽतीय देशान् बहुलान् स्वकार्य -
 सिद्धयै क्वचिद्राजपुरे भिषग्भिः ।
 अवाप्य सन्दर्शनभाषणानि
 समानयंस्तान् गुरुवर्यपार्श्वम् ॥

slokas 79 to 92 are decriptive of the exchange of courtesies between Sri Sankara and the doctors. Slokas 93 to 95, 98, 99, 101 to 103 are copies of *Madhavviya* XVI, 18 to 26. In spite of the fact that Sri Sankara was not for treating himself and gave way only to the importunities of his disciples, Sri Sankara himself is said to have called upon the Asvins to cure him (sloka 104) and they consulted Indra and Brihaspati. The latter told them that Sri Sankara was Siva incarnate. In the context of Brihaspati's speech, the sloka that describe the

early days of Sri Sankara namely *Madhaviya* IV, 1 to 3, 11 to 17, V, 4, 2, 3, 61 to 67 are bodily incorporated here as slokas 113 to 125 and 127 to 134, In the further slokas in the chapter the Asvins are said to have responded to the advice of Brihaspati and ultimately cured Sri Sankara of his ailment.

Hastamalaka is introduced only in the last and 12th chapter. Here slokas 2 to 4, 11 to 29 are the same as *Madhaviya* XII, 40 to 42, and 44 to 62. Sri Sankara's ascent of the *Sarvajna Peetha* at Kashmir is described in slokas 30 to 55 which are the same as *Madhaviya* XVI, 55 to 60, 62 to 81. The discussion about Kama Sastra and Sri Sankara's occupying King Amaruka's body described in *Madhaviya* IX, 69, 70, 105 and 106 and X, 17. 18 are transferred to this chapter as slokas 62, 63, 66, 67, 70 and 71. Similarly slokas 79 to 82 are copied from *Madhaviya* XVI, 84 to 87.

The last of these slokas deserves a special consideration. *Madhaviya* reads as follows :

इत्थं निरुत्तरपदां स विधाय देवीं
सर्वज्ञपीठमधिरुह्य ननन्द सभ्यः ।
संभावितोऽभवत्सौ विबुधैश्च वाण्या
गाग्या कहोलमुखरैरिव याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥

The reading of "Vyasachaliya" is

एवं निरुत्तरपदां स विधाय देवीं
सर्वज्ञपीठमधिरुह्य ननन्द सभ्यः ।
मात्रा गिरामपि तथा पुरुषैश्च सभ्यैः
संभावितो रुचितदेशमयं जगाम ॥

Atmabodhendra deliberately misquotes even this thus

एवं निरुत्तरपदां स विधाय देवीं
सर्वज्ञपीठमधिरुह्य मठे स्वकृते ।

मात्रा निगमपि तथोपगतैश्च मिश्रैः

संभावितः कमपि कालमुवास काञ्च्याम् ॥

and not content with thus introducing Kanchi he proceeds to "quote" four more stanzas as from *Vyasachaliya* but they are not found in the printed edition. We shall have occasion to deal with this matter again in another context.

Thus if we carefully analyse the contents of the new *Vyasachaliya* and if we exclude from it the irrelevant and irreverent interludes and passages, there will be nothing in it other than the passages borrowed from *Madhaviya* and reshuffled without any sense of propriety. And yet we are asked to believe that *Madhaviya* with its 16 chapters and about 1850 stanzas and innumerable episodes and highly philosophical discussions and alluring poetry is an *abridgement* of the *Vyasachaliya* with its 12 chapters and less than 1200 stanzas, half of which are patently borrowed and the other half irrelevant and barren of any interesting episode or discussion. Any ordinary reader can easily judge for himself in which work the stanzas which are common to both these publications fit in with the context naturally and who has copied from whom.

We fail to see any justification for the bias and tirade that the Kumbhakonam mutt people have set up against the *Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya*. They have gone to the length of recording a statement from somebody that somebody else admitted to him some years ago that he was responsible for the book. They conveniently forget that long before that somebody else was born the *Madhaviya* had been in vogue. Dhanapati Suri finished his commentary on the *Madhaviya* in A.D. 1799. Sadarada's *Sankara Vijaya* which follows *Madhaviya* was written in A.D. 1783 and Dhanapati Suri's commentary on the same in A.D. 1804. *Advita Rajyalakshmi*, another commentary on the *Madhaviya*, is dated A.D. 1824.

Even Atmabodhendra refers to *Samkshepa Sankara Vijaya* though he does not mention the name Madhava; the reference is certainly to *Madhaviya* for no other work is known by that name. The attempt therefore to prove it to be a recent composition is on the face of it absurd. But thanks to the methods of modern propaganda it is quite possible to unearth “ancient” works from “miscellaneous” papers and parade them as original works from which Madhava stole, and to misinterpret slokas and try to make them yield confessions of stealth. After all, how does *Madhaviya* affect the Kumbhakonam math any more than other publications? It is in no sense a partisan of Sringeri Math nor does it decry anybody else. As will be shown in the sequel, we shall not have to rely upon the authority of *Madhaviya* at all for it contains nothing relevant to the subject on hand, namely the claims of the Kumbhakonam math, and on the other hand there is more than ample material in their own “authorities” to discredit those claims.

The reader will now have realised that some of that Math’s authorities are merely extracts from the *Madhaviya* amplified into independent works by the addition of some irrelevant and inappropriate stanzas. It may well be that these stanzas also are copied from elsewhere.



CHAPTER – VII

GURURATNAMALIKA

The main stay of the Kumbhakonam mutt is the work called *Gururatnamalika* said to have been written by Sri Sadasivendra Sarasvati the saint of Nerur. It was published as one in a series of Five Prakaranas attributed to that Saint and the entire book was called *Vedanta Pancha Prakarani*. The Five included *Atmavidyavilasa* a well known work of his, just to give an air of authenticity to the other four also. They were all proclaimed to be

श्रीमत्परमहंसपरिव्राजकाचार्यश्रीमत्परमशिखेन्द्रसरस्वती
श्रीचरणशिष्येण विदितवेदितव्येन परोरजसा श्रीसदाशिवब्रह्मेद्रेण
कृताः बोधार्या-गुरुरत्नमालिका-आत्मविद्याविलासशिवमानसिक-
पूजा-सपर्या पययिस्तव इति पञ्च कृतीः ॥

Evidently it was intended at that time to give Sri Sadasivendra also a place in the list of the Mutt Acharyas and so in the colophon of the first of these books it is stated

इति श्रीमत्परमहंसपरिव्राजकाचार्यश्रीमज्जगद्गुरुभगवत्पाद-
विरुदश्रीसदाशिवबोधेन्द्रसरस्वतीप्रणीतं बोधार्याप्रकरणम् ।

But he was never a Jagadguru nor had he the suffix Bhagavatpada nor the intervening name Bodha. Further this *Bodharya Prakarana* is identical with *Svatmanirupanam* a well known work of Adi Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada himself. To ascribe it to Sri Sadasivendra, is, to say the least of it, not honest. If sloka 26 of the *Saparyaparyaya Stuti* is to be believed, that work also seems to have been a production of Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada.

यतीन्द्राणां राजा जयति भगवान् भाष्यकृद्सौ
 नमस्यः प्रज्ञानां सदसि य इमामुज्ज्वलपदाम् ।
 सपर्यापर्यायस्तुतिमिति विधाय श्रतिशिरः—
 प्रसिद्ध्ययार्थमिलसमनुजध्राह सुजनम् ॥

The Editor is careful to add a note that this sloka is not found in some manuscripts which mention however Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra as author. Another work *Sivamanasika Puja* is also included in the series. But to make the collection authoritative the *Atmavidyavilasa* and six *kirtanas* known to be Sri Sadasivendra's are also included in the series. But the main object of the publication is betrayed by the fact that a *Jagadguruparamapra stava* and a *Jagadguruparampara nama-mala* both giving lists of the Acharyas said to have presided over that mutt and four copper plates of that mutt are also inserted in the middle of the book, This clearly shows that the publication was for the purpose of giving publicity to the several claims of the mutt.

Even at the outset, it may be stated that the *Gururatna-malika* significantly lacks the flowing diction which characterises all the works of Sri Sadasivendara. It is supplemented by a commentary said to have been written by one Atmabodhendra Sarasvati, a disciple of Atmaprakasendra Sarasvathi known also as Mahadevendra Sarasvati, in Salivahana Saka 1642 corresponding to A.D. 1720. The original itself is said to have been written by Sri Sadasivendra at the request of one Atmabodhendra Sarasvati who is said to have succeeded Paramasivendra Sarasvati in that mutt. We shall reserve for a later context the question whether Paramasivendara Sarasvati who was certainly the Guru of Sri Sadasivendra ever presided over that mutt.

That the compiler of the *Guruparampara* has a knack for composing verses is clear from the large number of "quotations" found in abundance in his composition. That

he was a good grammarian also cannot be questioned for both the text and the commentary as well as the "authorities" quoted in the latter bristle with rare grammatical forms which, while bearing testimony to his learning in grammar, betrays unfortunately the common authorship of all of them. His knowledge of the *Dharmasastra* was obviously very poor.

Even the most casual reader of that book will be struck by the frequent references to the Kings of Kashmir, Magadha and Ujjain and by the almost complete absence of any reference to the Kings of the Chola, Chera, Pandya and Kerala countries and even of the Kanchi territory. This is explainable only on one basis, namely, that the compiler of that list had before him only a list of the Kings in Northern India and had no information of the kings who ruled at Kanchi or near it. In fact, it is patently seen that the compiler has taken the names of Kings from Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* the only Sanskrit work of modern times dealing with a succession of Kings. To give his compilation therefore a "historical background," he had to indent largely upon the only work available to him.

For mere stories he had them in plenty in the *Vikramacharita* and other works of that sort as also in the folk tales current in the land in exuberant abundance. It was easy to coin a string of names and make out of the whole a full fledged *Guruparampara*. The Gurus can also be assigned with safety the sub-sect to which they belonged, their names in their *Purvasrama*, the names of their parents, dates for their *sannyasa* and ascension to the seat and *Brahmibhava* and other "Personal" details, nor was it difficult to recount interesting events and incidents in their lives for no one could possibly contradict them. But the absurdity of his attempt to prepare a *Guruparampara* is very often too patent to deceive the most cursory reader.

Most of the “quotations” given by Atmabodhendra eulogise the greatness of and the exploits of the several Acharyas of that mutt but unfortunately the “original” works wherefrom the passages are “quoted” as pointed out by Mr. N. Venkataraman, “are not available at present”; we do not know if this remark carries the suggestion that they will be “made” available in the future. It is a pity that such a valuable body of literature which was available to Atmabodhendra in the 18th century to quote from has not only disappeared but has not been available to anybody else, before or since, anywhere.

The compiler refers to many a book and purports to quote from them. As mentioned before, none, of them are extant in the world. They may be roughly classified as follows :

A. Anonymous. Under this category come

1. *Acharya Vijaya*, evidently identical with Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya*,
2. *Jagadguru Katha Sangraha*. This is “reproduced” fully on page 40,
3. *Sadguru Santana Parimala*.

B. Unfamiliar works of Unfamiliar Authors.

Besides the *Brihad Sankara Vijaya* attributed to Chitsukha said to have been an intimate associate of Sri Sankara, Atmabodhendra refers to

1. *Prachina Sankara Vijaya* of Muka Sankarendra said to have been the 20th acharya of that mutt. He is sought to be indentified with Muka kavi the well known author of the *Muka Panchasati*.
2. *Punyasloka manjari* of Sarvajna Sadasivendra said to have been the 56th acharya of that mutt. This is a

string of verses giving “personal” details about the several acharyas ascribed to that mutt, in particular the dates of their passing away. It is not disclosed wherefrom he got all those details. Atmabodhendra has supplied a supplement to it with reference to later acharyas.

3. *Mani prabha* of Ramilla, said to have been a keeper of horses but converted into a poet by the grace of “Muka Sankarendra.”
4. *Hayagrivavadha* of Medu or Mentha, similarly said to have been an elephant mahout turned poet by the same acharya.
5. *Siddha Vijaya* of Mantha Bhatta said to be a biography of Sachchidanandaghana the 23rd acharya of that mutt,
6. *Vaidyabhidhana chintamani* of Kuhala said to have been a great doctor in Kashmir.
7. *Goudapada Ullasa* of Harimisra evidently supposed to be a biography of Goudapada.
8. *Vidyasankara Vijaya* of Abhinava Uddanda Vidya-ranya Bharati. As Atmabodhendra criticises this book, I am not sure whether this also is a pure concoction of his.

C. *Unfamiliar works attributed to familiar authors.*

1. *Mahapurusha Vilasa* of Bhavabhuti, in which he is said to have praised Brahmanandaghana and Chidanandaghana the 31st and 32nd acharyas of that mutt.
2. *Sankarendra Vilasa* of Vakpati Bhattodbhata, said to be a life of Abhinava Sankara claimed to be acharya No. 38.

3. *Sarvajna Vilasa* of Sarvajnatma.
4. *Guruvijaya* of Krishna Misra.
5. *Bhakti Kalpalatika* of Jayadeva.
6. *Santi Vivarna* of Advaitananda.
7. *Guru Pradipa* of Advaitananda.
8. *Siva Sakti Siddhi*.
9. *Sthairyavicharana Prakarana*.

Sri Harsha in his *Kavya Naishadham* mentions that he is the author of Nos. 8 and 9 among others but except his *Naishadham* and *Khandanakhandakhadyam* on other work is available and yet Atmabodhendra professes to quote from Nos. 8 and 9.

D. Misquotatians.

- 1, *Siva Rahasya*.
2. Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya*.
- 3, "*Vyasachaliya*" *Sankara Vijaya*
4. *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya*.
5. Sankarananda's *Brihadaranya Upanishad Dipika*.
6. Sriharsha's *Naishadham*.

These will be dealt with in appropriate contexts.

Not content with "quotations" from the above mentioned four classes of "authorities" the compiler had also such solicitude for modern research scholars and even towards works written deliberately to discredit Sri Sankara that, in deference to their "findings" and statements, he was prepared to split up even the personality of Sri Sankara into five if he

could thereby swell up and add prestige to the *Guruparampara*. According to him, the first Sankara was born at Kalati and wrote the Bhashya. The second Sankara was one Kripa Sankara, the 7th acharya of that mutt, who was the real *Shanmatasthapanacharya* and who appointed a Visvarupa to Sringeri mutt. The third Sankara was Ujjvala Sankara the 14th acharya who blessed a Kerala King Kulasekara to become a poet. The fourth Sankara was Muka Sankarendra the 18th acharya sought to be identified with Muka Kavi of *Panchasati* fame. The fifth Sankara was an Abhinava Sankara the 36th acharya and it was he that was born in 788 A.D. three years after the death of his father Visvajit, at Chidumbaram, ascended the *Sarvajna Peetha*, at Kashmir and disappeared in the Dattatreya Cave in the Himalayas.

Not content again with these five Sankaras on his list, the compiler would include therein Sri Suresvaracharya also if possible, and also some of the well known teachers of Advaita. With these and other names available in Sanskrit literature, with a fertile brain to coin many more names and "incidents," with a *Rajatarangini* to yield historical cross references of "corroboration," with a knack for versification and "quoting" from "authorities" fortunately available to himself alone in all the wide world, with a facile pen and possibly with other incentive, it was not a difficult matter to evolve a continuous *Guru Parampara* plausible on the face of it and imposing in its contents. We shall in the sequel consider how far the list is trust-worthy and show effectively how far the compiler was prepared to go in his attempt to give his mutt a standing and prestige, and how hopelessly he has given himself away by attempting to soar very high. We shall show also in a later context that Sri Sadasivendra of Nerur could not possibly have been the author of the *Gururathnamalika* at all. The commentator of "Atmabodhendra" says that Suresvaracharya was not a Paramahansa and this betrays his ignorance of even ordinary Sannyasa Dharma; this incidentally shows that he could not have been a Sannyasi and that the name 'Atmabodhendra' was only an assumed name. It may well be that the date of its composition given as 1728 A. D., is also an antedating by more than a century.

CHAPTER—VIII

SRI VISVARUPACHARYA

Sri Suresvaracharya occupies a very high place in the galaxy of Advaita teachers. He was not only the oldest in age but the most learned of the disciples of Sri Sankara. His importance is seen from this simple fact that, when other disciples sought Sri Sankara, Sri Sankara found it necessary to seek this disciple and convert him to his side. Even the *Gururatnamalika* has to concede that Sri Sankara stayed at Sringeri for “some years”

कलयन्निलयं च तुङ्गभद्रा- तटिनीरोधसि वेधसः स्त्रिया द्राक् ।
कतिचिच्छरदोऽत्यवीवहद्यो यतिराट् क्वापि मठे स मेऽस्तु सद्यः ॥
(Sl. 25)

The Commentator interprets the some as “twelve” and quotes

अब्दान् द्वादश सोऽत्यवीवहदधिव्याख्यान सिद्धान्तं
शिष्यान् स्वान् विनयन् स्वभाष्यसरणौ श्रीतुङ्गभद्रातटे ॥

It must be remembered that Sri Sankara was 16 years of age when he met Sri Vyasa and was awarded a further span of 16 years for propagating his *Bhashya* and that he started on his tour only after that. If he spent 12 years out of these 16 at Sringeri itself, we must realise his attachment to that place. Surely such a sacred place which enchanted him so much deserved the best of his disciples to continue the line of succession in the mutt founded there. The *Sankara Vijaya* of Anandagiri says.

तत्र परमगुरुः द्वादशाब्दं विद्यापीठे स्थित्वा बहुशिष्येभ्यः
शुद्धाद्वैतविद्यायाः सम्यगुद्देशं कृत्वा तदनन्तरं कंचित् शिष्यं
सुरेश्वराख्यं पीठाध्यक्षं कृत्वा स्वयं निश्चक्राम ।

“The Great Guru stayed at that seat of learning for 12 years, taught to many disciples the pure Advaita knowledge, and then installing a disciple called Suresvara as the head of that seat he himself started from there”.

But later on this passage was amended into

तत्रैव परमगुरुः द्वादशाब्दकालं विद्यापीठे स्थित्वा बहुशिष्येभ्यः
शुद्धाद्वैतविद्यायाः सभ्यगुपदेशं कृत्वा तदनन्तरं पद्मपादाख्यं कचित्
शिष्यं पीठाध्यक्षं कृत्वा भोगनामकलिङ्गं एतस्मिन् पीठे निक्षिप्य
स्वयं निश्चक्राम ।

“The Great Guru stayed at that seat of learning itself for 12 years, taught to many disciples the pure Advaita knowledge and then installing a disciple called *Padmapada* as the head of this seat and *placing the Linga called Bhoga in that seat* he himself started from there ”

The reason for the amendment is quite obvious namely to deny Sureswara to Sringeri and to introduce a “Bhoga Linga” at Sringeri. Consistently with this amendment, an “authority” was unearthed in *Markandeya Samhita*

भ्रीदेशिकः पद्मपदं स्वशिष्यं
पाषण्डखण्डार्थमतिप्रचण्डम् ।
शृङ्गाद्रिदेशे श्रिततुङ्गभद्रे
नियोजयामास स शंकरार्यः ॥

I may mention that nowhere else is Padmapada mentioned as the acharya of Sringeri. The *Gururatnamalika* has to concede that Sri Sureswara also stayed at Sringeri for a “long” time though he is said to have done so at the request of the acharyas there who were “Prithvidhava and Visvarupu known also as Sthirabodhaghana and Pratapadama” (Sl. 34). There is no mention of Padmapada here. Evidently the introduction

of Padmapada is an after-thought or was not known at the time of the *Gururatnamalika* and its commentary; on the other hand, the commentary on page 36 definitely allots Padmapada to the Dvaraka mutt and Prithvidhava to Sringeri. Consistent with its claim to be the supreme mutt, the Kumbhakonam mutt thought it necessary to claim both Sri Sankara and Sri Sureswara. But as the Sringeri mutt and also the Dvaraka mutt made similar claims, Atmabodhendra sought a reconciliation of all these claims by denying Suresvara to any mutt ! According to him he was given the right of supervision over *all* the mutts, stayed at each of those mutts for some time and therefore is shown as the next in succession to Sri Sankara in their respective succession lists also. It must be noted that he is not claimed by the Badari or Puri mutt. His reasons for denying Suresvara the headship of any mutt are also curious.

सुरेश्वरस्य सकलविबुधशिरोमणित्वेऽपि शपथपथैकपापिता-
श्रमतया स्वयं अपरमहंसतया च न कात्याचार्यतयाऽप्रतिष्ठितता ।

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अयं सुरेश्वरः स्वयं अरमहंसतया परमहंसैकसमध्यासनीये
जगद्गुरुणा स्वपीठे शिष्यपीठेषु वा न निवेशितोऽपि स्वसमान-
वैदुष्यभाजनतया महायोगितया च सर्वपीठव्यवस्थागोपने
नियुक्तः । तत्र तत्र कियन्तंचित् कालमुवास । ततः तन्मठीयैः स
एव परमाचार्यात् परं आचार्यपरम्परायां पठ्यते इति वस्तुस्थिः ।

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Sri Suresvara is said to be disqualified as he became a Sannyasi only as the result of a bet and as he was not Paramahansa. His *Vartikas*, *Naishkarmyasiddhi*, *Manasollasa* and other works are quite sufficient to belie the first reason. Atmabodhendra does not explain why Suresvara is not a Paramahansa but Mr. N K. Venkatesam Pantulu says that

his having been a Grihastha is the disqualifying factor; but such a disqualification is quite unknown to the Sastras.

It will be seen from the above that Suresvara has been claimed as the acharya of Sringeri next in succession to Sri Sankara long before the composition of Atmabodendra which is assigned the date 1720 A.D. And yet Mr. T. S. Narayana Aiyar a militant advocated of the Kumbhakonam mutt says "the name of Suresvara is clearly an innovation brought about by the advocates of the Sringeri mutt *after* 1856, Upto that period. *every one* believed that Prithvidava or Visvarupa was the immediate successor of Sankara in that mutt... ... *Visvarupa cannot be identified with Suresvaracharya* and is quite a distinct person from him. It has been distinctly stated in *all the ancient Sankara Vijayas* that Visvarupa was the incarnation of Yama whereas Mandana Misra or Suresvaracharya was uniformly considered as an incarnation of Brahma Deva." the italics are mine. It is not necessary for us to consider his sources of information. If we are able to establish the identity of Visvarupa with Suresvara, the authenticity of the so called authorities which deny such identity or postulate that they were incarnations of different Devas is automatically disproved and the novel theory that Visvarupa and not Suresvara presided over the Sringeri mutt will have no leg to stand upon.

(1) At the outset it may be stated that the extant *Sankara Vijaya* of Madhava, Sadananda, Govindanatha and even *Vyasachala* and the *Sankarabhyudaya* relied upon by the Kumbhakonam mutt as even of more value than Madhava consistently and repeatedly refer to Suresvara by the name of Visvarupa.

(2) Rama Tirtha. the able commentator of Sri Suresvara's *Manasollasa Vartika* on Sri Sankara's *Dakshinamurthi stotra* says.

तच्छिष्यैः विश्वरूपाचार्यैः सुरेश्वरापरनामभिः तत्पद्य-
वन्धार्थतत्त्वं तात्पर्यतो मानसोल्लासनाम्ना वार्तिकात्मना
ग्रन्थसंदर्भेण आविष्कृतम् ।

“The substance of that poem has been well brought out by his disciple *Visvarupacharya* otherwise called *Sureswara* in the work called *Manasollasa* written in the *Vartika* form.”

(3) Madhavacharya in his *Parasara Madhaviya* Vol. 1 page 57 says

इदं च वाक्यं नित्यकर्मविषयत्वेन वार्तिके विश्वरूपाचार्यः
उदाजहार —

आम्ने फलार्थ इत्यदि ह्यापस्तम्ब स्मृतेर्वचः ।

फलवत्त्वं समाचष्टे नित्यानामपि कर्मणाम् ॥ इति ।

“Visvarupacharya quoted this sentence in his *Vartika* as concerning Nityakarma thus”

The passage quoted is sloka 97 of *Brihadaranyaka Sambandha Vartika* an admittedly well known work of Suresvara.

(4) Sri Vidyanaraya in his *Vivaranaprameya Sangraha* says on page 92

तत्तारतम्यं च तदेतत् प्रियः पुत्रात् इत्यस्याः श्रुतेः
व्याख्यानावसरे विश्वरूपाचार्यैः दर्शितम् । ...

वित्तात् पुत्रः पुत्रात् पिण्डः पिण्डात् तथेन्द्रियम् ।

इन्द्रियेभ्यः प्रियः प्राणाः प्राणात् आत्मा परः प्रियः ॥ इति ।

“This gradation has been pointed out by Visvarupacharya while commenting on the Sruti ‘This is dearer than the son’ thus”

This passage is sloka 1029 in Sri Suresvaracharya's *Brihadaranyaka Vartika* II (4)

(5) Again Sri Vidyaranya in his *Jivanmukti Viveka* page 46 says

तदाहुः विश्वरूपाचार्या :-

शुभैरामोति देवत्वं निषिद्धैर्नारकीं गतिम् ।

उभाभ्यां पुण्यपापाभ्यां मानुष्यं लभतेऽवशः ॥ इति ।

“Visvarupacharya says this.....”

The passage quoted is sloka 41 of *Naishkarmya Siddhi* an admitted work of Suresvara.

(6) *Vachanamala* a commentary on Visvarupacharya's *Balakrida* a commentary itself on the *Yajnaavalkya Smriti* begins thus.

अवनम्य मनुसुरेश्वरयोगीश्वरतीव्रकिरणगुरुचरणान् ।

शास्त्राणां व्याकृतं कृतं नपि देवता निःश्लिः ।

Bowing in reverence to all the Devas and to the authors and to the commentators of the Sastras, Manu, Sureswara and Yogiswara (Yajnaavalkya) the disciple of the Sun”

Mahamahopadhyaya T. Ganapati Sastrigal who edited the *Balakrida* points out that Visvarupacharya is referred to as Sureswara. He refers also to an earlier commentary called *Vibhavana* by one Vedatma Yatisvara who says :

यत्प्रसादादयं लोको धर्ममार्गस्थितः सुखी ।

भवभूतिसुरेशाख्यं विश्वरूपं प्रणम्य तम् ॥

“Bowing in reverence to Visvarupa called Suresa, the Grace of Siva, on account of whose blessings the world was made happy and placed on the road of Dharma”

Mr. Sastrigal points out that “Bhavabhuti” may be a title like Sivadasa indicating the devotion of the author towards Siva. He is corroborated by the distinctly Saiva trend in the introductory slokas of *Balakrida* as also in the *Manasollasa*.

(7) Sankarananda in his *Taittiriya Upanishad Dipika* says

वक्ष्येऽधुना शंकरविश्वरूप -

वाचा विनीर्णीतसमस्तवाक्यम् ।

कृष्णं यजुस्तित्तिरिनामचिन्हं

पदार्थशुद्ध्यर्थमतीव सार्थम् ॥

“I shall give out the meaning and the word significance of Krishna Yajus Taittiriya whose sentences have all been well expounded by the words of Sankara and Visvarupa.”

The reference is obviously to the *Bhashya* and the *Vartika* of Sri Sankara and Suresvara respectively.

(8) The *Guruparampara* of the Govardhana Matha at Puri Jagannatha mentions the names of four royal sishyas, twelve ordinary sishyas and four Jagadguru sishyas of Sri Sankaracharya. The last are

पञ्चपादादिकर्तारं पञ्चपादं सनन्दनम् ।

वार्त्तिकादिग्रन्थकारं विश्वरूपं सुरेश्वरम् ॥

पृथिवीधराख्यं श्रीमद्वस्तामलकयोगिनम् ।

तोटकं चानन्दगिरिं प्रणमामि जगद्गुरुन् ॥

“I bow to the Jagadgurus. Padmapada alias Sanandana the author of the *Panchapadika* etc. Visvarupa alias Suresvara the author of the *Varitikas* etc., Hastamalaka alias Prithvidhava and Totaka alias Anandagiri.”

(9) Though King Sudhanva's grant relied upon by the Dvaraka Mutt assigns Suresvara to Dvaraka, it confirms the identity of Visvarupa with Suresvara in these express words :

विश्वरूपापरनामसुरेश्वराचार्यान्

It is interesting to note that this grant also, like the *Guruparampara Stotra* of Puri Jagannatha, identifies Prithvidhava with Hastamalaka. The Kumbhakonam mutt however treats them as two different persons and allots Prithvidhara to Sringeri and Hstamalaka to Jagannatha.

(10) The sacred Samadhi of Sri Suresvara is still preserved and worshipped at Sringeri just south of the 'Temple of Sri Sarada. It is claimed by the Kumbhakonam mutt that Suresvara passed away at Kanchi and that a street called Mandanamisra Agraharam testifies to that fact. We are not in a position to state if there was any such street or how or when it got that name. Anyhow, if it was intended to commemorate the name of Suresvara, there is no reason or justification at all for indenting upon his Purvasarama name. According to the *Vyasachailya* itself, Mandana Misra was a person quite distinct from Visvarupa who became Suresvara later on. If so, the entire bottom is taken out of the "agraharam" claim to Suresvara.

(11) Even Atmabodhendra who would allot Prithvidhara to Sringeri has to admit that the *Mathamnaya* mentions Visvarupa as the acharya of Sringeri. He has a curious and original explanation to offer. That is, they were the incarnation of Yama and Mrityu and were so inseparable and resided in the same place that they could by courtesy be treated as not distinct from each other (page 38).

आचार्यो विश्वरूपकः इत्याम्नायस्य च मृत्युयमावतारयोः
अविनाभावं एकाधिकरणवृत्त्योः अनयोः पृथ्वीधवविश्वरूपयोः
राजपुरोहितन्यायेन अमेदप्रतिपिपादयिषया भक्त्या प्रवृत्त्यौ-
जित्यात् ।

It is unnecessary to analyse this reason: it is sufficient that he accepts the tradition that Visvarupa was at Sringeri. If as shown above there is unimpeachable evidence that Visvarupa was the same as Suresvara, it is idle to contend that they were separate individuals or to allot Visvarupa to Sringeri and reserve Suresvara for the Kumbhakonam mutt or for the general supervision over all the mutts-

(12) If then Visvarupa is the same as Suresvara and if the former was the acharya at Sringeri, it necessarily follows Suresvaracharya presided there. When Brahmasri Srinivasa Sastri of Nadukaveri within a few miles of Kumbhakonam visited Kaladi the birthplace of Sri Sankara, he wrote a century of verses and in one of those verses he specifically mentions Visvarupa as having been appointed for the Sarada Peetha on the banks of the river Tunga.

अद्राक्षं भाग्ययोगाच्छु तिहृदयविदामग्रणीयोंगिराजो
ॐ

येन श्रीविश्वरूपोऽन्ययमि पुरवरे शारदापीठगम्ये ।

तुङ्गाभङ्गानुषङ्गप्रतिकलकलितस्वाश्रमध्यानयोगे

ऋङ्गरीघाम्नि तस्य श्रतिशिखरगुरोः पावनं जन्मदेशम् ॥

(13) Brahmasi Halasyanatha Sastri of Kumbhakonam itself in his *Jagadguru Taravalistuti* refers to the Sringeri Parampara as that of Suresvara

सुरेश्वरपरम्पराकृतसपर्यंतुङ्गासरि

तटाश्रयसरोरुहासनकलत्रसेवोत्सुकम् ॥

I do not refer to more recent Pandits or to Pandits in places far away from Kumbhakonam as there is a tendency in modern times for many of the Pandits to humour the personages to whom their compositions happened to be addressed for the time being. We have therefore given prominence in the above treatment to authorities which are above the slightest suspicion of partiality one way or the other.

(14) Evidently Mr. N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu later on realised that Mr. T. S. Narayana Aiyar and himself went too far in trying to dispute the identity of Visvarupa and Suresvara and so in the second edition of his book *Sri Sankaracharya and His Kamakoti Peetha* he added an appendix where, among other guesses and theories and other “quotations” he conceded that Visvarupa was a name of Suresvaracharya and so claimed Visvarupa for the Kanchi math itself !

It was mentioned above that the amended version of Anandagiri substituted Padmapada for Suresvara at Sringeri. That this version is a clear fabrication is patent from the quotation given in the *Dindima* commentary on *Madhaviya* XII, 68

अत्र प्राञ्चः— मठं कृत्वा तत्र विद्यापीठनिर्माणं कृत्वा
भारतीसंप्रदायं निजशिष्यं चकार ।

यस्त्वद्वैतमते स्थित्वा भारतीपीठनिन्दकः ।

स याति नरकं घोरं यावदाभूतसंग्रहम् ॥

कंचित् शिष्यं सुरेश्वराख्यं पीठाध्यक्षमकरोत् । इति ॥

This confirms the Calcutta edition and falsifies the embellished edition and the version said to be found in a manuscript at Benares unearthed after the visit of the Kumbhakonam mutt Swamiji there.

CHAPTER—IX

THE EARLY ACHARYAS

We have seen how far the appropriation of Suresvara either as the Head of the Kumbhakonam mutt or as the general supervisor over all the mutts is justifiable. We shall now consider some other names which are grafted on to its *Guru-parampara*. As stated already, its compiler gives a large number of cross references to “contemporaneous” kings and authors. It is for historical scholars to check them and find out if they have any basis. Apart from it, there is ample material even from an ordinary layman’s point of view to negative their truth, incidentally falsifying the genuineness and the reliability of the “authorities” quoted.

To begin with, Sri Sankara is said to have been born definitely in Kaliyuga 2593. Atmabodhendia “quotes” *Prachina Sankara Vijaya* as saying (p. 24)

तिष्ठे प्रयात्यनलशेवधिबाणनेत्रे
यो नन्दने दिनमणावुदगध्वभाजि ।
राधेऽदितेरहनि निर्गतमस्त्रलग्ने
ऽप्याहूतवान् शिवगुरुः स च शंकरेति ॥

The same “authority” would have it that Sri Sankara installed Suresvara in that mutt to guard over Sarvajnatma and passed away in Kaliyuga 2625.

कलशैश्च शरेक्षणाध्वनयनैः संक्रामकोटिप्रथे
पीठे यस्य सुरेश्वरं समवितुं सर्वज्ञसंज्ञं मुनिम् ।
कामाख्याः सविधे स जातु निविशन्नुत्तुल्लोकस्पृहो
देहं स्वं व्यग्रहाय देहस्तुंगमं धाम प्रपेदे परम् ॥

This gives Sri Sankara the period 508 to 476 B. C. Recent writers on the Kumbhakonam mutt are agreed that

this is too early a period and must be brought down to the 1st century B. C. But in making this suggestion they have necessarily to curtail the period assigned to each of the Heads; so they say that an average of 30 years may be taken for the early occupants (vide N. Ramesam, p. 15 and Atreya Krishna Sastri, p. 13). They forget that it is not open to them to do so for, unfortunately for them, the name of the cyclic year in which each of the occupants passed away is definitely fixed and it is not for them to disturb it. *Punyaslokamanjari*, said to record the life history of each acharya, says about Sri Sankara

महेशांशाज्जातो मधुरमुग्दिष्टाद्वयनयो

महामोहध्वान्तप्रशमनरविः षण्मतगुरुः ।

फले (32) स्वस्मिन् स्वायुष्यपि शरचराब्दे (2625)

ऽपि च कलेः

विलिल्ये रक्त क्षिण्यधिवृत्तसितैकादशारे ॥

When his birth is said to be in the year Nandana and his departure in Raktakshi, these dates cannot possibly be altered. Nor is it possible to interfere with the periods of any of his successors as their dates are also equally fixed and as the *Punyaslokamanjari* particularly mentions the length of each of such periods. It is not possible to so interfere unless the "authority" is thrown to the winds. Incidentally *Sankarabhyudaya*, so much relied upon by that mutt, must be also discarded for it gives a different date for Sri Sankara, nearly 13 centuries later, namely Kaliyuga 3889 (788 A. D.)

नवाधिकाशीतियुतः प्रशत्यां

युक्ते सहस्रत्रितये व्यतीते ।

कलेः समानां विभवार्द्राधे

सिते दशम्यामुदभून्महेशः ॥

It gives a different cyclic year Vibhava for the birth. Atma-bodhendra's explanation is that this is the date of birth of

Abhinava Sankara the 38th acharya and that there has been a confusion between the two dates because of the identity of names. He therefore emphasis on 508 B. C. being the correct date.

It cannot be disputed that Sri Sankara came after Kumarila Bhatta. Kumarila Bhatta in his *Tantra Vartika* quotes Bhartrihari's *Vakyapadiya*. Houen Tsang, the Chinese traveller who visited India in about 700 A. D. says that Bhartrihari had died about fifty years before, Sri Sankara in his *Tatvamasi Prakaranam* of his Upadesa Sahasri has this sloka (142)

अभिन्नोऽपि हि बुद्ध्यात्मा विपर्यासितदर्शनैः ।

प्राह्यग्राहकसंवित्तिमेदवानिव लक्ष्यते ॥

The same sloka is found in Suresvara's *Brihadarany Vartika* and Anandagiri the commentator mentions that the sloka is a quotation from the Buddhist thinker Dharmakirti. Suresvara himself refers to Dharmakirti in another sloka thus

त्रिष्वेव त्वविनाभावदिति यद्धर्मकीर्तिना ।

प्रत्यङ्गायि प्रतिज्ञेयं हीयेतसौ न संशयः ॥

Thus it is clear that Dharmakirti preceded both Suresvara and Sri Sankara. The Chinese Traveller Fa Hian writes in 695 A. D. that Dharmakirti was his contemporary. So it seems to be patently impossible to assign an earlier date to Sri Sankara and it is more impossible to assign him a date in the sixth century B. C. If this conclusion is accepted, it necessarily follows that the list of acharyas of that mutt from 508 B. C. down to the 8th century A. D, must be scrapped completely, thus negating the authority of *Punyaslokamanjari* and other works purporting to give such a list. There can no more be any justification for treating them as "authority" for any later events either.

As elsewhere pointed out, Sri Sureswara is the same as Visvarupacharya. Visvarupa in his commentry on Yajnavalkya's Smriti mentions a reigning king.

इति संभृतमण्डलः सुधामा
 पुरुषचिरो रमणः प्रतापशीलः ।
 रविरिव नृपतिः समः प्रजानां
 जगदखिलं व्यवहारतो विभर्ति ॥
 प्रशमोदयानुरक्तो
 निखिलमलं मण्डलं निजं कृत्वा ।
 पालयति सततमुर्वीम्
 अतिवल्लवानेष नृपसविता ॥

Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri is inclined to think that this reference is to King Aditya I who founded the Chola Empire by his conquests of Kongudesa and Tondaimandalam. If he is correct, Suresvara will have to be assigned the 9th century A. D. In any case he could not have attained Siddhi in 406 B. C. (*Kaliyuga* 2695 cyclic *Bhava* year according to Atmabodhendra). Even if we are not prepared to accept that Visvarupa is the same as Suresvara or that *Balakrida* is his composition or that the reference is to a Chola king, we have the definite fact above mentioned that Suresvara quotes Dharma-kirti by name and therefore must be assigned the 8th century A. D. at the earliest.

Atmabodhendra leaves out Sri Sankara and Suresvara in counting the acharyas of that mutt and begins with Sarvajnatma as its first acharya. We shall also adopt his numbering.

Sarvajnatma the famous author of *Samkshepa Saririka* is claimed as acharya No. 1. Even in his 7th year he is said to have held his own in arguing with Sri Sankara and to have been given Sannyasa by Sri Sankara himself and appointed as

the acharya even then but under the guardianship of Suresvara. The guardian lived on for 70 years more and so Sarvajnatma was 77 when he took charge of the mutt and he lived for 42 years more. Gururatnamalika says that Suresvara stayed at Sringeri for a "long time." The Commentator interprets this as the period from the passing away of Sri Sankara till the attaining of majority by Sarvajnatma. A wonderful guardian indeed who stays away at Sringeri during the minority of his protege at Kanchi! He is said to have spent some time at Dvaraka as the teacher of Brahmasvarupa the then acharya there, and passed away at Kanchi in *Nala, Kali, 2737, Punyaslokamanjari* :

कल्पद्दैः स ह्याग्निलोकनयनैर्वर्षे नले माघवे
 लिल्ये कृष्णवतुर्दशोमनु महस्याभ्नायशैलान्तिके ।
 ग्रन्थैर्यत्कलितैर्न्यदर्शि विशदं संक्षेपशरीरक-
 प्रख्यैरद्वयसूत्रभाष्यगहनच्छन्नः पदार्थोच्चयः ॥

In proof of his pupilage under Suresvara, a sloka in his *Sam-kshepa Sariraka* is referred to. Why did he omit any mention of Sri Sankara who is said to have given him Sannyasa and must be the primary guru ? To enable this Sarvajnatma and the Prithvidhara assigned by the Kumbhakonam mutt to Sringeri to be counted among disciples of Sri Sankara, it is boldly suggested that the name सुरेश्वराख्यसच्छिष्यसन्यासाश्रमदायकः found in the Ashtottarasata Namavali in all editions issued by that mutt itself should be altered into सुरेश्वरादिषट्छिष्यसन्यासाश्रमदायकः. We cannot but admire the daring and resourcefulness shown in a patently forlorn cause.

श्रीदेवेश्वरपादपङ्कजरजसंपर्कपूताशयः ।

सर्वज्ञात्मगिराऽङ्कितो मुनिवरः सक्षेपशरीरकम् ।

चक्रे सज्जनबुद्धिमण्डितमिदं राजःयवंशे नृपे
श्रीमत्यक्षतशासने मनुकुलादित्ये भुवं शासति ॥

It is mentioned here that he is a disciple of *Devesvara Pada*. This word is interpreted as a paraphrase of *Suresvara*. Such a paraphrase would not be irregular if it were made to suit exigencies of metre but, as we find the name *Devesvara* in the prose colophon also, this theory of paraphrase is untenable and we have to take it that *Devesvara* alone was the proper name of the Guru;

इति श्रीदेवेश्वरपूज्यपादशिष्यश्रीसर्वज्ञात्ममहामुनेः कृतो
संक्षेपशरीरके...

Evidently the compiler of the list did not know that the same *Sarvajnatma* has written another work called *Pramanalakshana* wherein he expressly says that he was the *sishya* of *Devesvara pada* who was the *sishya* of *Devananda pada* who was the *sishya* of *Sreshthanandapada*, completely cutting at the root of the theory that he was a disciple of *Suresvara*. Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, the well known epigraphist, in Vol. II of the *Travancore Archaeological Series* remarks : “The pedigree of the author as given in the latter work (*Pramana Lakshana*) does not disclose any relationship with *Sankaracharya* and his matha. Where-from *Atmabodhendra* (the commentator of the *Gururatnamalika*) got the detailed history of *Sarvajanatma* is not patent and in the absence of this information we have to take his statement *cum grano salis* (with a grain of salt).” It is obvious that he attaches no value to the *Gururatnamalika* itself or to the *Brihat Sankara Vijaya* and *Punyaslokamanjari* “quoted” by the commentator.

Further Mr. Gopinatha Rao has shown that the King *Manukuladitya* referred to in the above stanza was a Kerala ruler who reigned about 978 A. D. Mr. Nilakanta Sastri on being referred to confirm Mr. Gopinatha Rao and writes to

say "I have no doubt that Manukuladitya of Sarvajnatman was the Kerala Ruler Bhaskar Ravivarman about 978—1030 A. D. The late T. A. Gopinatha Rao proved this conclusively. The King had the name Manukuladitya." The Kumbhakonam mutt however would claim Sarvajnatma as its acharya from 476 to 364 B. C., that is, nearly 15 centuries earlier !

One Satyabodha is referred to in Jnanottama's commentary on *Naishkarmya Siddhi* of Suresvara and his "*Padaka Sata*" is said to have dispersed the combatants belonging to other faiths. The work is not available but the name was handy and he is made the 2nd acharya of the mutt and credited also with being the author of *Vartikas* on the three Bhashyas—*not available at present*. Jnanottama himself is coolly grafted on to the Kumbhakonam mutt as acharya No. 3 under the name of Jnanananda. The author of the commentary was really one Mahopadhyaya Jnanottama Misra who explains that he got this unusual name in memory of his father's Guru.

चोलेषु मङ्गलमिति प्रथितार्थनाम्नि
 ग्रामे वसन् पितृगुरोरभिधां दधानः ।
 ज्ञानोत्तमः सकलदर्शनपारदृश्व
 नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिविवृतिं कुरुते यथावत् ॥
 इति श्रीमहोपाध्यायज्ञानोत्तममिश्रविरचितायां

He is evidently a very late writer and Dr. V. Raghavan seems inclined to have him allotted towards the end of the 12th century. He could not possibly be identified with "Jnanananda" who is said to have presided over the mutt from 268 B. C. to 205 B. C. Sloka

वस्तुस्यातिविधातिवादितिमिरं नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिस्फुट-
 व्याख्याचन्द्रिकया विधूय सुधियां सद्दृष्टिमुन्मीलयन् ।

अन्तस्संभृतशान्तवेदनसुधोद्योतः समुद्योतते

सर्वज्ञाश्रमचन्द्रमास्त्रिजगतीसर्वज्ञचूडामणिः ॥

is a laudatory verse written by somebody in praise of the author and appended to the book and says that the moon known as *Sarvajnasrama* shines by his moonlight known as *Naishkarmya Siddhi Vyakhya*; the *Vyakhya* has the name of *Chandrika*: the moon must necessarily be Jnanottama Misra himself. Evidently he took Sannyasa and was thereafter known as Sarvajnasrama, as Asrama is one of the ten well known Sannyasi suffixes. This incidentally shows that Atma-bodhendra had no justification at all for reading into this stanza any reference to Sarvajnatma "the 1st Acharya" or for ascribing the Sannyasa name of Jnanananda to Jnanottama.

The next set of Guru and disciple grafted on to the list are Sandhauanda and Anandajnana who are claimed as acharyas 4 and 5. Anandajnana familiarly known as Anandagiri was the well known commentator on Sri Sankara's Bhashyas and was certainly too famous to be left out of the Kumbhakonam list ; and as he refers to himself in his works as the sishya of Suddhananda, the latter also had to be given a place in that list. Unfortunately the propounder of the list was ignorant of the fact that Anandajnana in his commentary on the *Aitareya Upanishad Bhashya* has expressly referred to and quoted from the *Dipika* of Sri Vidyananda who admittedly belonged to the 14th century A. D. and could not be identified with an "acharya" who is said to have been in that mutt from 124 to 55 B. C. Further Mahamahopadyaya Kuppaswami Sastri of Madras in his introduction to the *Tarka Sangraha* of the Barodas Oriental Series is of opinion that Anandagiri was the same as Janardana the father of Sarvajna Vishnu who lived in the 14th century A. D. As the Kumbhakonam mutt would have only Brahmachari Sannyasis for its heads, this Anandagiri could not have been in that mutt.

Atma-bodhendra says that Anandajnana was succeeded by Kaivalya Yogi and then by Kripa Sankara, Visvarupa

Suresvara and Chidghana in order. Evidently to justify the mutt's claim to supermacy over even the Sringeri mutt, it is alleged that Kripa Sankara under the orders of his Guru Kaivalya Yogi appointed one Visvarupa for the Sringeri mutt. I do not see why this Visvarupa is called Subhata Visvarupa by N, Venkataraman (p. 54). It is curious that the successor of Kripa Sankara at Kanchi is also given the name of Visvarupa Suresvara. Can it be just to create a confusion? This Kripa Sankara is claimed to be the *real Shanmata sthapana-charya* (p. 56)- Some more names follow till we come to Ujjvala Sankara the 16th acharya who is credited with making the Kerala King Kulasekara a poet and passed away in Kali-yuga 3468 (367 A. D.) in Kashmir in a place "still known as Mahayatipura" after him. Some more acharyas of wonderful traits follow.

Then we come to "Muka Sankarendra" the 20th acharya. Muka Kavi the author of the delightful *Panchasati* in praise of Kamakshi was so directly connected with Kanchi itself that the temptation to include him in the list proved too strong for the compiler. Though the devotee is content to call himself Muka Kavi and the entire world also knows him only as such, he becomes in the compiler's hands Muka Sankarendra Sarasvati. Though the accepted tradition is that he got his power of speech by the grace of Goddess Kamakshi, we are asked to believe that he got it through the grace of his "predecessor Vidyaghana." He is credited with many a miracle said to have taken place in Kashmir and "quotations" are given from the work of the keepers of horses and elephants whom he turned into famous poets. He was also served by Matrugupta and Pravarasena both Kings of Kashmir. He is also credited with the authorship of a *Prachina Sankara Vijaya* from which Atmabodendra "quotes" but which has disappeared now.

Matrugupta is the name of a poet mentioned in Kalhana's *Rajatarngini* 3rd Taranga, as having waited on King Vikramaditya for some months till he was rewarded by being given the kingship over Kashmir when the real ruler Pravarasena was away. On the latter's return he gladly resigned in his favour, went away to Kasi and became a Sannyasi.

अथ वाराणसीं गत्वा कृतकाषायसंग्रहः ।

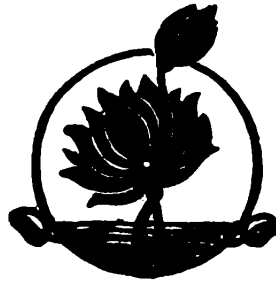
सर्वं सन्यस्य सुकृती मातृगुप्तोऽपव्रतिः ॥ III 320

Here was a Sannyasi mentioned in a historical poem and it would have been foolish on the part of the compiler if he did not appropriate him as an acharya of his mutt though as a King he ruled at Kashmir and as a Sannyasi stayed at Varanasi, both at the other end of the country far removed from Kanchi. It is curious why the author Kalhana who recorded that Matrugupta took Sannyasa at Varanasi did not think it necessary to mention even the name of the Guru who gave him Sannyasa and suppressed all reference to the Kanchi mutt over which he is said to have presided as Jagadguru under the high sounding name of Sarvabhauma Chandrasekara Indra Sarasvati. It is perhaps for this wanton suppression of a very important particular in Matrugupta's life Atmabodhendra has refused to provide Kalhana a seat in his imposing galaxy of acharyas.

After some more names we reach Abhinava Sankara the 38th acharya. It is this Acharya that is said to have been born to his mother Visishtha three years after the death of his father. at Chidambaram. Extensive "quotations" are given from *Sankarendara Vilasa* said to have been composed by one Vakpathi Bhatta—but *not available at present*. His mother afraid of calumny threw the child away in a forest ; the child was taken care of by the women of Sage Vyaghrapada ; Vyaghrapada himself performed the Upanayana for him and taught him the Sastras ; even the first Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada chose to be his teacher ; more than all this, Lord

Nataraja Himself in an invisible form proclaimed his competency for the headship of the Mutt. It is he again that went to Kashmir and ascended the Sarvajna Peetha there and disappeared with his body into the Dattatreya Cave. He was given a pair of sandals by Brahma Himself and with their help he toured in foreign countries and was accepted by them also as their Guru. This interesting tale we are asked to accept on the authority of *Gururatnamalika* and its commentary which “quotes” *Sankarendra Vilasa* and *Sadgurusantana Parimala* besides the normal *Punyaslokamanjari*. The reader will easily perceive that it is only an attempt to accommodate the several versions of Sri Sankara’s life found in other works.

Another curious circumstance in connection with this Acharya is that his predecessor is said to have passed away on Pushya Bahula Dvitiya in the year Prabhava while this Acharya’s date of birth itself is given as Vaisakha Sukla Dasami in the *next* year Vibhava. If he came to the seat, it must be after his upanayana and studies. Thus there must have been a long gap of several years when the mutt was without a head. *This incidentally gives the lie direct to the claim of that Mutt to have had an “unbroken line of succession.”*



CHAPTER—X

THE LATER ACHARYAS

Somadeva. the author of the famous *Kathasaritsagara*, a collection of folk tales, has been useful in suggesting many a story to the compiler of the list and it would have been sheer ingratitude if he were denied a place there. He is Acharya No. 46 under the name of Bodhendra though he hails from Kashmir, the other extremity of the Indian continent, and though there is nothing to show that this weaver of fairy tales, learned as he may have been, was ever competent to take, or actually took, Sannyasa. He is said to have been provided with a pearl palanquin by King Bhoja of Dhara and had his Kanchi mutt rid of Mlecchas with the help of a minister of King Kalasa of Kashmir

Chandra Chuda is said to be his successor, He is said to have taught Bhasya to Jayadeva (the author of *Chandraloka* and *Prasannaraghava*), Mankha (the author of *Srikantha charita*) and Krishna Misra (the author of *Prabodhachandrodaya*). In addition to these well known works, Jayadeva is alleged to have written a *Bhaktikalpalatika* and Krishna Misra a *Guruvijaya* and “quotations” are given from these books—“not available at present.” This Acharya is said to have defeated a Jaina scholar Hemacharya and to have been praised by the “great Kashmiri physician Suhala” in his “*Vaidyabhihanachintamani*” which also is not available now but has furnished a quotation” to Atmabodhendra.

His “successor” Chidvilasa defeated Abhinavagupta. Sriharsha and others. “Quotations” from Sriharsha’s *Sthairya Vicharana Prakarana* and *Sivasakti Siddhi*—not available at present—are given in proof of his greatness. I have dealt elsewhere with the deliberate misquotation from Sriharsha’s

Naishadham. The *Gururatnamalika* mentions the name Chidvilasa only. But Advaitananda, the author of *Brahmavidyabharanam* was a famous scholar ; in the view of the commentator, it would not be proper to leave him out; so he is identified with Chidvilasa and his name also is amplified into Advaitananda Bodhendra Sarasvathi. But Advaitananda himself says that he got his Sannyasa from Bhumananda Sarasvathi and that he studied *Brahmasutra Bhasya* under Ramananda Tirtha (not Sarasvati as mentioned by N. Venkataraman). But the Mutt is nothing if it is not resourceful. So it makes Advaitananda the author of two other works *Santivivarana* and *Gurupradipa* and proceeds to “quote” from the former two stanzas which identify Bhumananda with “Chandrachuda the Lord of the Kamakoti.” Even Atmabodhendra does not go to such a length, for these “quotations” are found only in later publications. Atreya Krishna Sastri “quotes” only one sloka but N. Venkataraman is able to quote two slokas though he himself says that the book is “not available at present.” It is noticeable that it is only in the second sloka that Bhumananda is given the alias Chandrachuda, Atreya Krishna Sastri would ascribe to this Acharya the authorship of a *Sankara Vijaya* also. I do not know if he is to be credited with the authorship of the *Sankara Vijaya*, popularly known as *Chidvilasiya Sankara Vijaya*, which no doubt mentions a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi but makes no mention of any Mutt there though there is specific reference to the founding of the recognised four mutts at Sringeri, Badari, Jagannath and Dwaraka and also says that Sri Sankara disappeared into the Dattatreya cave in the Himalayas.

Vidya Tirtha, the famous Guru of Vidyaranya, who entered into Lambika Yoga at Sringeri is also coolly appropriated by the Kumbhakonam mutt as its 49th Acharya. an audacious claim pitched too high as it cannot deceive the

the merest child. A beautiful edifice in stone testifying to the architectural skill of those times stands at Sringeri to commemorate the sacred place where the great Yogi disappeared. The Kumbhakonam mutt would make a distinction between Vidya Sankara of Sringeri and Vidya Tirtha of Kanchi and claim for the latter the status of being the Guru of Vidyaranya. That this claim is absurd and untenable on the face of it is clear from its own assertion that all its Gurus are Indra Sarasvatis ; the suffix Indra Sarasvati cannot be appended to "Tirtha" which is by itself a Sannyasi name.

The comptier of the *Parampora* noticed a stanza in the beginning of Madhava's *Sarvadarsana Sangraha*, where he bows to Sarvajna Vishnu, son of Sarngapani. He failed to realise that this Madhava was not the same as Madhava who was the elder brother of Sayana but was really the son of Sayana and therefore the nephew of the great Madhavacharya who was the preceptor of King Bukka of Vijayanagar. This Madhava specifically says :

श्रीमत्सायणदुग्धाब्धिकौस्तुमेन विपश्चिता ।

क्रियते माधवार्येण सर्वदर्शनसंग्रहः ॥

Under this misconception which the compiler attempts to justify, he decided upon piching upon the name of Sarvajnavishnu as the *Purvasrama* name of Vidya Tirtha. He evidently did not notice that in the same work Madhava quotes Sarvajnavishnu. The opening sloka mentions Sarvajna Vishnu as his Guru and as the son of Sarngapani :

पारं गतं सकलदर्शनसागराणां

आत्मोचितार्थचरितार्थितसर्वलोकम् ।

श्रीशाङ्गपाणितनयं निखिलागमजं

सर्वज्ञविष्णुगुरुमन्वहमाश्रयेऽहम् ॥

But when ho quotes him later he calls him Sarvajnavishnu Bhattopadhyaya.

तदुक्तं विवरणविवरणे सहजसर्वज्ञविष्णुभट्टोपाध्यायैः—

“ न चात्र हेतुदृष्टान्तयोः एकप्रकाशरूपान्वयः शङ्कनीयः,
तमोविरोध्याकारो हि प्रकाशशब्दवाच्यः तेनाकारेण
ऐक्यं उभयत्र अस्ति ” इति ॥

The passage quoted by Madhava is from a commentary called *Riju Vivarana* written by Sarvajna Vishnu Bhattopadhyaya on the *Panchapadika Vivarana*. He calls himself there as the sishya of Swami Indra Purna and the son of Janardana.

इति श्री स्वामीन्द्रपूज्यपादशिष्य-सर्वशास्त्रविशारद—
जनार्दनात्मज-सर्वज्ञविष्णुभट्टोपाध्यायकृतौ

Evidently the word Sarngapani in Madhava's sloka is either an alias or only a metrical paraphrase of the proper name Janardana. We have no evidence that he ever became a Sannyasi. On the other hand, we have the positive information that he was a Grihastha and had at least two sons and so could not be identified with "Vidya Tirtha" who is said to have been a Brahmachari-Sannyasi. Chennu Bhartta, the author of *Tarka Bhasha Prakasika*, was one of the sons as he describes himself there in these words :

श्रीहरिहरमहाराजपरिपालितेन सहजसर्वज्ञविष्णुदेवाराध्यतनूजेन
सर्वज्ञानुजेन चेन्नुभट्टेन विरचितायां

In his commentary on Sarvabhouma's *Ramasoundarya Lahari* also, he says :

श्रीविष्णुदेवाराध्यस्य चेन्नुभट्टोऽयमात्मजः ।
रामसौन्दर्यलहरीकाव्यं व्याख्यातुमिच्छति ॥

Chennu Bhatta has written another work called *Nirukti* and that has been commented on by one Vishnu Bhatta. It is interesting to note that in the latter Madhava's sloka

पारं गतं सकलदर्शनसागराणां ॥

is reproduced verbatim. This shows that Sarvajna Vishnu was known as Sarvajna Vishnu even at the time of the commentary on a work of Chennu Bhatta who was a son of Sarvajna Vishnu and referred to himself as a protege of King Harihara. If this King is Harihara I who ruled from 1336 to 1354 or is Harihara II who ruled from 1377 to 1404, Chennu Bhatta could not possibly refer to "Vidya Tirtha" by the name of Sarvajna Vishnu for according to the Kumbhakonam Mutt he became the head of that mutt as early as 1297 probably long before Chennu Bhatta was born. Thus it will be clear that viewed from any point of view it is impossible to equate Sarvajna Vishnu with "Vidya Tirtha" the alleged head of that mutt.

To add to the prestige of that mutt, it is further alleged that the Sringeri Mutt had ceased to exist for some centuries and that this "Vidya Tirtha" restored it through his sishyas. It is claimed also that Bharati Tirtha "the first head of the restored Sringeri Matha" was his disciple. Atmabohendra mentions that the disciples of Vidya Tirtha and of his disciple Sankarananda, namely (1) Sachchidananda (2) Advaita Brahmananda (3) Sandrananda (4) Advaitananda Sevadhi (5) Mahadeva Siva and (6) Advaita Sukhananda were made heads of the Sringeri and other Mutts established at that time. According to him No. 2 Advaita Brahmananda "known also as Anandatma" was the Vidya Guru of Sankarananda and he himself was identical with Bharati Tirtha. This theory is just to explain the fact that Sankarananda in all his works has referred only to Anandatma as his Guru and not to anybody else. This is a patent attempt to bring in Sankarananda into the Kumbhakonam list. It is sought to be supported by 'quoting' some slokas said to be found in Sankarananda's *Brihladaranyaka Upanishad Dipika*,

काञ्चीपीठजुषः कठोरधिषणानिर्धूतदुर्ध्वह-

द्वैतिवातदुराग्रहग्रहभयान् मादाविदुरक्रियान् ।

आचार्यान् मम चन्द्रमौलिचरणध्यानैकतानाशयान्

विद्यातीर्थमहेश्वरान् हृदि सदा विद्योतमानान् भजे ॥

सच्छात्रत्वेऽपि साक्षाद्गुरव इव दयामेदुरा ये पुनर्मां

गूढेष्वर्थेषु गाढ विवरणसरणेश्चक्रात्तत्प्रवेशम् ।

भारत्यानन्दतीर्थापरिवरुदवहानद्वयब्रह्मसौख्यान

वृद्धान् सिद्धान् प्रबुद्धानपि हृदि सततं भावये ब्रह्मभूतान् ॥

द्वैतध्वान्तनिकृन्तनाहरधिपैः शिष्यैर्विंशत्याष्टभिः

विष्टभ्यः द्वयविष्टराष्टकमितः श्रीमाधवाद्यैर्बुधैः ।

राष्ट्रं यो व्यदधिष्ट शिष्टपरिषत्स्वद्वैतमेवाद्वय-

ब्रह्मानन्दमुनीश्वरं तमनघं वन्दे विरूपाक्षगम् ।

Sankarananda is well known as the author of some *Upanishad Dipikas*, *Gita Tatparya Bodhini* and *Atmapurana* and always calls himself the sishya or Anandatma. These slokas obviously aim at connecting him with 'Vidya Tirtha' and the Kumbhakonam mutt. Though some of the *Dipikas* have been published, the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Dipika* has not yet been published. Atmabodhendra thought that he could safely "quote" anything from it and N. Venkataraman relying upon its non-existence has mentioned that it is "not available at present." Unfortunately for them, there is such a work still in manuscript. I have verified that these stanzas are *not* found in both the two manuscripts I am aware of. A mere reading of these stanzas will be sufficient to impress on any impartial reader their utter unreliability. Atmabodhendra would invest Sankarananda with the title of Abhinava Sankara also.

Paramasivendra the "Guru of the famous Sadasivendra" is claimed to have been the 55th Acharya of that Mutt. If he were so, his Guru must be one Sarvajna Sadasiva

Bodhendra (the alleged author of *Punyaslokamanjari*). He is said to have occupied that seat from 1539 to 1586. Psramasivendra is known to have written two books, *Daharavidya Prakasika* and *Siva Gita Vyakhya*. In both of them he mentions definitely that his Guru was Abhinava Narayanendra Sarasvathi who admittedly has no place in the Kumbhakonam list. Further it is well known that his sishya Sadasivendra was a contemporary of the Ruler Tuljaji of Tanjore (1729—1736). Kartigai Tirunal of Travancore (1768—1798) and Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaman of Pudukkottai (1730—1769) and a classmate of Gopalakrishna Sastri who was the Raja Guru of Pudukkottai and got a grant of villages in 1739 A. D. Paramasivendra himself says that he wrote *Daharavidya Prakasika* at the request of Tryambaka Makhi, This Tryambaka Makhi was the minister of the Tanjore Kings Sahaji (1684—1711) and Sarabhoji (1711—1728) and wrote a magnificent running commentary on *Srimad Ramayana* called *Dharmakuta* and finished it in October 1719 and lived on till 1750. This shows that Paramasivendra definitely belonged to the 17—18th century and cannot possibly be identified with “Paramasivendra” of the Kumbhakonam Mutt who is said to have passed away in 1586. The same facts conclusively prove also that the ascription of the authorship of *Gururatanmalika* to Sadasivendra is entirely baseless ; he is said to have written it at the request of “Paramasivendra’s successor Atmabodha alias Visvadhika” whose period is given as 1586—1638. To explain this patent impossibility of a 18th century saint writing anything two centuries earlier, it is urged that as he was a Yogi he could have lived so long. But this is forgetting that a “classmate” of his boyhood also belonged to the 18th century as above mentioned, and he was certainly not a Yogi as he got a grant in 1739.

The Atmabodha alias Visvadhika referred to above is the 56th acharya according to Atmabodhendra. He is credited

with the title of Abhinava Sankaracharya and with the authorship of a commentary on Sri Rudra. There *is* a *Sri Rudra Bhasya* by one Abhinava Sankaracharya but he had no aliases like Atma Bodha or Visvadhika ; and his real name was Rama Bramananda Tirtha. He was not even a Sarasvati, much less an Indra Sarasvathi. He has written another work called *Pashandagajakesari* and was the Guru of Venkatanatha who gave the name *Brahmanandagiri* to his *Vyakhya* on the *Bhagavad Gita* in memory of his Guru. He has nothing to do with the Kumbhakonam mutt, but Atmabodhendra evidently fascinated by the title of Abhinava Sankaracharya was tempted to include him also in the list.

Bodhendra Sarasvati the famous Bhakta who preached the high value of *Nama Sankeertana* has his Samadhi within a few miles of Kumbhakonam and is now appropriated by the mutt as its acharya No. 57 though the mutt where the samadhi is situate has always been quite an independent institution, with a distinct *Sampradaya* of its own, unconnected with the Kumbhakonam mutt.

I should think that the considerations mentioned above are more than enough to convince any unbiassed reader that the entire succession list till the end of the 18th century is a pure creation of the imaginative genius of Atmabodhendra. As already stated it is quite possible that "Atmabodhendra" himself is but the pseudonym for a Pandit who has obliged the Kumbhakonam mutt with this list. But a mere string of names will not be sufficient to give the mutt a status much less a status over "ordinary mutts." So it had to seek a new *Mathamnaya*, a new *Mahavakya* and a new title to justify its claim to unique greatness. How it has blundered and floundered even in these aspects will be shown in the sequel.

CHAPTER XI

THE FIFTH MAHAVAKYA

It is well known that all Sannyasis owing allegiance to Sri Sankaracharya have to be initiated into what are called *Mahavakyas*. The *Suka Rahasya Upanishad* specifies the *Mahavakyas* as Four.

अथ महावाक्यानि चत्वारि । यथा, ओं प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म,
ओं अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, ओं तत् त्वमसि, ओं अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।

Sri Vidyanaraya in *Mahavakya Viveka*, the fifth chapter of his *Panchadasi*, gives the meaning of only these four *Mahavakyas*. It may be mentioned here that this chapter is sometimes appended to the *Suka Rahasya Upanishad* and mistakenly treated as part of that *Upanishad* itself.

These four *Mahavakyas* are drawn from each one of the four Vedas. The *Upanishads* abound in passages proclaiming the identity of the Soul and Brahman, the identity of the Universe with Brahman, and so on: and they are no doubt “great passages” in the sense of being helpful for contemplation and introspection and are collected together in anthologies like *Mahavakya Ratnavali* for the benefit of Sannyasis but such passages are *not mahavakyas* in the technical sense of that term as that term is applicable only to the four sentences mentioned above.

The 9th chapter of *Siva tatva Sudhanidhi* which forms the *Malayachala Khanda* of *Sanatkumara Samhita* in the *Skanda Purana* gives a detailed exposition of the *Mahavakyas* “which are four beginning with *Prajnanam Brahma*”,

प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म चेत्यादि महावाक्यचतुष्टयम् ॥

Brahma'sri Srinivasa Sastri of *Brahmavidya* fame in his commentary called *Chintamani* on this work says specifically that the number Four is used in this context to emphasise the fact that these four passages alone and not others are entitled to the status of mahavakyas.

महावाक्यचतुष्टयं—संख्याग्रहणं रुद्ध्या महावक्यत्वं नान्येषां इति
द्योतयितुम् ॥

This sacred land of Bharata has been conceived of as a Yajna Bhumi or Vedi, Sacrificial Altar, and the four Vedas are allotted respectively to the four directions East, South, West and North corresponding to the order observed in seating the priests around the sacrificial fire. The establishment of the four Mathas in the four corners of the country and the allocation of the primary *Mahavakya* for each of them are based on this principle. There is no room for a fifth *Mahavakya* at all as there is no fifth Veda. Thus

Jagannatha Matha in the East has.

Rig Veda Mahavakya: Prajnanam Brahma.

Sringeri Matha in the South has

Yajur Veda Mahavakya: Aham Brahma Asmi.

Dvaraka Matha in the West has

Sama Veda Mahavakya: Tat Iwam Asi.

Bidari Matha in the North has

Atharava Veda Mahavakya: Ayam Atma Brahma.

The *Mathmnaya Setu* claimed by the Kumbhakonam Mutt to be authoritative as having been written by Sri Sankaracharya Himself mentions the Vedas for the recognised four Mathas but significantly enough does not mention any Veda at all for that Matha, and therefore does not mention any *Mahavakya* for it. Atmabodhendra however in his commentary on *Gururatnamalika* would

claim for it the Rig Veda and the :“ *Mahavakya* ” *Om Tat Sat*. It is certainly unfortunate that this “supreme mutt cannot claim the Yajur Veda for itself in spite of the fact that Sri Sankaracharya Himself belonged to that Veda. It is no doubt possible to spilt up the Yajur Veda into two, the Sukla and the Krishna. But tradition has made it impossible as all Sannyasis, whether belonging to the Sukla or the Krishna Sakha, are treated as Yajurvedis without any distinction and are primarily initiated into the *Mahavakya-Aham Brahma Asmi* which is in the *Sukla Yajus*. As this *Mahavakya* was thus appropriated by all Yajur Vedis, it was not possible to claim it for this “supreme” Mutt. It had therefore to accept the established tradition that *Aham Brahma Asmi* belongs to the Yajur Veda Matha at Sringeri. To escape the inevitable conclusion that, if the Kumbhakonam Mutt was also a Yajur Veda Mutt, it was a branch of the Sringeri Mutt, Atmabodha with rare resourcefulness claims the Rig Veda for his Mutt. But in doing so, he had to deny that the Rig Veda was the Veda of the Jagannatha Matha and allotted to it Sukla Yajur Veda retaining Krishna Yajur Veda for Sringeri. This led to the further absurdity of assigning a Sukla Yajur *Mahavakya*, *Aham Brahma Asmi*, to the Krishna Yajur Matha at Sringeri and a Rig Veda *Mahavakya*, *Prajnanam Brahma* to a Sukla Yajur Matha at Jagannath. The Kumbhakonam Mutt had thus to forego the Krishna Yajus to which Sri Sankaracharya belonged as well as the Sukla Yajus to which Sri Suresvaracharya belonged, in spite of its claim to be the “own” Mutt of the former, managed later on by the latter for 70 years. It had thus to give up the Yajur Veda and the Yajur Veda *Mahavakya* to Sringeri and to give up also the Rig Veda *Mahavakya* to Jagannath and to claim the Rig Veda as its own without however the *Mahavakya* from that Veda. As already stated there were only four *Mahavakyas* though the Vedas may be counted as five if the Yajur

Veda was split up into Sukla and Krishna. Though therefore there was a possibility to claim one of these five Vedas for itself, there was no fifth *Mahavakya* available for appropriation. Thus the Mutt in spite of its appropriating the Rig Veda which belonged rightly to the Jagannath Mutt, found it impossible to appropriate that Mutt's *Mahavakya* also and had to content itself without a *Mahavakya* from any Veda. The *Brihat Sankara Vijaya* said to have been written by a contemporary of Sri Sankaracharya and "quoted" in fragments in the work of Atmabodhendra says that what this mutt is to be initiated in is only the Pranava:

शक्तिः कामकोट्येव प्रणवश्चोद्देश्यवाक् ।

But Atmabodhendra would say that the Veda of Kumbhakonam is Rig and that its *Mahavakya* is "Om Tat Sat" which is neither in the Rig Veda nor in any other Veda. The words 'Om, Tat, Sat' are found in the *Bhagavad Gita* as three modes of expressing Brahman

ओं तत् सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।

It is apparent that, as the four genuine *Mahavakyas* had been appropriated by the four recognised mutts legitimately entitled to them, the claimant seeking to set up a fifth mutt had to content himself with what he could get from the *fifth* Veda which designation is by courtesy usually given to the *Mahabharata* wherein *Bhagavad Gita* is included. He could have been straightforward if consistently with this new "*Mahavakya*" he had claimed the *Mahabharata* as his Veda. But he chose to claim the Rig Veda as his, thereby heightening the absurdity of his claim.

It need hardly be stated that a *Vakya* or sentence must give expression to a correlated idea usually denoted by a subject, a predicate and an object and that a mere

collection of synonymous words can never make a sentence. We fail to see how “*Om Tat Sat*” which is simply an enumeration of three synonymous substantives can ever claim the status of a *Vakya*. It is well known also that a *Mahavakya*, as accepted hitherto and by all writers on Vedanta, must be an Upanishadic passage which proclaims the identity of the Soul and Brahman. The words “*Om Tat Sat*” are not found in any Upanishad nor can they postulate any identity between the Soul and Brahman for they do not refer to the Soul at all but all of them refer to Brahman only. To claim the status of a *Mahavakya* for such a combination of words which do not make even a *Vakya*, is on the face of it, ridiculous. The further claim that this collection of synonymous words found in the *Gita* is supreme over the Vedic *Mahavakyas* is still more absurd. If any body chooses to say that he does not belong to any of the recognised four *Sampradayas* and that he has been initiated only into this “*fifth Mahavakya*” now set up, we shall have no hesitation in saying that he cannot be even an ordinary Sannyasi of the order of Sri Sankaracharya.

To get over this contingency, a suggestion has been recently made that *Om Tat Sat* is only an *Upalakshana* for all the four *Mahavakyas* and that the Sarasvati order is initiated into all of them. But for a word to operate as *Upalakshana* it is a necessary condition that it must denote something which is of the same category as those sought to be implied. For example, if a boy is told “See that the curd is not eaten up by crows”, it does not certainly mean that monkeys may be allowed to eat it up; here the word “crows” is *upalakshana* for “all animals likely to eat up the curd.” Similarly any one of the *Mahavakyas* say, *Prajnanam Brahma*, may be an *Upalakshana* for the other three. In the sentence “Bring me a knife”, the knife

cannot be an upalakshana for a cloth or an umbrella. Similarly the *Om Tat Sat* which is neither a *Vakya* nor a *Mahavakya* cannot possibly be an *Upalakshana* for genuine *Mahavakyas*. It is also incorrect and misleading to say that the Sarasvati order is initiated into all the *Mahavakyas*. There is no peculiarity at all about the Sarasvati order. In fact, all the ten orders are, at the time of their initiation after Sannyasa, given all the four *Mahavakyas* which are taken respectively from the four Vedas, the only variation being that the *Mahavakya* of the particular Veda to which the initiate belongs is taught to him first before the *Mahavakyas* of the other Vedas. The claim therefore to have a *fifth* *Mahavakya* and to have *Om Tat Sat* for that *Mahavakya* is not only baseless but absurd in the extreme.

A desperate attempt to ascribe mahavakyas not only to the four Vedas but to every one of the several Sakhas in each Veda is now being made but this definitely ignores the Sampradaya and the Sastras, particularly the express statement of the Suka Rahasya Upanishad pointed out at the beginning of this chapter. Even then, *Om Tat Sat* is not a passage in any Sakha nor can it ever become a *Vakya* or *mahavakya*. Evidently realising this an ingenious plea is now put forward that “*Om*” is by itself a *mahavakya* as it is but the condensed form of “*So’ham*” if we leave out the consonantal sounds. This is again forgetting that, even if the condensement is granted to be legitimate, *Om* is the property of all Sannyasis and the Sarasvati order or the Kumbhakonam mutt has no special claim to it. In fact the Pranava is open to all Dvijas and “*So’ham*” to all Sadhakas. That neither the Pranava nor *So’ham* can be claimed for that mutt is also clear from Atmabodhendra’s definitely assigning these two as the “*mahavakyas*” of the two non-terrestrial Amnayas the Nishkala and the Oordhva respectively and “*Om Tat Sat*” for that mutt.

CHAPTER—XII

INDRA SARASVATI

The title of Indra Sarasvati is claimed to be the special characteristic of the heads of the Kumbhakonam Mutt. The “authority” in support of this claim is their *Mathamnaya Setu* which prescribes

कामकोटीमठे त्वस्मिन् गुरुः इन्द्रसरस्वती ।

The origin on this speciality is explained by Mr. N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu thus :

“ This title, Indra Sarasvati, has a traditional history of its own which goes to confirm the tradition that the Central Mutt of Sri Sankaracharya was established at Conjeevaram.... It is said that, on one occasion when Suresvara was seriously ill, Sri Sankara obtained for his disciple the medical aid of the Asvins, the doctors of Gods. Indra growing wild at this came down to the earth and aimed his Vajrayudha at the Asvins but the weapon stopped without going forward, and seeing that it was due to the power of Sri Sankaracharya, Indra gave his own title to the Jagadguru which is borne even to this day by the occupants of the Kamakoti Peetha. The other part of the title, namely Sarasvati, is borne by the same Peethadhipati for the reason that Sri Sankaracharya defeated Sarasavani or Sarasvati at Kashmir.”

This fantastic story reflects no credit on any of the high personages involved and is a patent myth. We do not know on what “authority” this tale is based. It is not found in any of the available *Sankara Vijayas* inclusive of the latest “*Vyasachaliya*” and in the other authorities of the Kumbhakonam Mutt. Where there is any reference to the Gods Asvins, they are said to have come down with the consent of Indra and

cured or attempted to cure Sri Sankara Himself and not Suresvara. There is thus no question of Sri Sankara vanquishing Indra at all. An alternative suggestion has been made that the word "Indra" is only a paraphrase of "Suresvara" the name of the sturdy opponent whom Sri Sankara vanquished in debate and won over to his side and made a disciple of his own. This ignores the fact that it was Mandana Misra or Visvarupa that was vanquished and not Suresvara ; Suresvara was the name given to him after he had Sannyasa from Sri Sankara ; he was not Suresvara at the time of the debate. The suggestion that Sri Sankara thought it an honour to take upon himself the names of Indra, Suresvara or Sarasvati whom he defeated is on the face of it absurd. The strength of such absurd tales, as of others from the Kumbhakonam Mutt, evidently consists in the obvious difficulty of disproving anything which may be said to have taken place hundreds of years ago. But even now we have enough materials to show that, just like similar claims, this claim to the title of Indra Sarasvati is also a pure afterthought of quite a recent date and has absolutely no foundation in fact.

Even the '*Birhat Sankara Vijaya*' "quoted" by Atmabodhendra does not support this claim. It only says :

शक्तिः भीकामकोटयेव प्रणवश्चोपदेश्यवाक् ।

शुद्धा सरस्वती चेन्द्रानन्दपूर्वा च भारती ॥

That is, the names may be simply Sarasvati or Bharati or may be Sarasvati or Bharati with the prefix Indra or Ananda, i. e. Indra Sarasvati or Indra Bharati or Ananda Sarasvati or Ananda Bharati.

For any attribute to be a *special* characteristic of a thing, it is a necessary condition that it must characterise *all* the things sought to be characterised and it is an equally necessary condition that it should not characterise any thing

other than the things sought to be characterised, If I say "Men have turbans on their heads", this statement will not apply to all men for not all men wear turbans ; here the wearing of turbans cannot be a special characteristic of men in general. Similarly if I say "Men are bipeds" this also will not be a special characteristic of men as birds also are "bipeds." So a special characteristic must not only be found in all things sought to be characterised by it but must not be found in things other than those things. We shall see if the special characteristic of Indra Sarasvati satisfies either of these conditions.

It is an indisputable fact that Sri Sankara who is said to have been 'honoured' by the grant or assumption of this unique title never appended it to his name. Nor did any of his numerous disciples or commentators or admirers or followers ever ascribe such a title to him. We find grafted to the Kumbhakonam list well known Vedanta teachers as Sarvajna-tma, Jnanottama Anandajnana, Muka Kavi, Advaitananda and Sankarananda. They are all said to have presided over that Mutt but curiously enough none of these writers chose to make any the slightest mention, in any of their works, of the Kanchi Mutt or of this unique distinctive suffix Indra Sarasvati.

The Mutt printed some copper plates as appendix to the *Gururatnamala Vyakhya* many years ago and published later on photo copies of the same and others in its possession. In the few grants where the name of the donee is mentioned, the 'Indra' is significantly absent. It is only in grant No. 10 that there is a mention of 'Indra Sarasvathi' but the Editor Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao has pointed out that the inscription is "in a kind of Nagari character which is quite modern" and Mr. L. D. Swamikannu Pillai is positive that "there was *no* lunar eclipse on the day in question" as mentioned in the grant. Thus even the records of the mutt itself do not support this claim.

Further, if as the *Mathamnaya Setu*, the code of conduct said to have been promulgated by Sri Sankara Himself, says the title of Indra Sarasvati was known as exclusively belonging to the heads of that Mutt, how comes it that several persons, admittedly having nothing to do with its headship, had that suffix ? It is interesting to note that most of these persons lived at Kanchi itself, or near it or in the Tanjore District itself close to Kumbhakonam. We may cite the following indisputable examples.

1. Ramachandra Indra Sarasvati. He is familiarly known as Upanishad Brahma Yogi as he wrote commentaries on most of the Upanishads and founded the Upanishad Brahmendra Mutt at Kanchi itself.

2. Vasudeva Indra Sarasvati was the Guru of No. 1.

3. All the occupants of the Upanishad Brahmendra Mutt at Kanchi have the suffix Indra Sarasvati. Specific mention may be made of Mahadeva Indra Sarasvati who was instrumental in performing the Kumbhabhisheka of Sri Margabandhu Temple at Virinchipuram, the viliage of Sri Appayya Dikshita, near Kanchi in 1892 and arranging for permanent puja there with the help of the acharya of the Sringeri Mutt and the descendants of that great Dikshita.

4. Geervana Indra Sarasvati was a contemporary of Appayya Dikshita and the author of *Prapanchasara Sangraha* and other works.

5. Balakrishna Indra Sarasvati, the author of *Nyayamoda*.

6. Raghunatha Indra Sarasvati, or Raghava Indra Sarasvati, the Guru of No. 5.

7. Anandabodha Indra Sarasvati, the commentator of *Yoga Vasishtha*.

8. Gangadhara Indra Sarasvati, Guru of No. 7 and probably identical with Gangadhara Indra Sarasvati the author of *Svarajya Siddhi*.

9. Chidanandabrahma Indra Sarasvati the Guru of Paramanandaghana Brahmananda Sarasvati author of *Smriti Ratna*.

10. Abhinavanarayana Indra Sarasvati. the Guru of No. 9 and the author of *Chhandogya Bhashya Tika*.

11. Jnana Indra Sarasvati, the Guru of No. 10. It is not known whether he is identical with Jnana Indra Sarasvati who has written the *Tatvabodhini Vyakhya* on *Siddhanta Kaumudi*,

12. Kaivalya Indra Sarasvati, the Guru of No. 11.

13. Bodha Indra Sarasvati, the author of *Advaita Bhushanam*.

14. Vasudeva Indra Sarasvati who has written a commentary on *Advaita Bushanam*.

15. Gopala Indra Sarasvati, the Guru of Venkatanarayana, the commentator of *Champu Ramayana*.

16. Sadasiva Indra Sarasvati, the Saint of Nerur on whom the *Gururatna Malika* itself is sought to be fathered.

17. Atmabodha Indra Sarasvati himself who is said to have written a commentary on *Gururatnamalika* does not claim to have ever presided over that mutt.

18. Vasudeva Indra Sarasvati of quite recent times who wrote the *Siddhantaesa Tatparya Sangraha* and lived in the Tanjore District.

19. Ramabrahma Indra Sarasvati another recent resident of the Tanjore District and the author of *Advaita Siddhanta Guru Chandrika*.

20. Svayamprakasa Indra Sarasvati who passed away some years ago at Sendamangalam in the Salem District.

21. Sadasiwa Indra Sarasvati the Guru of No. 20.

22. Advaita Sachchidananda Indra Sarasvati, the Guru of Achyuta Raya, the author of *Advaitarajya Lakshmi*.

I am sure that the facts stated above are more than enough to show that the claim of the Kumbhakonam Mutt to the title of Indra Sarasvati for its incumbents is entirely baseless even according to their own “authorities” and “records” and that their claim to have that title exclusively for themselves is falsified by several other well known persons also having that suffix.

CHAPTER—XIII

THE YOGA LINGA

In connection with the question whether Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada founded a mutt at Kanchi, the advocates of that Mutt have been from the start trying their best to confuse this definite issue by bringing in very many irrelevant factors about Sri Sankara’s connection with Kanchi. Nobody disputes the fact that the City of Kanchi and the temples there owe a great deal to him. If they contain any memorial of his visit to that place and to his work there, it is no proof that he founded a Mutt there. They further urge three more considerations, namely, (1) The Kumbhakonam mutt is in possession of a Sphatika Linga which belonged to Sri Sankara (2) Sri Sankara ascended the Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi and (3) Sri

Sankara passed away at Kanchi. It will be logical to treat these three factors distinctly but, as the “authorities” urged in support of them are the same, it is not possible to avoid some overlapping.

The main authority as regards the Linga is the *Siva Rahasya* passage where Lord Siva is said to have come out of the Sri Visveswara Linga at Kasi and given to Sri Sankara a set of five Lingas

एतत् प्रतिगृहाण त्वं पञ्चलिङ्गं सुपूजय ॥
 संगृह्य लिङ्गानि जगाम वेगात्
 भूमौ सुबुद्धार्हतजैनमिश्रान् ॥
 तद्योगभोगवरमुक्तिसुमोक्षयोग-
 लिङ्गार्चनाप्राप्तजयः “ स्वकाश्रमम् ” ।
 तान् वै विजित्य तस्मादक्षतशास्त्रजालैः
 मिश्रान् “ स काञ्च्यामथ सिद्धिमाप ” ॥

I fail to see why in those passages Jaina is distinguished from Arhata, what the difference is between Mukti and Moksha or why the word Yoga is repeated twice. Can it be that all the five Lingas “Yoga, Bhoga, Vara, Mukti and Moksha” are equally entitled to be called Yoga Lingas? The title Misra to denote learned scholars is prevalent mainly in Northern India and the passage may refer to disputations in that part of the country and not in the south at all. Further the portions within quotation marks represent only the readings adopted by the Kumbhakonam Mutt. Other versions have स कामम् and ततो लोगमवाप शैवम् or ततो नैजमवाप लोकम् or स काञ्च्यामथ सिद्धिमवाप शैवम् । It is worthy of note also that the Kumbhakonam version omits two slokas and a half in the middle of the chapter and about 13 slokas at the end.

As stated already it is not possible to attach any historical importance to this Purana authority and it is unnecessary to canvas the accuracy of any version. But as the learned Pandit referred to more than once before has put forward a novel theory that the slokas omitted in the Kumbhakonam version are but recent interpolations, it is necessary to point out how his theory is entirely baseless. He says that the sloka

तद्देदगिरिवज्रस्त्वं संजातोऽसि मदंशतः ।

द्वात्रिंशत् परमायुस्ते शीघ्रं कैलासमावस ॥

has been split up into two halves and between those two halves the two and a half slokas

दुर्वासश्शापतो भूमौ जातां वाणीं विजित्य ताम् ।

अगस्त्यचरिते देशे तुङ्गातीरे सुनिर्मले ॥

पुण्यक्षेत्रे द्विजवर स्थापयित्वा सुपूजय ।

यत्नास्ते ऋश्यशृङ्गस्य महर्षेराश्रमो महान् ॥

कलावपि ततोऽद्वैतमार्गः ख्यातो भविष्यति ।

have been fabricated and “printed” and that the object of those who so printed it was to secure for Sringeri a mention in *Siva Rahasya*. The Sringeri Sarada Temple is accepted by all including the Kumbhakonam Mutt and there is certainly no need at all to “fabricate” any authority in support of the same. Further the slokas said to have been printed have been in currency long before printing came to India and cannot possibly be any fabrication by the printers. Atmabodhendra is said to have written the *Gururatnamalika Vyakhya* in 1720 A. D. but, as he claims to be the disciple of Atma Prakasendra who is said to have presided over the Kumbhakonam Mutt and

passed away in 1704 A. D., he must be assigned an earlier date in the 17th century itself; in any case it must be early in the 18th century. On page 33 of his commentary he specifically refers to the existence of these slokas though he would not for reasons of his own admit their genuineness.

ये तु अमिनवोद्दण्डविद्यारण्यस्वामिमिरारचिते
विद्याशंकरविजये शिवरहस्यवचनत्वेन प्रतिपादिताः
“ दुर्वासश्शापतो भूमौ जातां वाणी ” इत्यादयः श्लोकाः तेन
कापि शिवरहस्यप्राचीनमातृकासु उपलभ्यन्ते इत्यप्रमाणिकमेव ।

We have not been able to get at the *Vidyasankara Vijaya* referred to by him. It must necessarily be of a date before Atmabodha. When these slokas are found in that work and are objected to by Atmabodhendra of the 17th or 18th century, it is meaningless to suggest that they are recent interpolations in the printed books. On the other hand it is quite clear that Atmabodhendra wanted to have them deleted as they seemed to give prominence to Sringeri.

As regards the other slokas at the end also, we have the evidence of Atmabodhendra himself about their genuineness. The Kumbhakonam version of *Sivarahasya* does not make any mention at all of Sri Sankara's victory over Mandana Misra or over Sarasvati. Atmabodhendra says that the conquest of Sarasvati was at the time of defeating Mandana Misra according to a reading of the *Gururatnamalika* itself, but that he prefers the reading which times it at the time of the ascension of the Sarvajana Peetha later on and so would have sloka No. 29 not in its place after sloka No. 22 but only after No. 28. In support of his position he advances the authority of *Siva Rahasya*, *Brihat Sankara Vijaya*, *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya*, *Prachina Sankara Vijaya*, *Vyasachaliya* etc. He says on p. 33

अस्य अत्र पाठस्तु उचितः सर्वज्ञपीठाधिरोहणसमय एव
तद्विजयस्य शिवरहस्य—बृहच्छंकरविजय—केरलीयशंकरविजय—
प्राचीनशंकरविजय—व्यासाचलीयादिषु निरूपितत्वात् ।

For the present it will be enough if we consider the *Siva Rahasya* put forward as an authority supporting his plea that the victory over Sarasvati was only at the time of Sri Sankara's ascending the Sarvajna Peetha and not before. The Kumbhakonam *Siva Rahasya* does *not* refer at all to any Sarvajana Peetha, or to Sri Sankara's trying to ascend it, or to any discussion with Sarasvati or to any victory over Her. The version on which Atmabodhendra based his statement must necessarily be a version in which all these events are mentioned. As a matter of fact, they are found recited only in the 13 slokas which the Kumbhakonam mutt now finds it inconvenient to accept. Those slokas are :

काञ्च्यां तगस्सिद्धिमवाप्य दण्डी
चण्डीशरूपो जगदाकलय्य ।
ब्रह्मैक्यविद्यां रचयन् स भाष्यं
शरीरकं नाम जगाद मोदात् ॥
व्यासेन संभाष्य समेत्य काशीं
तन्मण्डनार्यं परिखण्ड्य वाणीम् ।
जेतुं शरीरान्तरमेत्य काम -
कलां जगाहे प्रमदावराभ्यः ॥
पुनः स्वकं देहमवाप्य तूर्णं
पूर्णं निजं काममथाकलय्य ।
वर्णीं स जित्वैव तु तां मठे स्वे
शृङ्गेरिकारुये प्रणिवेश्य तुष्टः ॥

कापालिकं तं क्रकचं महोग्रं

कर्णाटदेशे निखिलं विजित्य ।

गोकर्णमासाद्य तमीशमीड्यं

स्तुत्वा महाराष्ट्रपदं प्रपेदे ॥

तत्र स्थितान् भास्कर भट्टमुह्यन्

तं नीलकण्ठं च तृणीकरिष्यन् ।

काश्मीरमासाद्य स शारदायाः

सर्वज्ञपीठं पदमारुरुक्षन् ॥

तत्र स्थितान् संप्रति सर्वपण्डितान्

चार्वाकमुख्यान् विपुलान् विजित्य ।

स दक्षिणद्वार्थकवाटभेदं

कृत्वा स देव्या विनिशङ्क्यमानः ॥

शङ्कां निराकृत्य निविश्य पीठे

ततो वदर्याश्रममाप दण्डी ।

नारायणं तत्र तपज्जलौघं

कुण्डं प्रशीतस्य निवारणाय ॥

ध्यात्वा शिवं तत्र निविश्य तस्थौ

कैलासदेशद्वृषभश्च देवाः ।

तमेत्य संस्तुत्य यदायुषस्ते

कालोऽगमत् त्वं वृषभेऽधिरोह ॥

इति प्रचीर्णः प्रभुरान्मनि स्वे
 विचिन्त्य शिष्यान् निजगाद मोदात् ।
 यूयं चतुर्दिक्षु मठेषु लिङ्गैः
 साकं वसन्निवत्युपदिश्य हर्षात् ॥

विवेश पृष्ठं वृषभस्य हस्तं
 संगृह्यवैरिञ्चमथास्य दत्तम् ।
 सर्वैश्च देवैरभिनन्द्यमानः
 स शंकरस्तन्निजधाम देवः ॥

विवेश कैलासनिवेशमच्छं
 सच्छन्दवृन्दारकवृन्दपूर्णम् ।
 तदादि तच्छंकरभाष्यमेतत्
 मूमौ जनं मुक्तिपदं दधाति ॥

एतत्तऽभिहितं देवि मुख्यं मुक्तिपदावहम् ।
 शांकरं चरितं लोके भविष्यति न संशयः ॥

इति श्रुत्वा महेशानाच्चरितं शंकरस्य सा ।

पुलकाङ्कुरसहस्रा प्रणनाम महेश्वरम् ॥

इति श्रीशिवरहस्ये नवमांशे शंकरप्रादुर्भावो नाम षोडशोऽध्यायः॥

The reader will note natural ending of the chapter here in contrast with the abrupt stop in the Kumbhakonam version. It will be also noted that it is only in these slokas there is mention of a dispute with Sarasvati as wife of Mandana and also of a dispute with Sarasvati as the Goddess of Sarvajna Peetha later, on. No such dispute is even hinted at in the Kumbhakonam version. It becomes

patent therefore that when Atmabodhendra refers to *Siva Rahasya* as his authority for mentioning a dispute with Sarasvati at the time of the ascension of the Sarvajna Peetha, he must necessarily be referring to these slokas which are now omitted as inconvenient. It is too late and futile to contend that they do not form part *Siva Rahasya*. Even if these very slokas were not there, there must have been other slokas mentioning the dispute with Sarasvati at the time of the ascension of the Sarvajna Peetha; otherwise Atmabodhendra could not have relied upon them as his authority. Where are they now? I mention this only to point out that the *Siva Rahasya* also has undergone some clippings and alterations at the hands of interested persons. The objection raised against the genuineness of these slokas is that they have no literary merit. I do not perceive how they are of less literary merit than the slokas accepted as genuine by that mutt.

The reader will note that in these omitted slokas it is specifically stated that the Lingas were given to the Sishyas to be worshipped in the four Mutts in the four corners of India. The Linga is accounted for by the undisputed fact that it was placed at Chidambaram and is still being worshipped there. When the Acharya starts four Mathas in the four corners of India, it is reasonable to assume that he hands over the remaining four Lingas to those four Mathas which are to be presided over by his well-known four Sishyas, Suresvara, Padmapada, Totaka and Hastamalaka. The reader may remember that according to the *Siva Rahasya* all these four sishyas were present with Sri Sankara when Lord Visvesvara gave him these Lingas. We would be gratuitously attributing partiality to Sri Sankara if he is taken as giving the Lingas to one or two of those sishyas and denying to the others any Linga. In the slokas which the mutt finds inconvenient

and therefore omits, we find it definitely stated that Sri Sankara asked his sishyas to reside in their respective mutts in the four corners of India with these Lingas

यूयं चतुर्दिक्षु मठेषु लिङ्गैः
सार्कं वसन्त्वित्युपदिश्य हर्षात् ।

In support of the authenticity of *Siva Rahasya*, the remarks of Sri Srikanta Sastri that *Sivarahasya* mentions that Lord Visvesvara gave 5 Lingas to Sri Sankara at Kasi are relied upon but his further remark that Sri Sankara asked his sishyas to place one of the Lingas at Chidambaram and worship the other Lingas in their respective Mutt is conveniently ignored; evidently the remark of Sri Srikanta Sastri was based upon tradition and upon the omitted slokas.

It will be remembered that according to the *Siva Rahasya* Sri Sankara got these five Lingas from Lord Siva who appeared out of the Sri Visvesvara Linga at Kasi. This version contradicts flatly the tradition recorded in the *Ashtottarasata Namavali* used in the daily Puja of Sri Sankara. Though the Kumbhakonam version of the Namavali also has its own variations, it has not scored out the name

कैलासयात्रासंश्रितवन्द्यमौलिप्रपूजकः

“The worshipper of Sri Chandramouli obtained during the trip to Kailasa.”

If he had already got them at Kasi, how could he and why should he get them again at Kailasa? The present Swamiji of the Kumbhakonam Mutt goes further and says that Sri Sankara took Suresvara also with him to *Kailasa* when he got these Lingas! (See his *Sankara Vijayam* p. 232) It cannot be that both the versions are true. Consistently with the latter version, amendments have been made in Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya* also, incidentally making the amendments comprehensive enough to include the other claims also of the Kumbhakonam Mutt,

I shall place before the reader the passages in the Calcutta edition of Anandagiri's Sankara Vijaya and those in the "embellished" परिष्कृत्य edition of the same in parallel columns so that he may see clearly for himself the mischief that has been set on foot. The Calcutta edition makes no reference at all to the trip to Kailasa or the getting of five Lingas from Lord Siva or their installation at Kedara, Nilakantha, Sringeri, Kanchi or Chidambaram. These are all part of the embellishments. Evidently it was felt impossible to deny the existence of Chandramoulisvara Lingas at Sringeri and Chidambaram; so they were included in the list and the other mutts at Jagannath, Dvaraka and Badari, though of equal status with Sringeri, were not even mentioned and were denied such Lingas, probably in the confidence that they were too far away to notice this and might not care to dispute the accuracy of any statement introduced at the instance of a new Mutt in the extreme south of India. What about the Chandra-moulisvara Linga even now in the possession of and being worshipped in the Dvaraka mutt?

Calcutta Edition
page 179:

तस्मादुद्ध मार्गमवलम्ब्य
अमरलिङ्गम् केदारलिङ्गम्
दृष्ट्वा कुरुक्षेत्रमार्गान्
वदरीनारायणदर्शनं कृत्वा
तत्र शीतलोदक...

"Embellished Edition"

तस्मादुद्ध मार्गमवलम्ब्य योग-
विद्याप्राप्तवियत्संचारः कैलास-
मधिगम्य पार्वतीसमेतं परमेश्वरं
प्रणमत् । स्वात्मतयाऽनुसंधान-
शीलस्य च परमगुरोः अग्रतः
परमेश्वरः पञ्च स्फाटिकलिङ्गानि
प्रकाशयामास । उगदनुग्रहाय
अम्बास्तवसारेण सह तानि आदाय
पुनः अवनितलमासाद्य केदारक्षेत्रे
एकं मुक्तिलिङ्गाख्यं तत्र प्रतिष्ठाप्य
तत्क्षेत्रपूजकान् पूजार्थं नियोज-
यामास । ततः कुरुक्षेत्रमार्गान्
वदरीनारायणदर्शनं कृत्वा तत्र
शीतलोदक.....

page 180 :

तस्मात् द्वारिकादिदि-
व्यस्थलविलोकनात् प्राद-
क्षिण्यं अयोध्यां प्राप ।

तस्मात् द्वारकादिदिव्यस्थल-
विलोकनवशात् प्रादक्षिण्येन नील-
कण्ठेश्वरं नत्वा तत्र शिष्यैः पूज्य-
मानः परमगुरुः वरनामकं लिङ्गं
प्रतिष्ठाप्य तत्रस्थान् पूजार्थं नियुज्य
ततः क्रमात् अयोध्यां प्राप ।

page 191 :

तदनन्तरं कंचित् शिष्यं तदनन्तरं पद्मपादाख्यं कंचित्
सुरेश्वराख्यं पीठाध्यक्षं कृत्वा शिष्यं पीठाध्यक्षं कृत्वा भोगना-
ख्यं निश्चक्राम । मकलिङ्गम् एतस्मिन् पीठे निक्षिप्य
ख्यं निश्चक्राम ।

The 65th chapter of Anandagiri's *Sankara Vijaya* is with reference to Kanchi and is called *Srichakara Nirmanam*. The opening chapter of the book which gives the contents calls it also *Sri Chakra Nirmanam*. The person responsible for the embellishment has evidently overlooked it as he did not change the name there though he changed it at the end of that chapter into *Srichakra Nirmana-Yoga-linga sthapanam* thus clearly showing that the latter was an interpolation.

page 196 :

तस्मात् सर्वेषां मोक्षफल-
प्राप्तये दर्शनादेव श्रीचक्रं
भगवद्भिः आचार्यैः निर्मितम् ।
इति आनन्दगिरिकृतौ
श्रीचक्रनिर्माणं नाम पञ्चषष्ठि-
प्रकरणम् ।

अतः सर्वेषां मोक्षफलप्राप्तये
दर्शनादेव श्रीचक्रं प्रभवतीति
भगवद्भिः आचार्यैः तत्र निर्मितम् ।
तस्मात् मुक्तिकाङ्क्षिभिः सर्वैः
श्रीचक्रपूजा कर्तव्या इति निश्चित्य
.... तत्रैव निजावासयोग्यं मठमपि
परिकल्प्य तत्र निजसिद्धान्तं अद्वैतं
प्रकाशयितुं अन्तेवासिनं सुरेश्वरं
आहूय योगनामकलिङ्गं पूज्य इति
तस्मै दत्वा त्वं अत्र कामकोटिपीठं
अधिवस इति अवस्थाप्य शिष्य-
जनैः परिपूज्यमानः श्रीपरमगुरुः
सुगमासः

इति आनन्दगिरिकृतौ श्रीचक्र-
निर्माणयोगलिङ्गस्थापनं नाम
पञ्चषष्ठिप्रकरणम् ॥

It would appear from this amendment that its author did not subscribe to the view that, as Sri Suresvara was a grihastha turned Sannyasi and became a Sannyasi only because of a bet, he was not pure enough to touch the Yoga Linga as it could be handled only by a Brahmachari Sannyasi and that he was not competent to be the head of the Mutt as he was not a Paramahamsa, a view enunciated by Atmabodhendra and emphasised by the Kumbhakonam Mutt. In this passage Sri Suresvara is specifically asked to worship the Yoga Linga entrusted to him and to preside over the Mutt.

Page 216 :

विषयेषु पेषयित्वा स्वयं विषयेषु प्रेषयित्वा तदनन्तरं
स्वेच्छया स्वलोकं गन्तुमिच्छुः समीपस्थं इन्द्रसंप्रदायानुवर्तिनं
सुरेश्वरार्यं आहूय भो शिष्य इदं
मोक्षलिङ्गं चिदम्बरस्थले प्रेषय
इति उक्त्वा स्वयं स्वलोकं गन्तु-
मिच्छुः

This amendment would have it that Suresvara himself was an Indra Sarasvati! Yet Atmabodhendra would not grant him the headship of any Mutt. It would seem also that Sri Sankara did not place the Linga at Chidambaram himself but entrusted that function to Suresvara.

We have already referred to the utterly unreliable nature of *Markandeya Samhita*. It reverses however the order of installation of the five Lingas. According to the amended Anandagiri, the order is Kedara, Nilakantha, Sringeri, Kanchi and Chidambaram. The *Samhita* does not admit the posthumous installation at Chidambaram but would have it as the very first. The order according to it is Chidambaram, Kedara, Nilakantha, Kanchi and then Sringeri. It also does not disqualify Suresvara for the Linga Puja or for the headship of the Mutt as the responsibility for both is specifically assigned to him.

शिवलिङ्गं पतिष्ठाप्य चिदम्बरसभातले ।
 मोक्षदं सर्वजन्तूनां भुवनत्रयसुन्दरम् ॥
 वैदिकान् दीक्षितान् शुद्धान् शैवसिद्धान्तपारगान् ।
 पूजार्थं युयुजे शिष्यान् पुण्यारण्यविहारिणः ॥
 मुक्तिलिङ्गम् तु केदारे नीलकण्ठे वरेश्वरम् ।
 पतिष्ठाप्य महायोगी परां प्रीतिमवाप सः ॥
 काञ्च्यां श्रीकामकोटौ तु योगलिङ्गमनुत्तमम् ।
 प्रतिष्ठाप्य सुरेशायै पूजार्थं युयुजे गुरुः ॥
 श्रीशङ्कराचार्ययोगी शृङ्गगिरिस्थानमगमदखिलेशः ।
 श्रीशारदाख्यपीठे शिवलिङ्गम् भोगनामकं चक्रे ॥

.....

सुरेश्वराचार्यवरं स्वशिष्यं
 काञ्चीपुरीसुन्दरकामकोटौ ।
 श्रीवन्द्यमौलीश्वरपूजनार्थं
 नियोज्य चक्रेऽस्य घराधिपत्यम् ॥

It will have been noted that even the *Siva Rahasya* passages do not mention that any Linga was established at Kanchi. The several *Sankara Vijayas* including Govindanatha, Chidvilasa and Vyasachaliya make no mention of any Linga having been at Kanchi; it may be said that *Patanjali charitam* refers to Sri Sankara only casually but *Sankarabhyudaya* written specifically to depict the life of Sri Sankara is equally silent about the Yoga Linga at Kanchi. It is impossible to place any reliance upon the interpolated portions of Anandagiri or upon the clearly partisan *Markandeya Samhita* or other works of that sort which may have come into existence to buttress the claims of that Mutt.

The Pandit advocate of the Kumbhakonam Mutt is bold enough to suggest that the Calcutta edition of *Anandagiri* is an innovation in 1881 and deliberately departs from the “pure” text of *Anandagiri* which mentions Kaladi and not Chidambaram as the birth place of Sri Sankara. He forgets that though that edition was printed in 1881 it is based upon a manuscript of a far earlier date and is exactly the same as the manuscript in the Library at Oxford. He forgets further that the “embellished edition” we have referred to above was of the year 1867 after “consulting several manuscripts obtained from various Pandits from the different regions of the country.” The full description is as follows:

आसेतुशीताचलान्तघरणीतलवासिनां सुजनानां अत्यन्तोप
काराय नानादेशस्थितपण्डितजनसकाशात् आनीतान् श्रीशङ्कर-
विजयग्रन्थान् अनेकान् अलोच्य क-शिवरामशास्त्रि, कौ-सुब्बा-
शास्त्रि, प्रमुखपण्डितैः साकं परिष्कृत्य श्रीमद्रामचन्द्रचरणार-
विन्दभजनासक्तहृदयेन ने-वेङ्कटसुब्बाशास्त्रिणा स्वकीयसरस्वती-
विलासमुद्राक्षरशालायां मुद्रितोऽभूत् ॥

This Edition so “carefully” prepared mentions only Chidambaram.

It is too late now to assert that there is an *Anandagiri Sankara Vijaya* which mentions Sri Sankara's birth at Kaladi. If there is any such manuscript, it must necessarily be a recent fabrication. As already stated the mere fact that such a manuscript may be available in a Government Manuscript Library or in any other Library, public or private, in these days does not in the least imply that the work is genuine or ancient. There can be no doubt that the 1867 publication has been made at the instance of the Kumbhakonam Mutt people especially as it includes the *Markandeya Samitha* and other “authorities” which are the specialities of that Mutt.

I may state in passing that Atmabodhendra quotes on p. 25 of his book a genuine passage from *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya*, (III, 5) but thinks fit to ‘quote,’ on p. 39, as authority for his statements that Sri Sankara disappeared in the vicinity of Goddess Kamakshi appointing Sarvajnatma and asking Suresvara to worship the Yoga Linga, about 6 stanzas which are unfortunately *not* found in the *Keraliya Sankara Vijaya*, and contradict also the latter’s version that Sri Sankara disappeared at Tiruchur in the Kerala country. This is another instance of the unscrupulousness and the unreliability of Atmabodhendra and his followers.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NAISHADHA SUPPORT

Before I leave this matter of Yoga Linga, it is necessary to consider the “authority” which the mutt looks upon as its trump card. In proof of the Yoga Linga in the hands of the Kumbhakonan Mutt, a verse Ch. XII, 38 in Sriharsha’s *Naishadha Kavya* is referred to

सिन्धोजैत्रमयं पवित्रमसृजत् तं कीर्तिपूर्ताद्भुत
यत्र स्नान्ति जगन्ति सन्ति कवयः के वा न वाच्यमाः ।
यद्विन्तुश्चियमिन्दुरश्चति चलं चाविश्य दृश्येतरो
यस्यासौ जलदेवता स्फटिकभूर्जगतिं यागेश्वरः ॥

in the context of Damayanti’s *Svayamvara*, Goddess Sarasvati describes to her the several kings assembled there eager to get her hand and in this particular stanza the King of Kanchi is described. The name of Kanchi was too

tempting to be disregarded by the Kumbhakonam Mutt advocates; there was also a mention of sphatika; it required just a stroke to convert Yagesvara into Yogesvara so as to make the passage applicable to their 'Yoga Linga'.

I would not care to deal with this patent misquotation but for the interpretation now sought to be placed upon it by the present Acharya of that Mutt as referring to an actual water tank dug by the King with the waters of which the "Yoga Linga" was being bathed. The learned Pandit referred to before contributes his mite from his wealth of learning in support of this novel interpretation, evidently not in any belief in its propriety but only in deference to his Acharya.

The stanza simply means "The King has created a wonderful tank out of his fame. It is a very sacred one and excels the ocean. All the worlds bathe in it. Which poet does not become dumb when he attempts to describe it? Even the moon assumes the lustre of a drop in it and having a watery body even becomes invisible in it and shines like a Yagesvara made of sphatika?" To say the least of it, the interpretation that it is a water tank that was dug by the King has no warrant in the words of the text or in the several commentaries on the stanza. With due deference to the Acharya and the Pandit who may be eminent each in his own way, I must say that, when they descend to the level of a "research scholar" or a "literary" expounder, they cannot count upon their eminence to ward off criticism.

Assuming that the stanza refers to a physical water reservoir and to the "Yoga Linga", Sriharsha; in giving out the story of Nala who lived long before Sri Rama, will be guilty of gross anachronism if he were to refer to a

Linga obtained by Sri Sankara at least 2000 years after the advent of Kali. The reference would be on the same par as a statement that Sri Rama in the course of his wanderings in the south felt delighted at seeing the colourful play of the fountains in the Krishnarajasagara Dam near Mysore.

In justification of this anachronism, another passage in the same Kavya where Nala refers to Krishna, Karna and Arjuna is pointed out, forgetting that there Nala is describing all the ten Avatars of God which are known to be recurring processes and that chronological accuracy is not necessary for Puranic events. Such a licence cannot be imported in dealing with historical and purely mundane facts. Further it is absurd to assume that Sriharsha ignored the many staple deities of Puranic fame at Kanchi and preferred to refer to a moveable Linga in the hands of a Sannyasi or any Linga in his hands. It would be more proper to equate Yagesvara with Ekambaranatha the Deity presiding over Kanchi. The name Yagesvara will be appropriate to him as Lord Siva by Himself is Yajnesvara, Lord of Sacrifices, and is more so as the Kanchikshetra is the sacrificial ground whereon Brahma performed an *Asvamedha* sacrifice as stated in the Kanchi Mahatmyam.

तत्र काञ्चीति विख्याता पुरी पुण्यविवाधिनी ।

विधातुश्चमेघार्थे निर्मिता विश्वकर्मणा ॥ Ch. 4

अश्वमेधस्य शालायां ब्रह्मणः परमेष्ठिनः ।

स्थानान्येतानि राजेन्द्र प्रोक्तान्यग्रादशैव हि ॥ Ch. 30

It seems to us that in all probability Sri Harsha did not refer to any deity at Kanchi at all but to a deity nearer home to himself, namely, the Linga called Yagesvara (popularly Jagesvara) in a famous shrine at a place known as Bala Kailasa in the Himalayas on the way to Manasa-sarovara and Mount Kailasa from Almora. It is worthy of note that the commentator Isanadeva has the reading Jagesvara in this stanza.

Nobody disputes the propositions that Sriharsha was a staunch Advaiti, that he had the highest regard for Sri Sankara and that he was also a devotee of Siva. The Pandit has taken pains to prove these propositions and curiously enough deduces from these propositions that he had great attachment to Kanchi "where Sri Sankara spent his last days" and to the "Yoga Linga which was being worshipped in the Kamakoti Peetha" and that "nobody could possibly object to this conclusion." In spite of this assertion, a layman like myself unacquainted with logical quibbling and possessing an unbiassed mind must refuse to subscribe to such a conclusion drawn by the Pandit. He is really begging the question.

Further, Sriharsha is famous for double meaning phrases. The commentators, besides pointing out that Yagesvara is the generic name of all sphaatika lingas, split up the word Yagesvara into Ya and Agesvara and give another meaning wherein what is immersed in the tank of fame and becomes invisible is not Chandra (the moon) but is Mount Kailasa, the king of mountains, made of crystal. This splitting cannot possibly be made if the word were "Yogesvara". It is idle to contend that the current reading of Yagesvara is a slip for Yogesvara. It is surprising that the Pandit so far forgets himself and descends to the कश्चित् कान्ता level in putting forward such a contention on the ground that Ya is in the feminine gender and Agesvara in the masculine and so they cannot be placed in apposition. He coolly suppresses the fact that the word Jala Devata preceding Ya is in the feminine gender and that Ya is used in conformity with it. In quoting the Naishadha text and some words from the commentaries of Mallinatha and Narayana, he boldly substitutes Yogesvara for Yagesvara though such a reading

is not found in any edition of the book, in any script throughout the length and breadth of India. If any such reading is found in any manuscript, it is a patent correction recently made to support the Mutt's version. In quoting Narayana the Pandit has omitted the portion which makes it beyond any possibility of doubt that the word is only Yagesvara and cannot be Yogesvara. Narayana is definite

असौ जलदेवता जागर्ति । असौ का ? या स्फटिकभूः
अगेश्वरः कैलासो जागर्ति वा ॥

Though Mallinatha and Narayana have the reading दृश्येतरः in the masculine, the earlier commentaries of Vidhyadhara, Chandu Pandita and Isanadeva have दृश्येतरा in the feminine gender.

यस्य पूर्तस्य असौ एष स्फटिकभूः कैलासगिरिरेव
या अगेश्वरो जलदेवता जागर्ति स्फुरति । कीदृशी जलदेवता
इत्याह-जलं उदकं चाविश्य प्रविश्य दृश्येतरा अदृश्या इत्यर्थः ।

(Vidyadhara)

यस्य पूर्तस्य जलं चाविश्य दृश्यात् इतरा अदृश्या असौ
जलदेवता जागर्ति । या स्फटिकभूः कैलासः अगानां पर्वता-
नामीश्वरः ।

(Chandu Pandita)

यस्य कीर्तितडागस्य असौ स्फटिकभूः कैलासगिरिरेव
यागेश्वरो महेश्वरो जलदेवता जागर्ति स्फुरति । कीदृशी ? जलं
चाविश्य दृश्येतरा अदृश्या इत्यर्थः ।

(Isana Deva)

A later Jain Commentator Jinaraja has also दृश्येतरा,
यस्य कीर्तिपूर्तस्य जलमाविश्य प्रविश्य दृश्येतरा अदृश्या
सती जागर्ति स्फुरति ।

Some point is sought to be made of the remark of Mallinatha स्फाटिकलिङ्गे यागेश्वरः इति प्रसिद्धिः and of Narayana यागेश्वरः स्फाटिक इति प्रसिद्धिः by amending the word यागेश्वरः into योगेश्वरः. If “Yogesvara” is the special name of the Sphatika Linga in the possession of the Kumbhakonam Mutt, they ought to have specifically referred to that Mutt. On the other hand, their remark amounts only to this, namely that a Sphatika Linga, that is, any Sphatika Linga is known as Yageswara. This is very clear from Jinaraja’s commentary.

यागेश्वरशब्देन स्फटिकनिर्मितशिवलिङ्गमिति प्रसिद्धिः ।

The Pandit is kind enough to concede that Lord Siva is also described as Yajnesvara in the Vedas but contends that Sri Ekamranatha at Kanchi is not known by that name and so cannot be the “Yagesvara” of this stanza. It is sufficient for our present purpose that Yagesvara may mean Siva in general. We are concerned only with the question whether Yagesvara or Yogesvara is the genuine text. That the latter is an impossible alternative is proved by the commentary of Chandu Pandita of the 13th century who paraphrases the word as “Yajnapurusha” which he cannot possibly do if the word were “Yogesvara”.

तत्रापि जलदेवता यागानां ईश्वरो यज्ञपुरुषः अदृश्यः ।

I think that the above is more than sufficient to convince any impartial reader that the innovation Yogesvara is a pure deliberate fabrication and that the suggestion that the universally current reading of Yagesvara is a slip for Yogesvara is absolutely baseless. Such suggestions only betray the need felt for getting hold of some plausible “authority” in any recognised book in favour of the position sought to be advanced.

I am quite confident that even the Pandit who now lends his support to the amended reading will have had only Yagesvara when he studied *Naishadha* and will have become alive to the Yogesvara amendment only after he has been initiated into the literature of the Mutt.

The claim to a "Yoga Linga" sought to be buttressed by such spurious "authorities" is patently an untenable one.

CHAPTER XV

SARVAJNA PEETHA

It is a well established tradition throughout the length and breadth of India that Sri Sankara ascended the Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir and disappeared from mortal vision in the Himalayas. The Kumbhakonam Mutt would have it that he ascended the Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi and disappeared at Kanchi itself. Govindanatha, the author of Keraliya Sankara Vijaya was not content to have Sri Sankara born at Kaladi in the Kerala country but would have him disappear also at Tiruchur. Anandagiri mentioned Chidambaram as the birthplace of Sri Sankara and Kanchi as the place of his passing away. The Dikshitaras of Chidambaram who have in their temple a Sphatika Chandramoulisvaralinga claim that the places of his birth and also of his disappearance was Chidambaram itself. As Sri Sankara had no local attachments and was quite at home anywhere in India, it may not matter much where exactly he spent his last days. But to ordinary people a sense of local patriotism makes them claim a sort of intimate relationship to him. It may be such a sense is at the bottom of Kanchi claiming the "honour" of his disappearance there but it is surely sacrilegious to point out an image *within* the Temple of

Kamakshi and say that it was the place of his Samadhi. This claim is advanced by the Kumbhakonam Mutt as "proof" of Sri Sankara's founding a math there.

As the tradition that Sri Sankara disappeared soon after his ascending the Sarvajna Peetha is too established to be disturbed, the math urges the further proposition that the Sarvajna Peetha was itself at Kanchi. But as again the existence of a Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir cannot be lightly denied, the math has to postulate a duplicate Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi also. Further the fact that Sri Sankara ascended the Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir is too well known to be contradicted by the Kumbhakonam Mutt. But if it accepted this it could not at the same time claim that it was the Kanchi Sarvajna Peetha that Sri Sankara ascended. The Mutt's advocates therefore hit upon the idea of splitting up the personality of Sri Sankara and advanced a novel theory that the first Sri Sankara ascended only the Kanchi Sarvajna Peetha and that the Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir was ascended by a successor of his in their Mutt who was also known as Sankara and was therefore confused with the original founder. In advancing this suggestion, they forget that they are bringing down Sri Sankara to the level of having to ascend only a duplicate Sarvajna Peetha when there was the time-honoured original seat at Kashmir. The absurdity of this suggestion is heightened by the fact that this duplicate Sarvajna Peetha was created by Sri Sankara himself in his own Mutt. If one makes at his own cost a high-backed upholstered ornamental chair, keeps it in his house and sits in it, he cannot certainly claim to have become a Governor or a High Court Judge. It is really meaningless to say that Sri Sankara started a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi and "ascended" it himself. And yet this is just what the Kumbhakonam Mutt urges as a fact. Recently a suggestion is made that he ascended both !

Madhava any Sadananda both say that the ascent of the Sarvajna Peetha was at Kashmir and that Sri Sankara immediately proceeded to the Himalayas and returned to Kailasa. The *Vyasachaliya* now published says in slokas 30 and 31 of its chapter 12 (which are identical with *Madhaviya* XVI, 55-56).

काश्मीराख्यं मण्डलं तत्र शस्तम्
यत्रास्ते सा शारदा वागधीशा ।
द्वारैर्युक्तं मण्डपैः सच्चतुर्भिः
देव्या गेहं यत्र सर्वज्ञपीठम् ॥ XII, 30—31

After answering all the doubts raised by the Goddess he is said to have ascended the Sarvajna Peetha and then gone away to the “resplendent or desired region”

एवं निरुत्तरपदां स विधाय देवीं
सर्वज्ञपीठमधिरुह्य ननन्द सभ्य ।
मात्रा गिरामपि तथा पुरुषैश्च सभ्यैः
संभावितो रुचितदेशमयं जगाम ॥ XII, 82

The resplendent or desired region must be Kailasa as the work ends there. The *Madhaviya* reading differs in the 3rd and 4th lines but that difference is not material in the present context.

As already stated, Atmabodhendra would have the Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi and also in the Mutt constructed by Sri Sankara himself. He therefore misquotes this passage thus :

एवं निरुत्तरपदां स विधाय देवीं
सर्वज्ञपीठमधिरुह्य मठे स्वकृते ।
मात्रा गिरामपि तथोपगतैश्च मिश्रैः
संभावितः कमपि कालमुवास काञ्च्याम् ॥

It would seem therefore that according to sloka 30-31 the Sarvajna Peetha was *within the temple of Sarada* and according to the amended sloka 82 the Peetha was *within the mutt* built by Sri Sankara. As Atmabodhendra does not quote sloka 30-31, he has evaded the necessity of reconciling his statement about the existence of Sarvajna Peetha at the Kanchi Mutt with the earlier definite statement that the Sarvajna Peetha was in the Temple of Sarada in Kashmir. A learned Pandit who recently felt the need for such a reconciliation has with rare courage advanced the theory that Vyasachala ment only Kanchi even when he mentioned Kashmir in sloka 30-31 and that they were interchangeable terms. Happily he does not say that the Temple and the Mutt also were interchangeable terms. He forgets also that the Sarvajna Peetha mentioned by Vyasachala was not of Sri Sankara's own making in his own mutt but was an ancient institution where long ago scholars from the north, east and west of India had gained admittance and that Sri Sankara went there just to remove the blot that attached to the scholars of the South who had not succeeded till then in gaining admission there. He *heard* about that blot and so went there to wipe it off. So it could not possibly be any creation of his or an appendage to his Mutt. Further Kanchi is a town and Kashmir is a country. Vyasachaliya definitely used the word country *Desa* with reference to Kashmir and it can by no stretch of verbal quibbling be made to relate to the town of Kanchi.

वार्तामुपश्रुत्य स दाक्षिणात्यो

मानं तदीयं परिपातुमिच्छन्।

काश्मीरदेशाय जगाम हृष्टः

श्रीशकरो द्वारमपावरीतुम् ॥

33 (Madhaviya XVI, 58)

द्वारं पिनद्धं किल दाक्षिणात्या

न सन्ति विद्वांस इतीह दक्षाः ।

तां किंवदन्तीं विफलां विधातुं

जगाम देवीनिलयाय हृष्यन् ॥

34 (Madhaviya XVI, 59)

The desperate attempt to interpret Kashmira Desa as Kanchipura is quite on a par with the same Pandit's interpretation of दिवमगमत् "went to Heaven" as "went to the Himalayas", referred to before in another context. The same Pandit would now have it that the *Mutt* alone was newly created at Kanchi and that the Sarvajna Peetha there was an ancient one and relies upon a perverse interpretation of his own of the misquoted Vyasachaliya passage mentioned above which is against all rules of syntax. N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu both in his first edition (p. 13) and in his second edition (p. 14) says definitely.

"Once before during his tour in Kashmir he had ascended the Throne of Omniscience traditionally established there... .. Now at Conjeevaram he *created* a Throne of Omniscience and finally defeating here a few people who went over to him from the banks of the Tamaprarani and converting them to his doctrine, he ascended the Grand Throne of Omniscience....."

(The italics are his)

All the four recognised Mutts are agreed in saying that the Saradha Peetha was only at Kashmir and it was there that Sri Sankara ascended the Sarvajna Peetha. It may be urged that they are interested in denying the Peetha at Kanchi, as otherwise they would have to concede importance to the Kumbhakonam Mutt. This is a purely fallacious reasoning. They do not in the least deny the greatness of Goddess Kamakshi at all. She is accepted on all hands and by the *Puranas* also as *Kamakoti* Peetha Nilaya. They cannot however tolerate for a moment the idea of anybody other than Goddess Kamakshi claiming to

rule over the Kamakoti Peetha. In the view of all true Bhaktas of that Goddess Kamakshi, it is profanity to claim for anybody else the title of Kamakoti Peetha Adhipati. The Kamakoti at Kanchi is certainly one of the several Sakti Peethas scattered throughout this sacred land and it is equally well known that Sri Sankara during his visit to Kanchi reduced the highly dynamic power of the Goddess by withdrawing a major portion of it into a Sri Chakra which he fixed up before the figure of the Goddess. This is recorded in his *Ashtottarasata Namavali* in the significant name :

काञ्च्यां श्रीचक्रराजाश्रयः तस्यापनदीक्षितः

It does not record at all any ascent of Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi. When there is a specific reference to Kanchi and the establishment of a Sri Chakra there, the absence of any reference to a Sarvajna Peetha there or a mutt there can only mean that both are pure myths.

Vyasachaliya does not refer even to Sri Sankara's visit to Kanchi or to the consecration of any Sri Chakra there. He does however refer to Kanchi and describe its sacredness but it is only in connection with the pilgrimage of Padmapada in the south and has nothing to do with Sri Sankara. To remedy this "defect" Atmabodhendra has found it necessary to tamper with the *Vyasachaliya* as above pointed out by inserting some phrases in the above mentioned sloka as if Sri Sankara founded a mutt of his "own" at Kanchi, ascended the Sarvajna Peetha there and lived there for some time. Not content with this amendment which reverses the meaning of the original and is inconsistent with what has gone before, Atmabodhendra proceeds to quote four more stanzas as from *Vyasachaliya*. It is in these additional slokas are mentioned the unique allegations of the Kumbhakonam Mutt that Sarvajnatma was appointed as Sri Sankara's successor to that Mutt

under the guardianship of Suresvaracharya and that Sri Sankara attained *siddhi* at Kanchi; the third of these additional slokas is a paraphrase of *Vyasachaliya* sloka 83; and the fourth is in praise of “Jagadguru Sankara in the form of Vipulananda whose sacred commands are borne on the head by the Kings of Nepal etc”. As pointed out by the Editor, “these verses are not found in any of the six manuscripts (including *two* from the Kumbhakonam Mutt itself) used for preparing the press copy of the present edition”. This “Vipulananda” is identified with Purnananda Sadasiva, who is said to have been in that Mutt for 81 years from A. D. 1417 to 1498. His successor Mahadeva is said to be the same as “Vyasachala” on the authority, not even of Atmabodhendra, but of one Atreya Krishna Sastri who out of his attachment to the Kumbhakonam Mutt was prepared to allow his imagination to run riot and invent and propound all sorts of excellences for that Mutt. Evidently inspired by Atmabodhendra and the “authorities” relied upon by him, which mention that Vipulananda was worshipped by the Kings of Nepal, Krishna Sastri boldly improved on the subject and declared in page 49 of his book.

“Further *the King of Nepal*, who is independently ruling a Kingdom in the Himalayas at the northern end of our country without being subjected to foreigners, *not only has the head of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha as his Guru, but is paying a portion of his state income as tribute.*”

He evidently thought that he was safe in making such wild statements in the southern corner of India about a King in the northernmost corner as nobody would care to verify them; but unfortunately for him the Maharaja of Nepal has been referred to and his Private Secretary in his letter

dated the 13th of May 1940 specifically says :

“ I write to inform you that the Government of Nepal have never acknowledged the head of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha as their Guru, nor do they pay annually as tribute any portion of their income as alleged by Pandit Atreya Krishna Sastri in the book entitled *Jagadguru Sri Sankara Guru Parampara* extract of which you have kindly translated into English.”

I deem it superfluous to refer here to his many other equally reckless statements. The latest book of Sri N. Ramesam on *Sri Sankaracharya* attempts to distinguish between the Sarada Peetha at Kashmir and a “Sarvajna Peetha” at Kanchi and to say that Sri Sankara ascended both ! As regards the former he says on page 84.

“ It is stated that prior to the Acharya’s visit the southern gate of the Mantapa was always closed and as soon as the great Acharya neared the Mantapa, *the southern gate automatically opened itself*. Sri Sankara got up the Sarada Peetha (held as Sarvajna Peetha by some works) and defeated in debate the scholars of that place and upheld the greatness of Advaita there.”

This story is at variance with all versions and reverses the natural order which would require Sri Sankara to defeat his opponents before he could get up the Sarada Peetha. The mention of a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi by Chidvilasa may well be due to local patriotism and if he is to be identified with Advaitananda Bodhendra the 48th Acharya of the Kumbhakonam Mutt as is done by Atmabodhendra and is to be credited also with the authorship of a *Sankara Vijaya* as is done by Atreya Krishna Sastri (p. 78), we can

well understand his attempt to bring the Sarvajna Peetha down to Kanchi. Govindanatha was evidently in a fix and so mentioned both Kashmir and Kanchi in quite a confused way :

ततो यतिकुलाचार्यः सशिष्यः शास्त्रवित्तम् ।

भूमिं प्रदक्षिणीकृत्य भूयः काञ्चीपुरं गतः ॥ IX, 1

जम्बूद्वीपस्य कुर्वाणे शोभां भारतमण्डले ।

शस्तं काश्मीरनामानं देशं विद्योतयम् भृशम् ॥ IX, 2

कामाक्ष्या नाम वाग्देव्या स्थानं तत्पुरमाप्तवान् ।

तत्रत्यसर्वविद्वद्भिः पूजयमानं दिने दिने ॥ IX, 3

सर्वज्ञपीठमारोढुमियेष यदिपुङ्गवः । IX, 4

According to him Kanchipura was a town in Kashmir. It is not an impossible conception but he is obviously wrong in calling Vagdevi (Sarasvati) as Kamakshi; she must have been called Sarada. It will be noted also that these stanzas are just paraphrases of sloka 55 to 58 of *Madhaviya* Chapter XVI which are the same as slokas 30 to 33 of “*Vyasachaliya*” where there is no room at all for any such confusion. As once before pointed out, a desperate attempt is being made by a modern Pandit to say that Kanchi was also evidently known as Kashmir. It is curious that such attempts are made when the Kumbhakonam Mutt people themselves admit the existence of a Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir but would say that it was ascended not by Sri Sankara but by a “successor of his” in the Kanchi Peetha. Atmabodhendra in commenting on sloka 64 of the *Gururatanmalika* says :

“अशेषविदासनाधिरूढं”-भट्टोद्भटादिविबुधयूथविजयपूर्वम्
अधिकाश्मीरमण्डलं अनुष्ठितं सर्वज्ञपीठाधिरोहणं इत्यर्थः ॥

In effect they would have the credit of ascending the traditional Sarvajna Peetha assigned to a later successor and be content to accord to Sri Sankara the very doubtful honour of ascending a Sarvajna Peetha created by himself in his "own" Mutt. It is unnecessary to dilate further on the absurdity of such statements.

It is beyond controversy that Sri Ramanujacharya was a resident of Kanchi itself and was at first a pupil of an Advaita teacher Yadavaprakasa there. In the whole of his life history, there is no mention of an Advaita Mutt at Kanchi nor of any Sarvajna Peetha there. If there were any such Peetha there, his biographers would not have ignored it and would have, on the other hand, said of him that he also tried to ascend or did ascend such a Peetha defeating all opponents. This significant omission disproves the existence of a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi. We have, on the other hand, the positive assertion that when Sri Ramanuja wanted to peruse *BodhayanaVritti* before writing out his *Sribhashya* he took a special trip to the *Sarada Peetha in Kashmir* in the company of his disciple Srivatsanka; that it took him three months to traverse this distance and that he ultimately got the book from Goddess Saradha Herself though he happened to lose it later on. It may be said that this story is not a historical one but only invented for the purpose of giving the *Sribhashya* the support of an ancient Rishi like Bodhayana. We are not concerned with this question. It is sufficient for our present purpose that even the followers of Sri Ramanuja believed in a Saradha Peetha at Kashmir only. This incident is described in great detail by Swami Ramakrishnananda on pages 185—187 of his "Life of Sri Ramanuja"

“He said to his disciples..... ‘It is hard to get Maharshi Bodhayana’s Vritti in this part

of the country..... I am told however that it is preserved with great care at the Sarada Peetha in Kashmir'..... Thus taking leave of the disciples, Ramanuja accompanied by Kuresa started for the Saradha Peetha which they reached after three months."

Again after writing out the *Sri Bhashya*, Sri Ramanuja took another trip to northern India and "at last reached the Saradha Peetha of Kashmir." "It is said that the Goddess Saradha was very much pleased to hear his exposition of the Mantra *Kapyasam Pundarikam* and gave him the title *Bhashyakara*". If there were a Saradha Peetha or a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi, his own town, he need not have troubled himself to go so far as Kashmir either to get the book *Bodhayana Vritti* or to get the appreciation of the Goddess of Learning.

We have shown in another context that Sri N. Ramesam has quoted Prof. H. H. Wilson as approving of the authenticity of Anandagiri's *Sankaravijaya* and that that quotation, truncated as it was, misrepresented the actual views of the Professor. Anyhow since his views are accorded some value, we may be permitted to quote him in the present context also. He wrote in the year 1828 and 1832 in the *Asiatic Researches* and his writings have been published in 1846 at Calcutta and again in 1862 by Trubner and Co. of London in a book called *Sketches of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*. He says about Sri Sankara :

"Towards the close of his life he repaired to as far as Kashmir and seated himself, after triumphing over various opponents, on the throne of Sarasvati,The events of his last days are confirmed by local tradition and the Pitha or throne of Sarasvati on which Sankara sat is still shown in Kashmir."

We have no reason to doubt the accuracy of his statement when he significantly uses the present tense. The words of a foreigner more than a century ago are certainly entitled to more weight than self-serving statements which are being published during recent times. It will be abundantly clear from what has been stated before that the existence of a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi is a pure myth.

It is pertinent in this connection to recall that the Kumbhakonam Mutt does admit the existence of a Sarvajna Peetha in Kashmir but it would say that the Acharya that ascended it was not Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada but a successor of his in that Mutt as its 36th Acharya and it was that Acharya that was born at Chidambaram and disappeared in the Himalayas and that the biographers attribute very often these events to the original Acharya himself. Those who look upon Madhava's *Samkshepa Sankara Vijaya* as of recent origin will be unpleasantly disappointed to find that Atmabodhendra refers particularly to the author of *Samkshepa Sankara Vijaya* as one of those who so mistake the events in the life of the later Acharya for those relating to the original Acharya. On page 68 he says;

इदमेव अधिकाश्मीरं अस्य अखिलवित्पीठाधिरोहणं आदिमा-
चार्याणां इति श्रेणुः विद्याशंकरविजय-संक्षेपशंकरविजय-कारादयः

We have already pointed out that whenever he refers to *Vyasachaliya* it is really not to the new *Vyasachaliya* but only to the *Madhaviya* and it is well known that *Madhaviya* alone is known as *Samkshepa Sankara Vijaya*. When he mentions therefore the work by this name he is necessarily referring to *Madhaviya*. This incidentally shows that *Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya* was anterior to the *Gururatnamalika Vyakhya* and was known also as *Vyasachaliya*.

CHAPTER—XVI

PLACE OF DISAPPEARANCE

As regards the place where Sri Sankara disappeared from mortal vision, Madhava and Sadananda both say that immediately after ascending the Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir he proceeded to the Himalayas and thence to Kailasa. Though Chidvilasa would have the Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi, he says that Sri Sankara went to the Himalayas and disappeared into the Dattatreya cave there. According to the new *Vyasachaliya*, Sri Sankara went away to the “resplendent or desired region” immediately after ascending the Sarvajna Peetha at Kashmir. As has been already pointed out, this description fits in with his original abode, the silvery mountain Kailasa. True devotees of Sri Sankara are reluctant to admit that he left his physical body behind for any ceremonies being performed for it. Ananadagiri alone would have it that Sri Sankara while at Kanchi “dissolved” his physical body in the subtle body and then dissolved that subtle body in the causal body and then dissolved even that in the Atma of a thumb-size and that funeral ceremonies were performed for him. The alleged process of dissolution is unknown to Hinduism and particularly to Advaita and its enunciation itself shows that the author was not conversant with the basic tenets of our religion.

I have already shown the unreliability of *Patanjali Charita* and *Sankarabhyudaya*. I am not behind anybody in the regard for Ramabhadra Dikshita or Rajachudamani Dikshita but I cannot for a moment accept as their composition any slokas which the Kumbhakonam Mutt chooses to assign to them or include in their genuine writings. We have seen enough of their playing ducks and drakes with reference to other “authorities” to place any reliance upon their statements. After all *Patanjali Vijaya* says only that after writing the *Advaita Bhashya* and touring successfully he had a stay at Kanchi.

गोविन्ददेशिकमुपास्य चिराय भक्त्या

तस्मिन् स्थिते निगमसीम्नि विदेहमुक्त्या ।

अद्वैतभाष्यमवकल्प्य दिशी विजित्य

काञ्चीपुरे स्थितिमवाप स शंकरार्यः ॥

“After serving the Guru Govindapada with devotion for a long time and after he was freed from embodiment and merged in the goal of the Upanishads, Sri Sankara wrote out his *Advaita Bhashya* and conquered the directions and had a stay at Kanchipura.”

It would seem from this that the *Bhashyas* were written only after Sri Govindapada passed away- We are not aware of any other work which mentions his passing away. If he did pass away before the *Bhashyas* were written and before Sri Sankara started on his tour of conquest, he could not possibly have met him in the Himalays after he had carried out his mission in this life. Sri N. Ramesam however on page 89 of his book says “At Badarinath, Sri Sankara had darshan of his Guru Govinda Bhagavatpada and his Paramaguru, i. e., his Guru's Guru Sri Goudapadacharya who were doing tapascharya in the Himalaya.” The Swamiji of that Mutt also says the same thing on page 233 of his *Sankara Vijayam*. Either of these versions must be untrue.

The last stanza of *Sankarabhyudaya* only says that Sri Sankara “enjoyed the bliss of Brahman in worshipping the Goddess every day”

कम्पातीरनिवासिनीमनुदिनं कामेश्वरीमर्चयन्

ब्रह्मानन्दमविन्दन्न जगतां क्षेमकरः शंकरः ॥

This cannot certainly mean that he passed away at Kanchi. I have already referred to the unreliability of the *Sivarahasya* and how it has been undergoing amendments. We have

mentioned also that Govindanatha's *Kerala Sankara Vijaya* says that Sri Sankara passed away at Tiruchur. It is painfully interesting to find that, though Atmabodhendhra quotes Govindanatha's sloka 5 in Chapter III of his *Sankara Vijaya* correctly on page 25, he deliberately misquotes him on pages 39 as saying

इति निश्चित्य मनसा श्रीमान् शंकरदेशिकः ।
 मठे श्रीशारदामिस्थे सर्वज्ञं निदधन्मुनिम् ॥
 सुरेश्वरं वृत्तिकृतमन्तिकस्थं तदाऽऽदरात् ।
 समं संस्थाप्य तस्मै स्वं वक्तुं भाष्यं समन्वशात्
 स्वशिष्यपारम्पर्येण लिङ्गं स्वं योगनामकम् ।
 सेवयेनं कामकोटिपीठे सार्धं वसेति च ॥
 इत्याज्ञां संप्रदायास्मै त्यक्तपीठमठस्पृहः ।
 कामाक्ष्या निकटे जातु संनिविश्य जगद्गुरुः ॥
 देहिभिर्दुःखं मेजे देहं तत्रैव संत्यजन् ।
 अखण्डज्योतिरानन्दमक्षरं परमं पदम् ॥
 स एव शंकराचार्यो गुरुमुक्तिप्रदः सताम् ।
 अद्यापि मूर्ते चैतन्यमिव तत्रैव तिष्ठति ।

These slokas are *not* found in the printed edition published by the Kerala Publishing House in 1926. They are *not* also found in the manuscript preserved in the Tanjore Sarasvati Mahal Library. They cannot be found there as they distinctly say that Tiruchur was the place of disappearance. Evidently taking advantage of the fact that the book was not easily available, Atmabodhendhra made bold to give those "quotations." The reader will note that here also the appointment of Sarvajnatma to the Pitha under the guardianship of Suresvara and the passing away of Sri Sankara at Kanchi are introduced in these misquotations just as they were introduced in the slokas misquoted

as from *Vyasachaliya* ; here we have the additional advantage of a reference to the Yoga Linga. Atmabodhendra must be congratulated on making these misquotations consistent with each other. The patent attempt to tamper with and "improve" upon the materials on hand is itself ample and positive proof of the falsity of the claims.

Sri N. Ramesam has in appendix B of his book published the opinion of two Vaishnava 'research scholars' from Mysore that Sri Sarkara settled down at Kanchi and passed away there, though they say "the place where the Great Acharya resided and preached during his last days on earth and where he attained Siddhi is still shrouded in mystery." They base their opinion mainly upon the *Siva Rahasya* passage and Atmabodhendra's misquotation of *Vyasachaliya* which we have already shown to be quite unreliable. They rely also on Dr. Hultzch's manuscript No. 2146 (1) which contains the sloka :

अगच्छत् स्वेच्छया काञ्चीं पर्यटन् पृथिवीतले ।

तत्र संस्थाप्य कामक्षीं जगाम परमं पदम् ॥

"Roaming about in the world, he came to Kanchi out of his own desire and establishing there Kamakshi he went to the supreme abode."

They refer also to a stanza in almost the same words said to be found in the *Guruparampara Stotra* of Kudli Sringeri Mutt.

स्वेच्छया पर्यटन् भूमौ ययौ कञ्चीपुरं ततः ।

तत्र संस्थाप्य कामाक्षीदेवीं परमगात् पदम् ॥

As Dr. Hultzch's manuscript is also called *Guruparāmpara Stotra*, the two mentioned above are evidently the same with slight modifications. It is well known that the Kudli Mutt is

an offshoot of the Sringeri Mutt long after Vidyaranya and yet the *Guruparampara* even before him does not correspond in the least with the Sringeri *Parampara*- The Doctor got the manu cript from one 'Jambunatha Bhatta' a Maratha Brahmana at Tanjore who is the eldest son of a certain Mannam Bhatta." There is no need to attach any historical importance to it. Assuming that it is a genuine document, we must note that the passage quoted only mentions that Sri Sankara established Goddess Kamakshi at Kanchi and *not* that he passed away at Kanchi. Sri N. Ramesam in referring to the same subject says on page 123.

"The *Guruparampara stotra* of the Sringeri Acharyas published by Dr. Hultzsch says that after establishing Prithvidhara in the Sarada Peetha, Sankara went to Kanchi. After consecrating Sri Kamakshi and *after appointing Visvarupa Yati to spread Advaita from his own Ashrama, Sankara attains immortal bliss.*

and quotes in proof the statement :

तत्र संस्थाप्य कामाक्षीं जगाम परमं पदम् ।

विश्वरूपयतिं स्थाप्य स्वाश्रमस्य प्रचारणे ॥

But this is a misleading quotation as in the context the words "his own Ashrama" really mean Sringeri and not Kanchi. The entire context is as follows :

संस्थाप्य स्वमठं कृत्वा तुङ्गभद्रानदीतटे ।

तत्र स्थित्वा द्वादशाब्दं यतिं पृथ्वी-वराभिधम् ॥

विद्यापीठाधिपं कृत्वा भारतीसंज्ञया गुरुः ।

भागच्छत् स्वेच्छया काञ्चीं पर्यटन् पृथिवीतले ॥

तत्र संस्थाप्य कामाक्षीं जगाम परमं पदम् ।

विश्वरूपयतिं स्थाप्य स्वाश्रमस्य प्रचारणे ॥

स्वयं काञ्चीमगात् तूर्णं श्रीपृथ्वीधरभारती ।

तद्वृत्तान्तं समाकर्ण्य तपसः सिद्धयेः तदा ॥

श्रीविश्वरूपयोगीन्द्राज्जातश्चिद्रूपभारती ।

ततो गङ्गाधरयतिः ततश्चिज्ज्ञानभारती ॥

It will be clear now that the Stotra says that the Acharya “established his own Matha on the banks of the Tungabhadra”. that he came to Kanchi casually in the course of his tour, that Sri Sankara stayed at the former place for twelve years and appointed ‘Prithvidhara’ for the Mutt there, and that it was Prithvidhara that nominated Visvarupa for the continuance of “his own” mutt (which necessarily means Sringeri) as he went to Kanchi for the perfection of his Tapas. It is not fair to suppress the preceding and succeeding slokas and try to give a twisted meaning to the expression “his own Ashrama”, meant Kanchi. It is not relevant here to consider who Prithvidhara was or whether it was he that was placed in charge of the Sringeri Mutt by Sri Sankara,

Further the two “research scholar” mentioned above place confidence on Anandagiri’s *Sankara Vijaya* and say on page 160

“About the authenticity of this work Prof. Wilson remarks that ‘it bears internal and indisputable evidence of being the composition of a period not far removed from that at which he (Sankara) may be supposed to have flourished and we may therefore follow it as a very safe guide’.

• Another great scholar Dr. S. K. Belvalker in his Gopal Basu Mullick lecture on Vedanta Philosophy says ‘According to one set of traditions Kanchi in the south of India is given as the place where the Acharya breathed his last. According to other sources, he died at Badarikasrama, disappearing into a cave in the Hima-

layas. The weight of probability belongs to the first view’.

“Thus from these divergent views we may gather that Kedara in the North and Kanchi in the South are the only two places that have claim to the distinction of being the places of the last residence and Siddhi of the great Acharya. Dr. Belwalker and Prof. Wilson, as seen above, have preferred to take Kanchi as the place.”

The above extract shows that these scholars base their opinion on the veracity of Anandagiri as certified to by Prof. Wilson. But we have already pointed out that the remarks of Prof. Wilson which are relied upon by Sri N. Ramesam also, have been not only misquoted and misinterpreted but that Prof. Wilson, instead of certifying to the veracity of Anandagiri does not hesitate to characterise him as an “unblushing liar.” Prof. Wilson has nowhere expressly or impliedly preferred Kanchi to Kedarnath. He leaves us in no doubt at all about his opinion. He definitely says in his book (1846 edition) page 127

“He-next went to Badarikasrma and finally to Kedarnath in the Himalayas where he died at the yearly age of thirtytwo. The events of his last days are confirmed by local traditions”

In another important publication of his, popularly known as Wilson’s *Glossary*, he refers to Sri Sankara thus

“Shancaran ; Shancarachorry. He was a native of Caulady, a village on Periyar about 20 miles south east of Cranganore in TravancoreTowards the close of his life he went to Cashmere’

Thus it will be seen that there is no warrant at all for the suggestion that Prof. Wilson “preferred” Kanchi to Ked-

arnath as the last resting place of Sri Sankara ; on the other hand, in his *Glossary*, he says on page 810 “whether he was more than a passing pilgrim at Canjeevaram is doubtful.” He no doubt mentions the existence of a Mutt at Kumbhakonam at the time of his *Glossary*, that is, A. D. 1855 but his remarks are significant.

COMBAKONAM ; *A Branch Mutt of Shankaracharya*, founder of the Advaita philosophy, is presided over by a chief gooroo of Smartha Brahmans.”

It must be pointed out in this connection that Prof. Wilson was not an idle tourist or journalist and that his remarks were not casual or irresponsible statements. The Privy Council says of him in the decision reported in I. L. R. 1942 Madras 893 at page 908 :

“Professor Wilson held the Chair of Sanskrit at Oxford and was Librarian to the East India Company but his *Glossary* was compiled pursuant to a resolution of the Court of Directors from the materials derived from all parts of India as well as from the stores of his own immense erudition.”

It is unfortunate that the Mysore “scholars” have chosen to theorise upon Prof. Wilson’s view without caring to look into the Professor’s actual wording which are so definite that there is no scope for any mistaking of theorising.

Coming to recent times we have several authors who are above all chance of being partial to anybody and who state definitely that Sri Sankara passed away at Kedarnath. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on page 152 of his scholarly treatise on “The Discovery of India” says :

“At the age of thirtytwo, this Brahmin from the tropical south died at Kedarnath in the upper snow-covered reaches of the Himalayas.”

Dr. Sampurnanand agreed with the tradition that Sri Sankara only disappeared from mortal vision at Kedarnath and did not leave his physical body behind to be interred in a Samadhi. He therefore looks upon the structure preserved at Kendarnath as a memorial rather than a Samadhi in the accepted sense of that term. He says :

“There is nothing to prove that Sri Sankaracharya *died* at this spot. All that tradition says is that he came to Kedarnath and in modern phraseology *disappeared thereafter*. So what is called Samadhi is really not a Samadhi but a memorial.”

A gentleman tries to twist the meaning of these sentences by ignoring the significance of the words italicised by me and professing to agree with the Doctor he says :

We are of the opinion that Kedarnath cannot be said to be the Samadhisthan of the great Acharya. Yet it is a unique place connected with the life of the Acharya, inasmuch as the Great Adi Sandara disappeared from amidst his followers while at Kedarnath. Traditions recorded in some work dealing with Adi Sankarachrya point out the fact that Sri Sankara went to Kailasa from Kedarnath, brought the five Shpatika Lingas and a portion of the *Soundaryalahari* Stotra and repairing to the south attained Siddhi at Kanchi. The memorial at Kedarnath should at any rate be kept intact.....”

Sri N. Ramesam chooses to give publicity to this in appendix C of his book evidently to detract from the validity of Dr. Sampurnanand's statements but this half-hearted support itself betrays the partisan spirit of the writer.

Dr. Theos Bernard of New York in his valuable book on *Hindu Philosophy*, page 21, says :

“He is believed to have died in the Himalayan village of Kedarnath.”

Thus all impartial authors, ancient and modern, are agreed that Sri Sankara disappeared for ever at Kendarnath. We cannot be expected to place any reliance on any partisan statements which have been introduced or interpolated just to serve partisan interests.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FIFTH MUTT

It is beyond dispute that Sri Sankara founded four Mathas in the four corners of India. *Vyasachaliya* said to have been written by an Acharya of the Kumbhakonam Mutt does not refer at all to the founding of any mutt and his silence as regards his own Mutt over which he is said to have presided is significant proof that no such Mutt existed and that in any case the author, whoever he was, was not aware of it. The *Ashtottarasata Namavali* of the Kumbhakonam Mutt, though it varies in some particulars from the current one, retains the reference to the founding of the four *Amnyas* in the four corners of the land and it does *not* mention any fifth *Amnaya* at Kanchi though it specifically refers to the consecration of a Srichakra there. As has been once before pointed out, even the *Anandagiri Sankara Vijaya* does not mention the founding of any Mutt at Kanchi and this “defect” had to be remedied by interpolating some passages in its 65th chapter as if he built a Mutt there and asked Sureśvara to

preside over it, This necessitated further amendments also, deleting the passages referring to Sringeri as "his Matha" and substituting and adding passages mentioning Kanchi. In addition to what we have already mentioned before as regards the difference between the Calcutta edition of the book and the "embellished" edition issued on behalf of the Kumbhakonam Mutt, we may in the present context refer to two more significant amendments :

Calcutta edition.
Page 190

ततः परं सरसवार्णीं मन्त्र-
बद्धां कृत्वा गगनमार्गदेव
शृङ्गपुरममीपेतुङ्गभद्रातीरे चक्रं
निर्माय तदग्रे सरसवार्णीं
निधाय "एवं आकल्पं स्थिरा
भव मदाश्रमे" इति आज्ञाप्य
निजमठ कृत्वा तत्र विद्या-
पीठनिर्माणं कृत्वा भारती-
संप्रदायं निजशिष्यं चकार।
तद्वारभ्य

"Embellished"
ततः परं सरसवार्णीं मन्त्र-
भद्धां कृत्वा गगनविद्यां पीठं
निर्माणं कृत्वा भारतीसंप्रदायं
निजशिष्येषु आवकार। तद्वारभ्य
... ..

page 203

निजशिष्यपरम्परां आकल्पं
शृङ्गगिरिस्थानस्थां कृत्वा
सकलशिष्येभ्यो मोक्षमार्गोप-
देशं कृत्वा.....

निजशिष्यपरम्परां अकल्पं
काञ्चीपीठादितत्परस्थायिनीं
कृत्वा तन्मुखादेव सकल
शिष्येभ्यो मोक्षमार्गोपदेशं कृत्वा
.....

In addition to these amendments, it was necessary also to amend the words स कामम् into स्वकाश्रमे in the *Siva Rahasya* passage. Another curious thing which may be

noticed in the *Markandeya Samhita* is that it refer only to the Mutts at Sringeri and Kanchi and not to the other three Mutts ; this shows a conscioness that the author of the passages was particular only in giving the Kanchi Mutt a status.

Chidvilasa's *Sankara Vijaya* is claimed to have been written by the 46th Acharya of the Kumbhakonam Mutt. It mentions a Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi, but does not mention anything about the founding of a Mutt at Kanchi, though it mentions specifically the four recognised Mutts.

Sringeri :

श्रीमठं तत्र निर्माय विद्यापीठमचीकृतम् ।

चतुर्वेकं वावदूकं सुरेशार्थमग्रिमम् ॥

ब्रह्मविद्यावरिष्ठं तं तत्पीठे विनिवेद्य सः ॥

Ch. 24 (30, 21)

Jagannatha :

ऐद्रयां ककुभि तत्रैकं भोगवर्धननामकम् ।

जगन्नाथस्य चाभ्यर्णे मठमेकमचीकृतम् ॥

पद्मपादाचार्यवर्यं तन्मठाधीशमातनोत् ॥

Ch. 20 (10, 11)

Dvaraka :

पश्चिमस्यां हरित्येष मठमेकं विनिर्ममे ।

हस्तामलकनामानं तदध्यक्षं ततान सः ॥

Ch. 31 (3—6)

Badari :

कौबेर्यां दिशि तत्रैकं मठं दिव्यमकारयत् ।

तन्मठे तोटकाचार्यवर्यं छायाऽनुवर्तिनम् ॥

Ch. 31 (28)

Chidvilasa describes in detail the renovation of the Kanchi temples and would not possibly have left out the establishment of a Mutt there if it were true.

Some of the *Mathamnayas* extant in the land mention in addition to the four above-mentioned *Amnayas* three more which are in the purely spiritual or Adhyatmic plane, thus raising the number of *Amnayas* to seven. The *Mathamnaya Setu* however, which is peculiar to the Kumbhakonam Mutt, mentions eight *Amnayas*, adding one more to justify its own existence, but curiously enough, though the new *Amnaya* is put between the four terrestrial *Amnayas* and the three spiritual ones, the latter are counted as the 5th, 6th and 7th, without giving any number to the new one. A mere glance at the contents of this *Setu* will be sufficient to convince the reader that it is a clear fabrication for the purpose of claiming supremacy. In partitioning this land among the four terrestrial *Amnayas* it has to concede that Sringeri was for the south, Dvaraka for the west, Jagannathn for the East and Badari for the North. As regards Sringeri it says :

आन्ध्रौढलाटकर्णाटकोङ्कणाष्टेङ्कणा अपि ।

शृङ्गेर्यधीना देशास्ते संस्थिता दक्षिणापथम् ॥

It is curious that Oudhras and Latas who are evidently North Indians are included in this list and Dravidas are left out. The *Setu* does not allot any territory to the Kumbhakonam Mutt for its 'jurisdiction.' If therefore it claims any jurisdiction over any particular set of people or any particular tract of the country, it will be against the terms of the *Setu* itself. If then the Sringeri Mutt is for South, it necessarily follows that it has jurisdiction even in the towns of Kanchi and Kumbhakonam ; not open to the Kumbkakonam Mutt which relies upon the and it is *Setu* to question this undeniable fact which is confirmed by the *Setu* itself. The *Setu* says ;

उक्ताश्वत्वार आम्नाया यतीनां हि पृथक् पृथक् ।

ते सर्वे मत्पदाचारनियोगेन यथाविधि ॥

प्रयोक्तव्याः स्वधर्मेषु शासनीयास्ततोऽन्यथा ।

कुर्वन्त एव सततं अटनं धरलीतले ॥

विरुद्धाचारसंप्राप्तौ मत्पदस्थसमाज्ञया ।

लोकान् संशीलयन्त्वेते स्वधर्मप्रतिरोधतः ॥

.....

तान् सर्वाम् शासयन्त्वेते आचार्या मत्पदे स्थिताः ।

स्वस्वराष्ट्रप्रतिष्ठित्यै संचारः सुविधीयताम् ।

तैरन्यतो न गम्येत मन्मथ्याः सर्वतश्चराः ॥

.....

कामकोटीमठे त्वस्मिन् गुरुरिन्द्रसरस्वती ।

सर्वोत्तरः सर्वसेव्यः सार्वभौमो जगद्गुरुः ॥

अन्ये गुणवः प्रोक्ताः जगद्गुरुरयं परः ।

.....

अन्ये मठास्तु चत्वारः आचार्यं मत्पदे स्थितम् ।

संप्रदायैश्चतुर्भिः स्वैः समर्चन्तु यथाविधि ॥

According to even these [few extracts] which exemplify the tenor and tone of the *Setu*, the four Mutts are to be under the orders of this “supreme Mutt.” their Acharyas are to travel only with its permission ; they ought not to encroach on another’s region ; the Acharya of this Mutt however may go anywhere; he is above all and is Jagadguru while the others are but Gurus enjoined to worship him !

It will be seen that, even according to the *Setu*, the jurisdiction of the Kumbhakonam Mutt. if any, is “over” the four recognised Mutts and certainly not over their Sishyas. But strangely enough it would not adopt the straightforward

course of asking those Mutt to recognise its supremacy and enforcing its disciplinary jurisdiction over them but would, on the other hand, engage itself in creating a literature of its own and doing propaganda in various ways and using its influence, ingenuity and energy in trying to confuse the minds of the ordinary people with the object of gaining *their* recognition incidentally weaning them away from their timehonoured allegiance to any one of the four recognised Mutts. The evident object to such high-pitched propaganda is to secure a recognition at least equal to those four Mutts. Reference is made in this context to stray and casual remarks of Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dr. Ganganath Jha. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and others and even to a more casual remark in a judgment of the High Court of Madras as if they proved anything.

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar is quoted as saying :

“(He) established Mutts or centres of religious learning and practices in the North, South, East and West of India . Srinagar, Dwaraka, Puri, Sringeri and Kanchi were his far flung spiritual capitals.”

The casualness of the remark is quite patent from the fact that he leaves out Badari where Sri Sankara did found a Mutt as accepted on all hands and has included Srinagar where he did not found any Mutt at all. He included Srinagar evidently because the Sarvajna Peetha was nearby and included Kanchi also because he renovated the temples there and not because he founded any Mutt in either of those places. Dr. Ganganath Jha also does not refer to any Mutt at Kanchi. He refers only to “the establishment of seats of worship at places like Kanchi, Sringeri, etc.” In this connection I may usefully recall the definite remarks of Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar in his latest “Homage to Sri Sankara.”

“Born in Kalady in Travancore, Sri Sankara manifested miraculous physical and spiritual energy. He established Mathas in the Himalayas, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea and in the Karnatic country at Sringeri which was associated with the name of Rishyasringa and was situated on the banks of the Tunga River and juxtaposed to its confluent, the Bhadra.

“It is needless to deal with the long narratives and Sankara Vijayas that have dwelt on the several miracles connected with Him, because the greatest miracle of all is His life itself and the fact that in 32 years, from his birth at Kalady to his Mukti at Kedarnath, he compressed the labours of centuries of intellectual and spiritual illumination

“Sri Sankara installed in His Peetha at Sringeri Sarada Devi representing Brahma Vidya and also established the Sri Chakra and gave to His chief disciple Sri Suresvaracharya a Sphatika Linga of Chandramoulisvara and the Murti of Ganapati.”

The reader will easily note that the above passages positively negative most of the claims put forward by the Kumbhakonam Mutt.

Evidently in deference to the persistent propaganda of the Kumbhakonam Mutt, the Hindu Religious Endowments Commission which had Dr. C. P. Remaswami Aiyar as its Chairman has chosen to record the plea of that mutt that it was inaugurated by Sri Sankara at Kanchi, that he assumed the headship of Sarvajana Peetha there and this Peetha was later on thifted to Tanjore and thence to Kumbhakonam. But it is careful to preface these statements with the words “Tradition has it,” “It is reported.” thus making it clear that such

statements based as they are on no evidence are in no sense any finding of the commission or the opinion of any of its members.

The observation of Justice Satyanarayana about a “Central Mutt” at Kanchi can have no value as the Writ proceedings in which he made them related to a Madhva Mutt and the Chidambaram Temple, both having nothing to do with the Advaita Mutts. On the other hand, in the case of Swami Bharati Krishna Tirtha, Sir Courtney Terrel and Syed Fazl Ali of the Patna High Court had to deal with a Mutt founded by Sri Sankara Himself. They say in their judgment :

“The Trust in question is that of the Govardhana Math at Puri. This Trust was founded as one of four similar trusts by a great Hindu religious leader in ancient times with the object among others of combating the spread of Buddhism. The founder Adi Shankaracharya divided India into four jurisdictions with a Matha at the head of each. Under the western jurisdiction was placed the territory roughly corresponding to that now known as the Bombay Presidency called the Sarada Math at Dwaraka.....Northern India was placed under the Jyoti Matha which is now extinct. Eastern India was placed under the Govardhana Math, the subject of the present dispute and Southern India under the Sringeri Matha in Mysore. We are told that the founder and the Mathas, founded by him, are objects of profound veneration by all sections of pious Hindus. The Head of each Math is known by the title of Jagadguru Shankaracharya and his religious authority is widely, if not universally, accepted.”

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru also in his “The Discovery of India” makes these pertinent observations.

“He (Shankaracharya) established four great Maths or monasteries, locating them far from each other, almost at the four corners of India. One of these was in the south at Sringeri in Mysore, another at Puri on the east coasts, the third at Dvaraka in Kathiavar on the west coast and the fourth at Badarinath in the heart of the Himalayas. At the age of thirtytwo, this Brahmin from the tropical south died at Kedarnath in the upper-snow covered reaches of the Himalayas ..By locating his four great Monasteries in the north, south, east and west of India, he evidently wanted to encourage the conception of a culturally united India.”

Prof. H. H. Wilson whom the Kumbhakonam Mutt advocates misquoted for the purpose of strengthening the “authority” of Anandagiri’s *Sankara Vijaya* does not make any mention of any Mutt at Kanchi He says :

“In the course of his peregrinations, he established several Mathas or convents under the presidency of his disciples, particularly one still flourishing at Sringeri or Sringagiri on the Western Ghats near the sources of the Tungabhadra”

It may be urged that at his time the Mutt had moved to Kumbhakonam. We have already pointed out that he doubts if Sri Sankara was “more than a passing pilgrim” at Kanchi.

About Sringeri which he spells Shringairy he says “Rishya Sringagiri in Sanskrit—Most important of Mutts founded by Shuncara” but as regards Kumbhakonam, as pointed out before, he says “Combakonam; *A branch Mutt* of Shankaracharya, founder of the Advaita philosophy is presided over by a chief gooroo of Smartha Brahmins”.

This shows beyond doubt that during his time the Kumbhakonam Mutt was known as a “branch Mutt” and certainly not as any “Central Mutt”. This is strongly corroborated by the remarks of Dr. Burnell who was District Judge of Tanjore so close to Kumbhakonam wherein he refers to “the Mathas on the Coromandel coast which have renounced obedience to the Sringeri Matha where Sankarachariar’s legitimate successor resides”. There is absolutely no basis for any suggestion that he was misled or had any bias against the Kumbhakonam Mutt.

Another writer who cannot be suspected of any partiality is K. M. Pannikar. He says on page 101 of his “*A Survey of Indian History*”:

“The main organisational work that Sankara undertook was the establishment of the four great Mutts, at Badari in the north high up in the Himalayas, at Puri in the east, at Dvaraka on the west coast off Jamnagar and at Sringeri in the south. These pontifical seats were to be occupied by Sankaracharyas who were to maintain unpolluted the teaching of Advaita and to uphold the ascendancy of Upanishadic thought. It is undeniable that these great Monasteries, with their subsidiary institutions also under religious teachers sometimes assuming the title of Sankaracharya, have helped to maintain the orthodoxy of Sankara’s teachings and the hold of Hinduism on the people”.

Dr. Theos Bernard of New York on page 21 of his *Hindu philosophy* says of Sri Sankara thus:

“Sankara is belived to have been born at Kaladi on the West Coast of the Peninsula in the Malabar... He founded four Mathas or monasteries, the chief of which is the one at Sringeri in the Mysore Province of Southern India. The others are at Puri in the East, Dvaraka in the West and Badari in the North in the Himalayas. He is believed to have died in the Himalayan village of Kedarnath”.

Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji writes :

“Sankaracharya also established four Maths or monasteries in the four corners of India, viz., Jyotir math in the North, Sharada Mutt in the West, Sringeri Math in the South and Govardhana Math in the East. These were as it were, the pillars of Sankara's religious victory (दिग्विजय), the capitals of his spiritual empire exercising its sway over the whole of India.”

Mr. K. A. Abbas in his article on “*Does India Exist*” in the Journal *Blitz* dated 17—6—1961, has under the caption *Shankara's Vision of India* expressed himself thus ;

“Certainly the concept of India is at least as old as Shankaracharya, the scholar reformer from Kerala who gave his vision of India a definitive geographical shape by locating the Dhams at Sringeri in the South, Puri on the East Coast, Dvaraka on the West Coast and Badrinath in the heart of the Himalayas. Are we to understand that the millions of pilgrims who travelled from their villages across the vast land were untouched by the spirit of the unity of India? Shankaracharya the man from the extreme South placed

the final seal on the Map of India by dying in Badrinath in the extreme north of the country.”

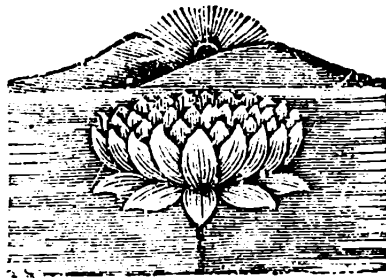
Gertrude Emerson Sen says in “Cultural Unity of India” p. 31—(A Government of India Publication)

“Before his death at the young age of thirtytwo, Sankara founded four maths for Hindu Sannyasis on the four sides of India – Puri, Dvaraka, Sringeri and Badarinath, thus fostering in a practical way the spiritual unity of the country.”

As against the disinterested pronouncements of such eminent persons of international fame, of various countries and faiths and of unimpeachable integrity, it is impossible to give any credence to the statements of partisans or others who could not resist the temptation of humouring those in whom they choose to evince interest for the moment for reasons of various sorts. We may cite as a sample of the latter the glaringly absurd assertion of Atreya Krishna Sastri on page 89 of his book that one Abhinava Uddanda Vidyaranya Bharati Swamigal, the Head of the Sringeri Peetha, while returning from Ramesvaram in 1797 apologised for having accepted *Pada Puja* at Jambukesvaram and other places and promised not to commit that sin any more! Unfortunately for him, there was no Acharya of that name at all at Sringeri. In referring on p. 99 to a litigation said to have taken place at Trichirapalli he says that it was decided there that it was only the Kumbhakonam Mutt Swamiji that was entitled to repair the *Thatanka* of Goddess Akhilandesvari; even according to the Mutt’s edition of the papers relating to that litigation, the Court expressly and specifically stated that it was *not* considering that Mutt’s claim, as the plaintiff’s claim to the exclusive right had not been proved. To interpret this as confirming

or upholding the Mutt's claim is not honest. On the same page he says that it is said that Muthuramalinga Setupati of Ramanathapuram, Ramachandra Maharaja of Pudukotta, and the Rajas who were ruling over Vijayanagar, Kerala and other Native States, all gathered together and unanimously honoured the "Kanchi Kamakoti Peethadhipati" and came to the decision that his line of succession alone was unbroken from the time of Adi Sankara! The recklessness and absurdity of such statements is too patent to be pointed out. I may state in general that the other publications also are bristling with such absurdities and baseless statements and it is not worth while refuting them individually. Yet such books are advertised, sold and distributed by the Mutt.

It is quite irrelevant in this context to consider whether there are not innumerable Advaita mutts scattered throughout the length and breadth of India. Every place touched by the holy feet of Sri Sankarabhagavatpada or any of his successors may well develop into a mutt. We are concerned only with the question whether there was or could be any Amnaya Mutt other than the recognised four. The above considerations clearly negatives such a possibility.



CHAPTER XVIII

A PIOUS MYTH

That the words of Dr. Burnell, Prof. Wilson and Mr. Pannikar that the Mutt at Kumbhakonam was a “Branch” or subsidiary Mutt are not mere idle or irresponsible ones is proved by several other indisputable factors. Kumbhakonam is in the centre of the Tanjore District where the Kings of Tanjore held sway for some time. It may well be that the Mutt at Kumbhakonam came into existence in the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century at the instance of those Kings as the local representative of the Sringeri Mutt which was in the Karnataka region. This is confirmed by the fact that the incumbent of the Kumbhakonam Mutt had the Karnataka title of “Chikka (small) Udayar (Swami)” which necessarily implies that that there was a ‘Dodda (great) Udayar (swami)’ over him. All the incumbents of the Kumbhakonam Mutt within living memory have been only Karnatakas; the Mutt’s seal itself is in Kannada. The latest attempt to bring in a non-Karnataka to the seat is just in a line with the Mutt’s new claim to be an “All India” institution. It is just possible that, when frequent rivalry and disputes arose between the Tanjore and the Mysore Kings, the Kumbhakonam mutt thought it an opportune moment to claim to be independent of the Sringeri Mutt. The Sringeri Mutt has ancient properties in all the Districts surrounding the Tanjore District, namely in the Madurai and Tirunelveli Districts in the south, in the Coimbatore District in the west and in Chingleput, Madras, Tirupati and Kanchi itself in the north. It is just possible that a slice of territory was originally entrusted to a Deputy of the Sringeri Mutt to look after the spiritual interest of the disciples within the territory of the Tanjore Kings and that he assumed independence when the hold of the central authority got

relaxed in course of time by indifference or neglect or through other causes, political or otherwise, just as the rent-collectors became Zamindars and provincial Governors Maharajas when the sovereign authority at Vijayanagar became weak or ceased to exist. The claim of the Kumbhakonam Mutt to be called "Sarada Mutt" is evidently a remnant of its once subordination to the Sringeri Mutt. The Goddess at Kanchi is Kamakshi and the Goddess worshipped in the Mutt is Tripurasundari; these are distinct aspects of the Divine Mother and cannot be identified with Sarada. There is a temple for Sri Sarada only at Sringeri and not at Kanchi or Kumbhakonam. If therefore the Kumbhakonam Mutt has obtained or is in possession of any grant or document or properties as "Sarada Mutt", it can only mean that they originally belonged to the Sringeri Mutt. It is well known that the Sringeri Mutt at Kanchi is an ancient one and that the Kumbhakonam Mutt buildings there are only of recent origin. It is said that the Mutt buildings at Kumbhakonam itself has a slab recording its construction in A. D. 1821. It is not improbable that it is the first attempt to gain local prominence. It is conceivable also that to invest it with an ancient ancestry it began to claim to be a continuation of a Mutt at Kanchi alleged to have been put to the necessity of moving south owing to the political troubles in that region. I feel confident that historians also will easily negate such claims.

The Mutt seems to be yet undecided as to the date on which it must be supposed to have left Kanchi for the Tanjore District. Mr. G. S. Sardesai on page 190 of his *New History of the Marhattas* Vol. III says that Tipu Sultan of Mysore visited in 1791 "the Hindu Shrines of Kanchi wherethe main gate of the principal temple commenced by

Haidar was lying unfinished.” He adds “Tipu ordered the work to be quickly completed offering to bear the cost. He also personally led the grand Hindu procession of the holy chariot He employed large numbers of Brahmans to perform Hindu religious ceremonies invoking success to his arms *He invited the Sankaracharya of Sringeri to be present at Kanchi to supervise the rites of worship* in order to ensure success in his war” This could not possibly have happened if there was another Sankaracharya at Kanchi or even if there was a Sankaracharya at Kumbhakonam who had any influence at Kanchi. This shows also that, at least in the view of Tipu, the person competent to regulate the rites of worship at Kanchi was the Sankaracharya of Sringeri.

We may refer to another significant circumstance. In a case decided by the District Judge of Madurai between the Beri Chetties and the Komatti Chetties, it has been brought to light that these two sects *residing at or near Kanchi* quarrelled between themselves once before in or about 1763 A. D. and that the dispute came up before the Nabob Walajah for decision and that, in view of the religious points involved as regards their relative status, he referred the matter to the then Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Sringeri and that on receipt of the latter’s decision in the matter the Nabob fined the Beri Chetties. If there was a spiritual authority, another Sankaracharya, *residing at Kanchi itself* or having “jurisdiction” over that area, how happens it that the matter had to be referred to Sringeri?

It is well known that Sri Ramanujacharya was a resident of Kanchi itself and studied Vedanta under one Yadavaprakasa with whose teachings he was not satisfied. If there was a Sankaracharya, the Head of a “Central Mutt” at Kanchi, could not Sri Ramanuja or Yādava-

prakasa have sought further enlightenment from him about the Advaita standpoint? When Sri Ramanuja started on a tour of conquest, did he first tackle the Sankaracharya in his own home town? These facts clearly show that there was no sankaracharya at all at Kanchi. It is said again of Akshobhyamuni of Madhwa persuasion that he met Vidyaranya and had a discussion with him. It does not matter who won in the combat. We are not concerned with the accuracy of either of the statements :

विद्यारण्यमहारण्यं अक्षोभ्यमुनिरच्छिनत् ।

अक्षोभ्यं क्षोभयामास विद्यारण्यमहामुनिः ॥

Why did not Akshobhyamuni seek out the "Head Mutt" Acharya for disputation? The only answer is there was none such.

It is certainly pitiable that, to prove the existence of a Mutt at Kanchi, its advocates have to rely upon an abusive passage in Sri Vedanta Desika's *Gita Tatparya Chandrika* :

कुमतिमठगतिपरम्परायाः शिष्यान्नकुक्षिभरेः शिष्याभावे
प्रायोपवेशनं प्रसज्येतेति भावः ॥

"If there were to be no disciples to the line of Mathadhipatis of wicked intellect who fill their stomach with the food given by the disciples, they will have to starve"

As these words are of abuse from a Visishtadvaiti scholar, the Kumbhakonam devotee appropriates this remark to Advaiti Mathadhipatis and as Sri Vedanta Desika lived near Kanchi he would have it refer to the Kanchi Mutt

head, thereby “proving” the existence of the latter. Sri Vedanta Desika is known to have been a contemporary of Vidyaranya and according to the Kumbhakonam Mutt “chronology” it was “Vidya Tirtha” “the Guru of Vidyaranya” who was presiding over the Mutt at that time. It is impossible to conceive of Vedanta Desika as descending to such low language when speaking of “Vidya Tirtha.” There is no warrant also for assuming that he is referring to any Advaiti Mutt or to any Mutt near Kanchi. To make capital out of this remark and try to read into it a reference to an Advaiti Mutt at Kanchi betrays the desperate need felt for some “authority” in favour of its existence.

It is significant also that Sri Appayya Dikshita who lived very near Kanchi does not make the slightest reference to a Mutt at Kanchi or any Acharya there. An ingenious attempt is made by a modern advocate of that Mutt to read into the passages in *Yatraprabhandha* of Samarapungava Dikshita a reference to that Mutt and its Acharya. The Dikshita in his description of Kanchi mentions that the pilgrim after bathing in the Sarva Tirtha Tank saw and bowed to some Sannyasis who were on the banks of that Tank. The advocate in question wants us to take the plural “Sannyasis” as honorific plural and make it apply to a single Sannyasi and then take it as a reference to the head of the Kanchi Mutt. Instead of leaving it to this advocate to offer such an interpretation, the Dikshita could have straightforwardly mentioned the Mutt and its Acharya in express words. There is no mention of either in his work. Further the description of the Sannyasis given by the Dikshita makes it clear beyond any doubt that it could not possibly relate to the head of a Mutt. He refers to the Sannyasis living by *Madhukari*

Vritti, that is, going for food from door to door, which is certainly not appropriate to the head of a Mutt and that a “Central” Mutt; he refers also to their having no habitation of their own to stay in, which description cannot possibly apply to an Acharya who has a Mutt of his own.

अपि माधुकरिं वृत्तिमञ्चतो भ्रमवर्जितान् ।

... ..

तत्र कुत्रचन स्थास्नूनवनीपावनाकृतीन् ।

If as a matter of fact there was a Mutt and also an Acharya at that time, what prevented the Dikshita from referring to them? Why should it be necessary at all to unearth any reference to them from stray words? The absence of any direct reference by the Dikshita to a mutt or an Acharya, though he refers to the other features of Kanchi, proves on the other hand the absence of either during his times.

Any how it cannot be gainsaid that the Kumbhakonam Mutt has been in existence for nearly a century and a half. This period is quite sufficient to invest it with an “ancient” character as it is fairly equal to the length of the British regime in South India and the Mutt is certainly of a longer standing than many an institution that have come into existence during recent years deviating a great deal from the time honoured principles and practices of our religion in various ways and have yet managed to enlist the support and allegiance of several people. The Mutt may well content itself with such prestige as this standing may give and need not hanker after an imaginary ancestry. The ideals of Dharma preached by the Kumbhakonam Mutt are not different from those of the recognised Mutts and there is ample scope and the imperative need for co-operation in matters of religion to stem the tide of irreligion

which threatens to over-run even this land of Dharma. When even the ancient Kingdoms of the land have ceased to exist and all are sought to be brought down to the dead level of mere humanity in the name of secularism, it is meaningless to assert or lay emphasis on such claims as are put forward on behalf of the Kumbhakonam Mutt. It cannot possibly be that Sri Sankaracharya who toured throughout India more than once was so ignorant of its geography as to found a "central" Mutt at Kanchi when he chose Sringeri for the south. Any unbiassed reader who peruses the above pages is sure to be convinced of the entire baselessness of such a claim and of the utter unreliability of the "authorities" urged in support of it. The prestige of the Mutt is not enhanced by such untenable claims but will really be enhanced by good work in the field of Dharma and if that work is done disinterestedly as a service to humanity and not with the ulterior object of enhancing its own status and prestige in the eyes of the world.

It is our earnest hope and prayer that the Kumbhakonam Mutt and its advocates will at least in future desist from advancing or emphasising any aspect likely to create discord among the followers of Sri Sankaracharya but usefully spend their time and energy in the common sacred cause of Dharma, so vitally necessary for the preservation of our national individuality and the realisation of individual perfection.



APPENDIX—A

तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु मामद्वैतमुपश्रय ।
इति संबोद्धितो ब्रह्मा प्रणिपत्य महेश्वरम् ॥
सगणः प्राप सत्याख्यं निजलोकमनन्यधीः ।
ततः सर्वात्मको देवश्चिदम्बरपुराश्रितः ॥
अकाशलिङ्गनाम्ना तु विख्यातोऽभून्महीतले ।
तत्र चिद्वन्महेन्द्रस्य कूले द्विजकुलाश्रिते ॥
जातः सर्वज्ञनामा तु कश्चिद्द्विजकुलेश्वरः ।
कामाक्षीति सती चाभूत् तस्य लक्षणलक्षिता ॥
चिदम्बरेश्वरं ध्यात्वा तावुभौ प्रापतुः सुताम् ।
सा कुमारी सदा ध्यानसक्ताऽभूज्ज्ञानातपरा
विशिष्टेति नाम्ना तु प्रसिद्धाऽभून्महीतले ।
तामष्टमाब्दे विप्राय शान्तायाद्भुतकमणे ॥
प्रददौ विश्वजिन्नाग्ने सर्वजोऽपि पिता स्वयम् ।
सा सदा पतिमद्वैतं ध्यात्वा ऽऽकाशात्मकं शिवम् ॥
तस्याराधनमत्युग्रमाचकार विवेकिनी ।
तादृशीमपि संत्यक्त्वा ययौ विश्वजिदद्भुतम् ॥
अरण्यं तपसे कृत्वा मनो निश्चलतां गतम् ।
तदाप्रभृति सा नारी चिदम्बरमहेश्वरम् ॥

II

तोषयामास पूजाभिः ध्यानैरात्मगतैः सदा ।
स देवः सर्वपूर्णोऽपि तस्या वदनपङ्कजम् ॥
प्राविशद् विस्मितान् कुर्वन् जनानन्यान् सभागतान् ।
महोग्रतेजसा जुष्टा गर्भिण्यभूद् दृढाऽम्बिका ॥
सर्वैः संपूजिता नित्यं पित्रादिमिरुपासिता ।
अतीते मासि गर्भस्य वृद्धिरासीद् दिने दिने ॥
चिदम्बरेश्वरं कृत्वा यजमानं द्विजोत्तमाः ।
तृतीयादिषु मासेषु चक्रुः कर्माणि वेदतः ॥
प्राप्ते तु दशमे मासे विशिष्टागर्भगोलतः ।
प्रादुरासीन्महादेवः शंकराचार्यनामकः ॥
आसीत् तदा पुष्पवृष्टिः देवसङ्घप्रचोदिता ।
नेदुर्दुन्दुभयो दिव्याः स्वर्गलोके सुखं चिरम् ॥

इत्यनन्तानन्दगिरिकृतौ

गुर्ववतारकथा ॥



APPENDIX—B

तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु मामद्वैतमुपाश्रय ।
इति संबोधितो ब्रह्मा प्रणिपत्य महेश्वरम् ॥
सगणः प्राप सत्याकृत्यं निजलोकं पितामहः ।
कालव्याख्ये ग्रामवर्ये केरलानामलंकृते ॥
विद्याधिराजनामा यः प्राज्ञः शिवगुरुर्बभौ ।
ततः सदाशिवः शम्भुः लोकानुग्रहतत्परः ॥
ततो महिम्ना तत्पत्न्याः प्रविवेश स्वतेजसा ।
सा दधार सती गर्भमादिश्य समतेजसम् ॥
व्यजायत शुभे काले पञ्चोच्चग्रहसंयुते ।
अनन्दन् बान्धवाः सर्वे पुष्पवर्षैर्दिविच्युतैः ।
शम्भोर्वरमनुस्मृत्य पिता शिवगुरुः किल ।
आयुषो ह्रस्वतां जानन्नपि नोवाच किञ्चन ॥
सर्वज्ञत्वादिसुगुणान् शम्भूक्तान् तस्य संसरन् ।
तेजसा तस्य च शिशोः सूतिगोहोदरस्थितैः ॥
नैशं तमो न ववृते तद्द्भुतमिवाभवत् ।
स्त्रियो विप्राश्च शूद्राश्च बाला बृद्धास्तथाऽपरे ॥
तं सुजातमभिप्रेक्ष्य शम्भुरित्येव मेनिरे ।
सद्यः पुष्पफलाकीर्णः तरवः सर्वतोऽभवन् ॥
नकुलाहिश्वहरिणसिंहदन्ताचलादयः ।
अन्योन्यवैरमुत्सृज्य शम्भुः शमधना इव ॥

IV

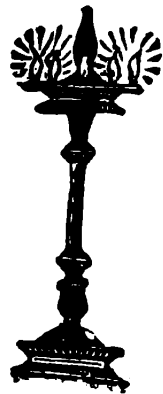
आयाताः प्रेक्षितुं सर्वे तं सुपर्वमहोजसम् ।
जना जनपदवाता उत्तमाधममध्यमाः ॥
सौगतस्य करात् तत्र कस्यचिज्जनसंसदि ।
प्रकृष्टमपतद्भूमौ पुस्तकं तन्मतोचितम् ॥
वेदवेदान्तविषया वादाः सुबहवोऽभवन् ।
प्रसेदुश्च दिशः सर्वाः सलिलं विमलं बभौ ॥
वेदव्यासस्य हृदयं अदृष्टार्थसमुद्भवात् ।
प्रहर्षमतुलं लेभे विनियोगविदो गिरः ॥
तस्य शंकर इत्याख्यां चक्रे शिवगुरुस्ततः ।
तस्यान्वर्थं समालोच्य जहर्षुः परमर्षयः ॥
दिनैः पक्षैश्च मासैश्च वर्षैश्च ववृधे सुतः ।
पञ्चवर्षेअस्य वर्णग्रहणेनास्य धीमतः ॥
उपनीतिमकृत्वैव ममार महितः पिता ।
तस्योर्ध्वदैहिकं साध्वी चकार ज्ञातिभिः समम् ॥
अथोपनाययामास माता तनयमात्मनः ।
सदाचारवता गोत्रजन्मनैव विपश्चिता ॥
चतुरोअधिजगे वेदान् पञ्चमाब्दे स धीरधीः ।
शास्त्राण्यपि च सर्वाणि बाल एव व्यगाहत ।
चकार मातृशुश्रूषामतिमानुषकर्मकृत् ॥

इत्यनन्तानन्दगिरि कृतौ गुर्ववतारकथाप्रकरणं नाम द्वितीयम् ।



PART—II

HISTORICAL & OTHER NOTES



By

K. R. VENKATARAMAN





॥ श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः ॥

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE KUMBHAKONAM MUTT

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PART—II

HISTORICAL & OTHER NOTES

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CHAPTER—I

AUTHORITIES: HOW DISCOVERED & SHAPED

For centuries before the advent of Sankara, Buddhist and Jaina Monasteries had existed cheek by jowl all over the land, and later Vaishnava and Saiva mutts studded the country. They were all held in equal reverence, though some were more prosperous and consequently more influential. It never occurred to any sect to invest any single monastery with overlordship over the others. During the last century, contrary to historical evolution and well established tradition, the head of the Kumbhakonam Mutt assumed the title of *Jagadguru Sankaracharya* and claimed that he alone was entitled to be honoured as *Jagadguru*, while the heads of the four established mutts at Dwaraka, Badari, Puri and Sringeri were only *Gurus*.

कामकोटि मठेः वस्तिन गुरुरिन्द्र सरस्वती । सार्वभौम जगद्गुरुः
अन्येतु गुरवः प्रोक्ताः ॥ जगद्गुरुरयं परः)

The office of the trustee to the temple of Kamakshi Devi of Kanchi, which he applied for and got from Government

and exercised for nearly a century, lent colour to his calling himself *Kanchi Kamakotipithadhipati*. Obliging pandits “discovered” Puranic support for him as they used to do for the elevation of people to kingship and analogous positions of authority. A suitable geneology, in the case of a mutt a guru parampara was not difficult to “discover”. In this case it was expressed as a *stava* to which a commentary was added. Other authorities from the Puranas and even from Kavyas and Dramas were “discovered” in quick succession, some of which have been examined in Part I. They include the *Mathamnayasetu*, *Punyaslokamanjary* and *Sushama*. Atmabodha, the alleged author of the *Sushama*, has referred to works either unknown or nonextant. Embellished editions of Anandagiri’s *Sankara Vijaya*, *Sivarahasya* and *Markandeya Samhita* were prepared. Every attempt was made to discredit the *Madhaviya Sankaravijaya*. A large number of books and tracts were published in several languages. One curious tract pretended to gauge the relative importance of the several mutts from the size of their seals. An Andhra Pandit and a Vaishnava Pandit got a resolution passed proclaiming the primacy of this mutt, and released it in 1872 in a *Siddhantapatrika*. The services of several pandits were enlisted for propaganda, the latest being Sastraratnakara Polagam Rama Sastri. The journal *Kamakoti* was publishing the activities of the mutt, but the *Kamakotipradipam*, the avowed object of which is to foster the prestige of the mutt, has been started now and is vitriolic in tone.

The hospitable pages of *Kalki*, (a Tamil weekly of Madras) are also pressed into service by the mutt propagandists. N. Ramesan. I. A. S. has written two books, *Sri Sankaracharya* (1959) and *Sri Kamakoti Pitham*

(1962). Ramesam's books and articles serve as a paradigm to the mutt's numerous claims.

About 1876, Kōkkōnda Venkataratnam Pantulu wrote his *Sankaramatha-tatvaprakasika* rebutting the claims put forward by this mutt. Another prominent scholar who did the same was Nadukaveri Bhatta Sri Narayana Sastri. The Pandits of Varanasi issued a decision in 1934 denying the claim of this mutt to have been established by Sri Sankara.

The *Kumbhakonam Mutt Claims*, a much belated publication, was the latest rejoinder, and it provoked some abuse from a few but no proper or consistent reply from anybody. The followers of the mutt hardly paused to think that the book was an answer to a long series of their publications extending over a century. The mutt's propaganda has since been considerably intensified. It has therefore become necessary to enlarge the *Kumbhakonam Mutt Claims* if only to expose all the casuistry indulged in by the mutt's followers, particularly Polagam Rama Sastri who has taken upon himself the role of a "champion of truth".

The discovery of Puranic and literary authorities and documents in the shape of copper plate grants was rather the result than the cause of the mutt's influence which the prestige of the tradition of the Kannadiga scholar-statesman Govinda Dikshita and the patronage of the Tanjore Royal Court had secured for it. It will interest readers to know the process by which these authorities were 'discovered'.

The *Jagadgururatanamala* foisted upon the name of Sri Sadasivendra claims that Gaudapada was worshipped by Iarches (Ayarchya, in the Sanskrit form), the preceptor

of Appolloneus (Apaluneya in Sanskrit). The legend of Appolloneus visitiug India and meeting Iarches is a very doubtful one. The Greek account of Appolloneus does not mention Gaudapada at all, and the only authority for associating these two names is the *Gururatnamala*. Observes Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, “it is to be doubted if it is a genuine work of Sadasiva Brahmendra...Atmabodha in his commentary on the stanza cites as authorities for the story Harimisra’s *Gaudapadollasa* and the *Patanjalicarita*. The former work is not to be traced- And in the *Patanjalicarita* (which is the same as (*Vijaya*) of Ramabhadradikshita there is no mention made of the Appolloneus episode,” (*Goudapada* pp. 12-3)

In a post script to his preface to *Sankaravijaya* Vyasachala, (published in 1954) the publisher Mr. T. Chandrasekharan, Curator, Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, says that, “after the completion of the printing and binding of this work”, Polagam Rama Sastrigal placed in his hands four new verses alleged to have been extracted from the commentary of the *Jagadgururatnamala* “but not found in any of the manuscripts used for preparing the press copy of the present edition of Vyasachala’s *Sankara Vijaya*” (italics ours)

Sastraratnakara Polagam Rama Sastri is a great scholar who can be relied upon to write books on Vedanta but the small booklet *Sri Gitartha Sangraha* written by him has come as a painful disappointment. In the preface this book is praised as a great contribution by the learned Pandit to a proper understanding of the Gita. Says the writer of the preface : शास्त्रनिष्णातैः ... श्री रामशास्त्रीभिः नूतनोऽयं गीतार्थसङ्ग्रहः कृतः मम प्रार्थनानुसारम् ।

How far the work is नूतन (original) the following table will show :

Polagam Rama Sastri's
Gitarthasangraha

Reproductions from
(A)
Madhusudana Sarasvati's
Gudarthadipika

Verse	8	Ch. II last verse
„	9	Ch. III last verse
„	11	Ch. IV last verse
		(B)
		<i>Sridharyam</i>
„	13	Ch. V last verse
„	14	Ch. VI opening verse
„	15	Ch. VII last verse
„	16	Ch. VIII last verse
„	17	Ch. IX last verse
„	19	Ch. X last verse
„	20	Ch. XI last verse
„	22	Ch. XII opening verse
„	24	Ch. XIV opening verse
„	25	Ch. XV last verse
„	26	Ch. XVI last verse
„	28	Ch. XVII last verse
„	29	Ch. XVIII opening verse

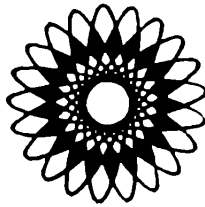
These verses constitute the vital part of *Sri Gitarthasangraha*, and they pass for Polagam Rama Sastri's "original" composition. Eight of these verses he has reproduced verbatim and the rest with slight changes from Madhusudana's *Gudarthadipika* or Sridhara Swami's commentary.

It is not surprising that a Pandit who does not hesitate to pass off as his own the compositions of others

chooses to attribute to Madhavacharya and others tendencies similar to his own.

It obviously did not strike the Pandit that borrowings and wholesale reproduction from others have to be acknowledged. Years hence it may not surprise one if a wag should say that “unscrupulous followers of some other mutt” had lifted Polagam Sastri’s verses and printed them in the *Gudarthadipika* and *Sridharyam*!! Our object in referring to this book, irrelevant as it may seem, is to illustrate the various methods that have been employed for several years by a succession of pandits in shaping the mutt literature and embellishing Puranic works cited as authorities. Swami Vivekananda once upbraided a class of Pandits for “text torturing” and well he may have added “text-manufacturing” and “test-transplanting.”

It is not out of rancour or want of respect to the Acharya who now presides over this mutt that these pages are written. Our object is to counter the mutt’s exaggerated claims of antiquity and superiority which illserve the need of the hour for concerted action by all the great personalities in charge of our *dharmasthapanas*.



CHAPTER—II

THE GURUPARAMPARA

The comprehensive compendium in English of the “chronicals” relating to the mutt is N. Venkataraman’s *Sankaracharya the Great and His Successors in Kanchi*, and it may be considered the mutt’s *locus classicus*. The dates and figures given in this section are from this book.

An eagerness to place Sri Sankara several centuries before Christ has obviously led the chroniclers to the necessity of fabricating chronology. It is to be noted that two devoted admirers of the mutt, S. V. Viswanathan and S. V. Venkatesvara were forced to admit that “the author (of the *Gururatnamala*) cannot be regarded as an authority regarding the generation of Gurus remote from his time” (E. I XIV) and Venkataraman observes that the accuracy of the chronology of the mutt is “questionable regarding the earlier part of it” and “we cannot say at present how far the older verses are genuine and of contemporary origin” A careful examination shows that not only the earlier part but much of the latter part also is vitiated by fanciful association of persons and events and fallacious conclusions.

It has been shown in Ch. VIII of Part I that Sarvajna-tman, claimed to be the immediate successor to Sankara, and placed in the 4—5th Century B. C., was not a direct disciple of either Sankara or Suresvara but was a native of South Kerala in the 10th century A. D. and had no connection with the mutt.

It has also been pointed out that Anandajnana or Anandagiri claimed as the fifth Guru (124—55 B. C.) could not have lived before the 14th Century A. D. The reader’s

attention may be drawn to an observation made by Sri Anantanandendra Sarasvati of the Kumbhakonam Mutt: "he (Anandajnana) wrote a work called Tatwaloka under the guidance of Anubhutiwarupa. He later became the disciple of Suddhananda. He belonged to the 14th Century" (*Saintly Steerers of the Ship of Brahavidya* p. 28) and to another observation to the same effect in the *Introduction to Brahmasutrabhashya* a "Kamakoti Kosasthana" publication to commemorate the *Sashtiabda-purti* of the present Acharya (p. 9): इमे च आनन्दज्ञाना परनामानः शुद्धानन्द पूज्य पादानां शिष्याः। एतेषा कालः क्रि 1400) It should be obvious to the reader that both Suddhananda and Anandagiri were not Gurus of this mutt, and Venkataraman admits that "the link between Jnanananda and Suddhananda is weak." (p. 53)

Chidghana (No. 9 in the list A. D. 127 172), also called Sivananda, is said to have favoured Sivadvaita. The Sivadvaita School rose only after the 8th Century, as a reaction to the Lakulisa creeds.

Sachchidghana (No. 11 A. D. 235-72). On his demise he is "believed to have turned into a linga," which the chroniclers identify with the linga in Kayarohana temple in Kanchi. The name *Kayarohana* will readily bring to mind the celebrated place of Lakulisa's disappearance in Western India. Lakulisa's followers established Kayarohana temples in the South out of reverence for and in commemoration of the founder of their cult. Kanchi was for several centuries a well known centre of their cult. This temple in Kanchi is not earlier than the 9th Century.

With Ujjvala Sankara (No. 14—A. D. 329—67) commences what we may describe as the 'Kashmir period' in the chronicles. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* has indirectly helped the chroniclers to erect a pre-fabricated structure

with an imposing facade of make-believe history. "A Maharashtra by nationality", this Guru is said to have blessed a Kerala chieftain with the gift of poesy, and attended by him, went to Kashmir, covering the entire length of the land, and is stated rather flamboyantly that he "drove beyond the Indus, the Saka Yavana and Silhaka followers of a Brahman convert to Jainism", and his successor Gauda Sadasiva went one better and "drove out of the country many Balhika Buddhists." This leaves us wondering how for several centuries after this alleged exploit Kashmir and the North-west could continue to be very influential and prosperous centres of the heretical sects with hundreds of new monasteries springing up and throwing up a succession of Buddhist divines of the greatness of Kumarajiva who carried their faith to Tibet and China. Did these heretics stage a re-entry to the Cis-Indus regions? The chronicler further says that the town Kalapuri was renamed Ujjvalapuri after this guru. How thoughtless of Kalhana not to have recorded all this! The successor Gauda Sadasiva said to be a son of a Brahman minister who had turned Jain, "showed very early leanings towards Vedanta." The irate father put the boy into a box which he threw into the Indus. Bhurivasu, a Brahmin of Pushpapuram (according to Venkatesan) and Pataliputra according to Venkataraman—one may wonder how a box floating down the Indus ever reached Pataliputra on the Ganga) picked up the box, rescued the boy and brought him up until Ujjvala Sankara ordained him. To this narration, the account of the rescue of Gauda Sadasiva and his ordination supplies the necessary *deus-ex-machina* to make it a mythical romance. The romantic setting is continued in the account of Surendra (No. 16—A. D. 375–385) who defeated in a polemical contest a Charvaka who was assisted by no less a person than Brihaspati himself!

While considering Muka Sankara (said to be No. 18 —A. D. 399—437), it should be remembered that to his famous work *Muka Panchasati* scholars do not ascribe any date earlier than the 16th Century., and to Mentha, who is said to have been blessed by this Guru, Keith and Nilakanta Sastri assign the latter part of the 6th Century. Ramesam asseverates that Mooka Sankara's date can be verified with the political history of Kashmir" (*Bhavan's Journal* Vol. VIII No. 20, p. 55). Where, may we ask, does he find mention of Muka Sankara in any authoritative history of Kashmir or even in the *Rajatarangini*? With the story of the "pontificate" of Muka Sankara is interwoven the story of Matrigupta whom scholars place in the 6th Century. A poet who lived several centuries later is canonised and assigned the 5th Century and is provided with disciples who are known to belong to the late 6th Century. While Muka exercised his office as pontiff from Kashmir his sishya exercised it from Varanasi till A. D. 447!!! What was happening in Kanchi all these years? Was there a shift of the headquarters from Kanchi to Northern India?

The life of Sachchidanandaghana, the *Siddhaguru*, (No. 23—A. D. 527—48) is said to have been written by Manthabhatta in his *Siddhaviyaya mahakavya*. Mantha finds a place in the history of Sanskrit Literature, but this *Kavya* does not—it is one of those "not available now".

We cannot pass over a pertinent observation of Venkataraman that eleven gurus (12 to 22) seem to have lived and died outside Kanchi mostly in Northern India. They cover between them some 300 years, and do not seem to have remained in Kanchi for any length of time during this long period. We may perhaps add by way of explanation that in the South there was no contemporary

historical Kavya or chronicle for the mutt chroniclers to draw upon for inclusion in their list of gurus and accounts of glorious achievements.

Brahmanandaghana I (29—A. D. 655-68) is extolled as having been “served” by Lalitaditya of Kashmir. Actually this king ruled between A. D. 733 and 769. Apart from the chronological inconsistency, we are told of an astounding event. Lalitaditya deposed a Karnataka Prince, a son of Queen Ratta, whom the next Guru Chidanandaghana (30 A. D. 668-72) reinstated on the throne. Lalitaditya’s conquests extended up to Kanouj on the banks of the Ganga (640) and no further. What a far cry from Kanouj to Karnataka! Deccan was at that time, ruled by the Chalukyas who were powerful enough to prevent even the great Harsha from coming south of the Narmada. Was any King in far off Kashmir powerful enough to interfere in their succession. And who is this son of Queen Ratta?

Chandrasekhara II (No. 32 — A. D. 692—710) “vanquished in dispute Chankuna, celebrated Buddhist and Minister of Lalitaditya of Kashmir”. Chankuna (‘general’ in Chinese) a native of Tokharistan on the upper Oxus, built stupas and founded viharas in Kashmir. Not only does Kalhana not refer to any defeat sustained by him at the hands of any adversary but describes miracles worked by him which won for him the devotion of Lalitaditya who made several endowments to Buddhist foundations and installed an image of Sugata specially brought from Magadha (*R. T.* IV-246).

Vidyaghana III (No. 35—A. D. 758-88) “preserved or protected the Dharma with great difficulty”, “as the

country was overrun by Mahomadans". On this Venkataraman himself comments as follows. "About this time the Arab Mahomadans were making a series of raids in Western India extending as far as Guzaret, but did that affect life in Kanchi in any way?"

To us who are convinced that Sankaracharya was born in A. D. 788, the discussions in the foregoing paragraphs are purely academic, and, even then, they help to pin-point the fantastic nature of the stories and incidents narrated by the chroniclers.

The period assigned to Abhinava or Dhira Sankara (No. 36 A. D. 788 to 840) approximates to that of Adi-Sankara, and some details given in the life sketch of this guru accords with some known details of Adi Sankara's life. It does little credit either to the intelligence of the chroniclers or to their devotion to their mutt to trot out the legend of the guru's birth three years after his father's demise, and of his early upbringing by a tigress wife of Vyaghrapada. When people claiming to be followers of Sri Sankara weave such blasphemous tales how can we blame *Manimanjari* and similar works by Madhvas?

Born in Chidambaram, this guru also succumbed to the lure of Kashmir, and went there to defeat Vakpati-bhatta and some other poets. The names of these poets have been taken from Kalhana (*R. T.* IV 490-7), and two stray verses from *Sadguru Santana Parimala*, "another work unknown," are quoted in support of this tale. Except for a Prakrit work of Vakpati and a few stray verses of Manoratha (these verses do not of course relate to any guru of this mutt) no works of these poets are now found and they are known only by name. Likewise from Canto V of *Rajatarangini* are ferreted out the names of Ananda-

vardhana, Ratnakara and some others who are mentioned as ' worshippers ' of the next guru Sachchidvilasa (A. D. 840-73).

The succeeding five gurus are Karnatakas.

Bodha II (44 A. D. 1061—98). An elegant and interesting work with picturesque anecdotes, the *Kathasaritsagara* is a renowned collection of stories that have afforded material for the development of folklore in many lands. The world knows its author, Somodeva, only as a delightful humorist. The mutt chronicles have included him in their calender and given him the canonical name of Sandrananda Bodha II. A suitable prince to honour the guru had to be found and who more suitable than Bhoja of Dhar? Bhoja gave the guru a pearl palanquin for his southern tour. According to Venkataraman Bodha's pontificate was between 1061 and 1098 but according to Nilakanta Sastri King Bhoja reigned from 1018 to 1061. Comment is needless. The reader's interest does not stop here. Guru Bodha cleared the outskirts of Kanchi of Mahomadans with the help of King Kalasa of Kashmir. We are not told how Kalasa came to Kanchi. Who was this Kalasa? Kalhana tells us that he was a profligate of befouled mind, whom his servants had reduced to the position of a *faineant* ruler. (R. T. VII)? Did Kanchi, a provincial capital of the great Chola empire, require the protection of a profligate prince from distant Kashmir? In the eleventh century Rajendra II, Virarajendra, Adhirajendra and Kulottunga I were the Chola emperors, and their victorious campaigns extended from Vengi in the north to Ceylon in the south. The only Mussalmans in the Chola dominions were peaceful Arab fakirs and traders. Venkatesan's account (p. 28) is less flamboyant. "At this time," says he, "the Math had some trouble from the

Mahomadans and it was got over with the aid of Pushyatataka, the minister of King Kalaseswara.” Were the great Chola emperors or their governors in Kanchi so indifferent or powerless as not to give protection to a mutt in one of their provincial capitals?

Among the poets who are said to have served Chandrasekhara III (45 A. D. 1098—1166) are Mankha, Krishnamisra, Jayadeva and Suhala. Krishnamisra had his drama *Prabodhachandrodaya* enacted in 1065 in the court of Kirtivarman of the Chandel dynasty. It is very doubtful if the poet lived till the year claimed as that of the accession of guru Chandrasekhara.

To Sri Krishnaswami Aiyar’s observations regarding Chidvilasa or Advaitanandabodha (A. D. 1166—1200) may perhaps be added just a remark that writing in 1957, Sri Anantanandendra Sarasvati of the Kumbhakonam Mutt does not mention that Advaitananda was connected with the mutt. He is discreetly silent on the point. Sri Anantanandendra is right in placing Sri Harsha in the 11th century. Abhinavagupta flourished round about A. D. 1000. It is palpably wrong to associate these two great men with Advaitananda of the late 12th century. Advaitananda’s diksha guru was Bhumananda and his disciple was Purnananda. How could this be reconciled with the mutt’s list where Chandrasekhara III is mentioned as Chidvilasa’s guru and Mahadeva III as his disciple. No sanyasi can have more than one diksha guru or *diksha nama*.

Kalhana’s *Rajatarangini* does not take the history of Kashmir beyond the 11—12th Century. The *Kathasaritsagara* does not provide characters fit enough to be canonized. Hence its author himself was canonized and

included in the parampara. The mutt chroniclers had perforce to turn to places and works nearer home. and Vidyatirtha of the Sringeri mutt was drafted on to this parampara.

Vidyatirtha (claimed to be No. 49—A. D. 1297–1385) was not a son of Sarangapani of Bilvaranya as has been stated nor was of the former name of Sarvajna-Vishnu. Sarvajna Vishnu (C. 1400) was a son of Sarangapani and guru of Madhava or Mayana, one of the two sons of the great Sayana.

No Vaishnava will admit Venkataraman's statement (p. 94) that Vedanta Desika was ever a pupil of Vidyatirtha.

Venkataraman makes some preposterous statements: (1) The Sringeri matha had ceased to exist for a long time and was restored subsequently under Vidyatirtha's orders; and Bharatikrishnatirtha was placed on the pitha of Sringeri. (2) On account of the spread of the Madhva sectarian movement, and Roman Catholic terrorism going on for some time in Portuguese India, Vidyatirtha founded 8 new mathas, with 8 of his pupils at their head, with Vidyaranya over Virupakshi (implying that Vidyaranya had no connection with Sringeri) and (3) Vidyatirtha ruled over the Kanchi matha for 73 years and went to the Himalayas to perform *tapas* for 15 years attended only by Sankarananda.

The answer to these statements is given by R. Rama Rao in the *Indian Historical Quarterly* (Volumes 6 and 7—particularly 7, pp. 83–87). We may reproduce some passages.

“The Kanchi tradition cannot be relied upon except for contemporary events There is no proof that

Vidyatirtha belonged to the Kanchi mutt. The Vagisvari-Ganapati temple inscription of 1356 refers to the visit of King Bukka to Sringeri to pay his respects to Vidyatirtha. Copper plates that eulogise Vidyatirtha and his relations with Bukka are found to belong to Sringeri or places not far from Sringeri. Neither Kanchi nor its neighbourhood has produced so far any inscription on stone or copper relating to Vidyatirtha. The list of the pontiffs of this mutt prior to Vidyatirtha given in the *Puṇyaslokamanjari* and other records of the mutt appear to contain the names of many of the rulers or ministers of Kashmir taken from Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* (12th century). It is too much to believe that the pontiffs of the math were connected with the rulers of Kashmir or their influence extended so far off As for *Sushama*, it merely exaggerates the importance of Kanchi mutt at the expense of Sringeri and other mutts in South India. Naturally, the writer's statements are full of inconsistencies and errors. The writer of *Sushama* says in one place that it is wrong to identify Vidyatirtha with Vidya Sankara; elsewhere, while attributing to Vidyatirtha the connection with the seal of Vidya Sankara found in the Sringeri mutt, he is ready to say that Vidya Sankara, Vidyatirtha and Vidyanaṭha are one and the same."

The presence of the magnificent Vidya Sankara temple in Sringeri built in A. D. 1333 is positive proof of Vidyatirtha's stay in and headship of the Sringeri mutt, and there are several documents to prove that this Acharya lived all throughout his life at Sringeri. Vidyatirtha did not die in the Himalayas, but entered into a chaṇambet excavated under his command, in *lambika yoga* and over this spot on the north bank of the Tunga river was raised a magnificent temple. He was on the Sringeri gadi between

1228 and 1333. Bharatitirtha and Vidyaranya were his sishyas. Bharatitirtha, who took *Sanyasa* in 1328, was pontiff from 1333 to 1380. Vidyaranya, who took *Sanyasa* in 1331 was the junior pontiff till 1380, and regular pontiff from 1380 to 1386. Emperor Harihara II made a grant in 1380 to Vidyaranya consolidating all the previous grants to the Sringeri mutt with the addition of more villages, and another in 1387 in memory of Vidyaranya who had by that time attained *Videha mukti*. Two temples in Sringeri commemorate their memory. An agrahara, named Vidyaranyaapuram, in Sringeri and several royal grants bespeak Vidyaranya's headship of the Sringeri mutt. He stayed in the imperial capital, Vijayanagar for some years and the mutt at Virupakshi commemorates his stay there but he was the pontiff of Sringeri, and it should be said that there is not one historian of any repute (Indian or foreigner) who does not speak of Vidyaranya as a pontiff of Sringeri and founder of the Vijayanagar Empire.

Sri Madhva (Anandatirtha was a contemporary of Vidyatirtha, and is said to have met with defeat in a polemical contest with the latter. Sri Madhva's creed had not spread to such an extent during his life time as to pose a danger to Advaitins in Sringeri.

As for Catholic terrorism in Portuguese India, we shall put the simple question; Was there a Portuguese India in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries? Even school boys know that Vascodegama landed in Calicut in A. D. 1498, more than a Century and half after the termination of Vidyatirtha's pontificate. The first Portuguese settlement in India was established about 1509 by Almeida. It is surprising that Venkataraman should make such a statement.

Venkatesan (p. 29) propounds another theory that the mutt at Sringeri had waned owing to Lingayat influence and was revived by Vidyaranya who was *sent there for the purpose*. The Virasaiva cult had not affected Sringeri and its environs, included in what was then known as the Marugere Vishaya, as inscriptions would attest. The agraharas here continued as centres of Vedic learning. The Samadhis of the gurus and temples, such as the Janardana temple, erected before Vidyatirtha's time attest to the peaceful and efficient ministration of an *uninterrupted line* of gurus in Sringeri.

Sankarananda (No. 50 - A. D. 1385—1417). We learn from his works that his diksha guru was Anandatman, and Vidyaguru Vidyatirtha. Sankarananda was not a pontiff of any pitha. In a sense he was a vidyagura of Vidyaranya since the latter pays homage to him in addition to Vidyatirtha. Sri Anantanandendra Saraswati of the Kumbhakonam Mutt says (*Saintly Steerers* p. 25) that Sankarananda was associated with Vidyaranya in the establishment of some new Mathas *affiliated to the Sringeri Matha!* (italics ours) and keeps a discreet silence on the question of Sankarananda's inclusion in the parampara of his mutt.

In the light of what has been said, it will be clear that Sankarananda must have died long before 1385 the date given in the Kumbhakonam chronicle for his taking sanyasa. It is absurd to carry the date of his death to 1417. The mutt chroniclers seem subsequently to have revised their previous stand and in the *Introduction to Brahmasutra Bhashya* (the sashtiabdapurti commemoration volume of the present Acharya) c. 1350 is assigned to Sankarananda, which is correct.

In part I of this book the veracity of the verse quoted on p. 97 in Venkataraman's book has been well repudiated.

Northern India having come under Muslim rule, the only place where Muslim influence had not penetrated perceptibly was Nepal, and the mutt chroniclers admitted a King of Nepal, anonymous though, to discipleship under Purnananda Saraswati (No. 51—A. D. 1417—98)

The authorship of a *Sankaravijaya*, called *Vyasachaliya* is ascribed to Mahadeva IV otherwise called Vyasachala (No. 52—A. D. 1498—1507). Referring to this T. Chandrasekharan, Curator, Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, expresses surprise that Vyasachala has not even mentioned in his work the Kanchi Kamakoti Matha, the matha of which he is alleged to have been head. (*Introduction to Sankaravijaya by Vyasachala* 1954)

Sarvajna Sadasiva Bodha (54—1524-39) is said to have been served by Pravira, King of Ramnad. "Pravira" sounds like a title and is not the name of any person. Early in the 16th Century Ramnad State had not been carved out as a principality.

The arguments adduced by Krishnaswamy Aiyer in Part I should make it clear that Paramasivendra II (1539—86) is not the Paramasivendra known as the guru of the famous Sadasivendra, that Atmabodha Visvadhika (1586—1638) is not Abhinava Sankara, author of *Rudrabhasya* and that Sadasivendra could not have written the *Gururatnamala*.

Nallaikshita of Kandaramanikkam of the 18th Century who learned Vedanta at the feet of Sadasiva,

exto^s Sadasiva as his guru, and Paramasiva as his para^{maguru}. Venkatakrishna Dikshita, a donee in the gran^t of 1692 made by the Tanjore King Shahji, was also a pu^{pil} of Paramasiva. Sridhara Venkatesa was a contemporary of Sadasiva. All these are additional proofs that Sada^{siva's} guru Paramasivendra lived in the 17—18th Cen^{tury} and is not identical with Paramasivendra shown in the mutt parampara as belonging to the 16th Century.

The issue *Brhma Vidya*, the organ of the Advaita Sab^{la}, an organisation now attached to the mutt pub^{lished} early in 1962 (Vol. IV No I in 1960—1), carries Sage Sadasiva's stotra in praise of his guru Paramasiva. The editor needs must write an introductory note repeating the hackneyed claim that this Paramasiva was an acharya of the mutt parampara. !* One is reminded of the Nazi propaganda code in Hitler's Germany that an untr^{uth} when repeated hundred of times attains the validity of truth. And what an irony that the journal which pub^{lishes} this note should bear the name of *Brahma Vidya* ! The *Kaveri Rahasyam*, a compilation published in 1962, says, that Sadasiva passed away in 1630. Here is an obvi^{ous} attempt to bring Sadasiva's date closer to the alle^{ged} date of Paramasiva of the mutt parampara. This puer^{ile} statement is false history unrelated to known and date^d documents and deserves to be dismissed out of hand.

It is claimed that Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati IV (No). 60—A. D. 1746—63 according to Venkataraman and No. 62—accession 1729, according to Venkatesan) finding

*The present writer has to confess in this context that he was, for some time misled by the sedulous propaganda of the Kun^{mbhakonam} mutt about Sri Sadasivendra being a disciple of that mutt and that it required careful scrutiny to detect the falla^{cy} in this and other similar claims made by it.

Kanchi unsafe owing to the wars between the "English and the Muslims left the place with the golden image of Kamakshi and went over to Udayarpalayam, and, later, at the request of the Maratha Raja, to Tanjore where the golden image of Kamakshi was placed in a temple. The guru subsequently chose to reside in Kumbhakonam." This statement calls for examination. In January 1698 the fort of Jinji, which commanded the territory now included in South Arcot and Chingleput districts, fell to the Moghal general Zulfikar Khan, and military operations continued for some more years. Daud Khan administered the Carnatic as naik or deputy to the Moghul. The rich temples in Kanchi offered temptation not only to the Moghul soldiery but to marauding hordes let loose on the country. "The authorities of the three pagodas (Ekamresvara, Kamakshi and Varadaraja temples) determined to protect the idols from their apprehended desecration by the fanatical zeal of the invader. They were accordingly conveyed away disguised as corpses and followed by funeral processions and were carried off to the Udayarpalayam jungles in the Trichinopoly district. The image of Kamakshi was of gold and is said to have been taken possession of by the Raja of Tanjore." These observations (1876) of Charles Stewart Cole of the Madras Civil Service were later reproduced in a G. O. (1985 dated 31—8—1931—Home Education). What happened to these idols may be briefly stated. In *Saka* 1632, *Virodhi* (A. D. 1709—10), *Phalghun, ba. di. 30 Bhadrapada*, "in compliance, with the order of Srinivasa alias Attan Tiruvengada Ramanuja Jiyar, his pupil the Chieftain Raja Sri Lala Todarmalla brought back the images of Varadaraja and his consorts from Udayarpalayam and set them up in the temple at Kanchi". (A. R. E 639 of 19) The idols of the Siva temple were restored to it by Sellam

Bhatta. The golden idol of Kamakshi was worshipped in Udayarpalayam from where it was taken to Tiruvarur and later to Tanjore. A grant dated 1784 by the Chief of Udayarpalayam to Dakshinamurti Sastri relates to endowments for the puja to this idol of Kamakshi. It is learnt that Dakshinamurti Sastri's second son went to Tanjore to officiate in the temple to which this idol was finally taken about the year 1781. The gurus of the Kumbhakonam mutt do not at all come into this picture.

Atreya Krishna Sastri (p. 89—1930 edn.) has a fine story to tell. “In Saka 1719 (A. D. 1797, *Pingala*) Abhinavoddanda Vidyaranya Bharati of Sringeri went on a pilgrimage to Rameswaram, and on his way back apologised to the Kumbhakonam mutt guru (Mahadeva VI) for having accepted *padapuja* and other offerings from people in Tiruvanaikovil and other places and gave an assurance in writing that he would not do so in future.” Poor Sastri! There was no guru bearing this name on the Sringeri pitha!

Quite of a piece with this is another of Atreya Sastri's propaganda stunts (*ibid* p. 90) that “the princes and zamindars of South India (enumerated by him) met, extolled the Kanchi Kamakoti Acharyas and resolved that their parampara *alone* is the uninterrupted parampara of Sankara.”

Venkatesan (p. 32) wants us to believe that in the days of Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati (No 62—A. D. 1814–51) when repairs had to be made to the Kamakshi temple in Kanchi, “on requisition from the people and the Government, Sri Sankaracharya of the Kamakoti Peetha at Kumbakonam, in whose hands vests the power to renew the Chakras went over to Conjeevaram and

then the repairs were proceeded with. "Government records however show that the Guru *offered* to carry out the renovation, applied to Government for permission and got a grant from Government. The guru subsequently arranged for an inscription relating to the consecration and his part in it, to be put up in the temple (339 of 54-5)

Writing about Sudarsana Mahadevendra Sarasvati VII (No. 63—A.D. 1851—91) Venkatesan (p. 33) refers to a gift of money to the guru by the Raja of Pudukkottai. Sir Seshia Sastri who was in charge of the administration of the State between 1878 and 1894 (first as Dewan and later as Dewan Regent) admitted the Kumbhakonam Mutt Acharyas to special honours in the State which they have since continued to enjoy. There is no record in the State before Sir Sashia's administration relating to honours or grants to this mutt, though there are several relating to other religious and charitable establishments and places of worship both within the State and outside it.

CHAPTER—III

THE COPPER PLATE GRANTS

The copper plates in possession of the mutt have been edited and translated by T. A. Gopinatha Rao. (*Copper plate Inscriptions of the Kamakoti Pitha—1916*)

The first plate refers to a grant of the village of Ambikapuram by Vijayaganda Gopaladeva to one Sankara yogi or Sankara guru. The details — *Khara, Karkataka, Monday Su. 10. Anuradha*—do not completely tally with the corresponding years of the Christian era either A. D. 1231 or 1291, which are the two *Khara* years in the 13th century. Palaeographically the record belongs to the 13th century. 'H. Krishna Sastri suggests 1351, a date which is much too late for this record. In an article published in the Dipavali special number (1961) of the Tamil weekly

Kalki N. Ramesan suggests the year 1111, which is obviously impossible. In that year Kanchi was a provincial capital and residence of the Chola emperor; and no chieftain, independent or vassal, could have been in control of the city nor dared to issue grants in his own regnal years. Till 1115 the Chola empire included the entire country south of the Tungabhadra-Krishna river system and the coastal area up to the Godavari. Later when Vengi was lost, the country south of the Krishna continued to be in Chola hands, and under direct Chola administration.

The Telugu Cholas (Chodas) of Nellore rose into importance late in the 12th Century, and counted politically in the reign of Rajadhiraja II. They owed allegiance to Chola over-lordship. Nalla Siddhi and his brother Tammu Siddhi were vassals of Kulottunga III. Nalla captured Kanchi in 1192-3 but was driven out in 1196. His records are found upto 1213 and along with those of Bettarasa (in Kanchi) between 1204 and 1213, and Tammu's till 1207-8. Then Tikka Gandagopala got the kingdom with the help of Kakatiya Ganapati and died in 1248. (Dr. N. Venkatramanaiya and M. Somasekhara Sarma). Tikka's son Manuma Siddhi II and one Vijayagandagopala were claimants. Manuma was also called Viragandagopala and was killed by Jatavarman Sundara Pandya. Tribhuvana Chakravarti Rajagandagopala identified with Madhuranantaka Pottapi Chola or Renganatha became king in 1290-1. This in brief is the tangled story of the Telugu Cholas.

The first plate of the grant, said to have been "newly discovered" dates the grant in the 16th year of Gandagopala. If 1231 is taken as the date of the record, the year of Gandagopala's accession will be about 1215, not an improbable proposition. Any other alternative bristles with more difficulties. In any case the discrepancy

in the astronomical data glares one in the face. Any way the date is not A. D. 1111 which is opposed to all known facts of Chola history.

We would invite Ramesan to pause to consider whether a vassal of the mighty Chola emperors in the heyday of their glory would ever be permitted to assume such imperial titles as *Chola naresvara* (l. 11 in the grant) and *Tribhuvana chakravarti chola partiva* (ll 16—17). A vassal who dared do so would have been punished for treason. How again is Ramesan justified in reading *Sankaraguru*, the name mentioned in the grant as *Sankaracharya guru* and describing as *Sankara mutt* what in the grant is mentioned as *a mutt to the west of Hastisaila*. (*Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Pitham* pp 17—18)? Such wrong statements will obviously mislead the reader. The learned writer may easily see that the Gandagopala of this grant must have risen to importance only in the declining years of Chola rule (13th century)

The identification of the donee bristles with difficulties H. K. Sastri objects to equating Sankararya with Sankaracharya. The expression *dvijanmana* in the second plate is intriguing. No *sannyasi* can be described by the common name of *dvija*. कथं वर्णश्रमी भवेत् ? “How can he be a varnasrami”? asks Sankara of a sanyasin. The unfortunate word Poppili (in the last line of the first plate and continued in the first line of the second) in the expression पोष्पलि प्रथितात्मने, which is described as the *intiperu*. The mention of this “house” name would show that the donee was really a householder.

This Sankararya, “a *muni* meditating upon Siva, enjoying the bliss of self, expounding the Upanishads and feeding people” must have been a *grihasta* like Appaya Dikshita of Sridhara Venkatesa.

And then, did any Telugu Chola King sign his name in a copper plate in Tamil, and in characters quite modern? Granting that the plate is genuine, it should be obvious that the Tamil Signature was a very late interpolation.

A Madras Professor, who was able to wangle from Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, a very brief letter has shared its contents with the readers of the *Kamakoti Pradipam* (issue of April 14, 1963). It reads as follows: "I have long been familiar with the Gandagopala copper plate published years ago by late T. A. Gopinatha Rao among the copper plate of the 'Kumbhakonam Mutt', and have never found any reason to doubt its genuineness." The significance of the inverted commas within which *Kumbhakonam Mutt* is put will not have been lost on this Madras Professor. Prof. Sastri speaks of the plate published by late T. A. G. Rao—not certainly of the 'newly discovered first plate.' (*Plate* is in the singular). Apart from an observation regarding the genuineness of the plate, Prof. Sastri does not say anything comfortable to this Madras Professor. Prof. Sastri has *not* said that the donee *Sankara Arya* was *Sankaracharya*; nor has he said that the *mutt* to the west of the temple of *Hastisailanatha* was a *Sankaracharya mutt*.

Next comes a set of Vijayanagar grants. Two of them are by Viranarasimha (1505–9) of which the first is dated S. 1429 *Sukla*, *Magha Mahodaya*, S. 1429 is A. D. 1507, but *Sukla* is A. D. 1510. If we overlook this discrepancy, we have to accept 1507, since Narasimha's reign terminated in 1509. The name of the engraver Viran asari, son of Mallanna asari, is correct. His name occurs in the copper plates between 1507 and 1523. The second grant, which bears the same date, has been edited

by S. V. Viswanathan in *E. I.* (IV. 17). The village granted in the first is Elichur and in the second Kudiyantandalam. Two grants by Krishnadeva Raya (1509—29) follow. The first dated S. 1444 (A. D. 1522) mentions Yati Chandra sekharā Sarasvatī residing in Kanchi who received the village of Padavur. The second (also edited in *E. I.* IV. 12) is dated S. 1450 (A. D. 1528); the donee Sadasiva Sarasvatī gets Udayambakkam.

This group of plates furnishes the following succession of sannyasis. No mutt or pitha, is mentioned in any of them.

Sadasiva Sarasvatī.

Mahadeva Sarasvatī (A. D. 1507)

Chandrachuda (Sekharā) Sarasvatī (1522)

Sadasiva Sarasvatī (1528)

None of them, it may be noted, bears the diksha name *Indrasarasvatī*, which is said to be the distinguishing appellation of the gurus of the Kumbhakonam mutt.

Asserts M. M. Anantakrishna Sastri :

सरस्वतीयोगपट्टं तु इन्द्र ण्द घटितमिन्द्रप्रार्थनया भगवत्-
पादानां साक्षात् भगवत्पादाधिशित कामकोटिपीठाधीशानाम्,
ततः प्राप्त सन्यासदीक्षा परंपरागतानां च । इन्द्रसरस्वती
संप्रदायस्तु कामकोटिपीठस्यैव । तच्छाखामटस्थोपनीषद्ब्रह्मेन्द्र
मठस्याप्यधीशानाम्, तदन्ते वासिनां च परंपरा वर्धते ।

(Sanskrit introduction to *Nyayachandrika* pp. 77-8 n)

“Suresvara, one of the direct disciples of Sankara, started the line of Indra Sarasvati, which is the honorific name of Sankara’s successors in the pitha he adorned but those of his disciples who were not appointed to the pitha were known as Ananda Sarasvatis”. (*Introduction : p. 4, to Sarirakavartikam*)

The gurus figuring in these grants were not *Indra Sarasvatis* not even *Ananda Sarasvatis* but plain *Sarasvatis* and, according to these learned statements made by the ardent and zealous followers of the mutt, could not have belonged to the mutt parampara.

The authors of the *Gururatnamala* and *Sushama* and other chroniclers must have obviously drafted on the names of sannyasis occurring in these plates to the mutt parampara. What particular mutt in Kanchi did theses yatis belong to? The engravers who faithfully describe with great care the greatness of the emperor and the saintliness of the donees in meticulous phrases and long winding *prasastis* would not have forgotten to mention the name of the mutt if it was of such importance as the Kamakoti pitha now claims to be.

A few other sannyasis such as Kamakshi Bharati (App. B, ARE 286 of 1955—6) and Durga Devi Sri Padangal (ARE 346 of 1954—5) are mentioned in other Kanchi inscriptions, and unfortunately they seem to have escaped the mutt chroniclers.

The Vijayanagar fragmentary record, we may pass over, and proceed to the next grant. The date of the grant is not S. 1613 as Gopinatha Rao has wrongly read, but S. 1633 (A. D. 1741) The figures engraved on top are not Akhilandesvari and Jambunatha of Tiruvanaikovil but Brihadamba and Gokarnesa of Tirugokarnam temple in Pudukkottai, the tutelary deities of the Tondaiman house.

The invocation *Periyanayaki tunai* at the end is clear. (Periyanayaki is Tamil for Brihadamba) The donors describe themselves as the servants of the Tondaiman, who hails from among the *araiyars* of Anbil Terkalur in Panrisulnadu, a Sub-division of Rajaraja Valanadu also called Rajendrasolavalanadu. This nadu comprises the eastern part of the former Pudukkottai state and southern part of Tanjore district. Anbil is the old name of Ambukkovil (Kolattur taluk) which had two divisions north and south; the south being the ancestral home of the Tondaiman Rajas of Pudukkottai. Both T. A. Gopinatha Rao and Ramesan have erred in identifying the place with Anbil on the north bank of the Coleroon in Lalgudi Taluk of Tiruchirappalli district, and Ramesan goes one step further and describes this grant as made by the Tondaiman "from the village of Anbil"!

The donor is not the Tondaiman Raja. His *servants* (*Uliyakkarar*) are the donors and the donee is one Venkitayyan residing in Kanchi. (காஞ்சீபுரத்தில் உள்கடை பவனிவிருக்கும்.) The Tondaiman's servants instituted a charity, the details of which are given in the grant. There is absolutely no warrant to say that Venkitayan was an agent of the Kumbhakonam mutt in Kanchi, and the grant does not afford any such indication. This false assumption originated by T. A. G. Rao has deluded many *who hitherto had not the opportunity or inclination to examine it. The period mentioned here refers to the early years of Tondaiman rule in Pudukkottai and it was only much later that Raja Vijaya Raghunatha, surnamed Bhoja Raja, (1739–1807) instituted charities in different places outside the state known as *Tondaiman Pararashtra kattalai*.

*The present writer failed to notice this in an article of his in the *Journal of Indian History*. (Vol. XXIX)

The articles mentioned in the charity include among others two pairs of *male cloths* and *two female cloths* to be presented annually. This at least should have convinced the two scholars that the donee was an ordinary *grihastha* and that their surmise that he was a representative of a mutt was quite unwarranted. Neither therefore is the grant a "Tondaiman Grant", nor has it any connection with the Kumbhakonam mutt, nor again is it dated in S. 1613. It is not known how it went into the possession of this mutt, nor how the Vijayanagar plates described above did so.

The next document purports to be a grant by Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayaka of Madurai to Lokaguru Srimad Sankaracharya Svamalavaru residing in Kanchipura and is dated S. 1630 or A. D. 1708. Nowhere in the grant is the donee described as the *Swami of the Sarada Mutt* as Ramesam avers (*Sri Kanchi Kamakoti pitham* p. 23)

Lines 16-7 of the plate would have us believe that the Svamalavaru had *his own mutt* in Tiruvanaikovil from *olden times*. This may be examined. Inscriptions from Tiruvanaikovil of the 16th year of Kulottunga I (1088) mention a "*narpattennayiram madam*" built by Avurudaiyan Solakon on the north side of the temple. This mutt was also called "*Tiruganasambandar madam.*" a branch of the mutt at Rajarajapuram belonging to the Tiruchchattimurram mudaliyars (heads of mutts are designated *Mudaliyar's*) who were direct disciples of Namasivayadevar, a great Saiva teacher (486 and 487 of 08). Note the name Ponvasikondan, which the street where the "48,000" or Tirugnanasambandar mutt was situated, bore (Ponvasikondan refers to Tirugnanasambandar). This building which at present is in the possession of the Kumbhakonam Mutt was originally an influential Saiva mutt, a branch of the establishment at Tiruchchattimurram.

By about 1240, this mutt at Tiruvanikovil housed two establishments of the Tirugnanasambandar mutt where the great Acharya Visvesvara Siva stayed for some-time, namely the Akhilanayaki tirumadam and the Naduvil madam forming two collateral lines of the parampara. The Acharyas belonged to the famous Lakshadhyayi or Golaki santanam. Saivas, as they were, they adopted Vedic rites and Upanishadic ideals and believed in the oneness of all existence.

An interesting inscription (135 of 36-7) which Dr. T. V. Mahalingam has reviewed in *J. O. R.* relates to changes in the management and right of worship in the Jambukesvaram temple. For generations these rights had been vested in the monks of the Lakshadhyayi sampradayam, and for the first time it was sought to place a learned grihasta named Chandrasekhara guru in charge of the management of the temple and in the exercise of the rights of worship. The archakas of the temple have since continued to be grihastas and add to their names the suffix *pandita*, of the Golaki mutt *sampradaya* of Saiva Acharyas. Chandrasekhara guru died about 1605. Inscriptions mention gurus of this line till 1714 (*Cf* 130 of 36-7). There is an undated one which is also assignable to the 18th century, till which time this building continued to house these Saiva acharyas. The plate under review dated 1708 speaks of the mutt as *Lokaguru Sankaracharya's own mutt!* Evidently Lokaguru Sankaracharya Svamaluvaru and the Acharyas of this Saiva santanam could not have lived together in the same mutt. And there is absolutely no record to show that these Saiva *Panditas* then accepted any guru other than one of their parampara.

The Hoysalas who ruled over parts of the Tamil country with their capital at Kannanur, north of Tiruchipalli, were patrons of these Saiva Acharyas. Vira Somanatha made considerable additions to the Akhilandeswari—Jambunatha temple, the eastern gopuram of which is described in the inscriptions as *Virasomeswaram-tirunilai elu gopuram*. It was begun by Maravarman Sundara Pandya I and completed by Someswara. In and round Tiruvanaikovil, a number of small shrines owe their origin to Somesvara and his nobles; one of them was named after Visveswara deva, the renowned Saiva teacher and guru of Kakatiya Ganapati. The small shrine with a *mukhalinga*, to the north of the “48000” mutt, which has recently come much to the notice of the public was built by Nilakantha Nayaka, a nobleman in Somanatha's court. The influence of these Saiva acharyas continued unabated during the Vijayanagar and Nayaka periods and also under the Carnatic Nawabs who made some changes in the administration of temple lands but did not interfere with the administrative authority and rights of these Saiva acharyas in the temple of Tiruvanaikovil. Down to the close of the 18th Century, no other swami exercised any special rights or privileges in this temple or owned any mutt here.

The places alleged to have been gifted to the Swamigalavaru include villages to the north of the Coleroom formerly included in the Turaiyur and Ariyatur Zamindaris. Tottiyam and the villages attached to it are in the Musiri taluk to the west of Musiri town. By 1688 Chikkadevaraya of Mysore ^{had} nibbled into the territories of the Madurai Nayaks. (line A) roughly drawn from east of Karur to Salem and Dharmapuri will indicate the eastern limit of his conquests. After 1699 the rest of the land to the north

of the Coleroon were under the Moghals. The Chiefs of Turaiyur, Ariyalur, Valikandapuram and Udayarpalayam were semi-independent poligars, all vassals of the Moghals. When they gave trouble to Mangammal (1689—1706), she appealed for help to Daud Khan who was administering the Carnatic as the deputy of the Subahdar of the Carnatic (Cf. Hemingway and Love) and Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman of Pudukkottai. How could Chokkanatha Nayaka's writ have run in these places in 1708 ?

The Kumbhakonam mutt has lands in some of these villages, which are all very recent acquisitions.

No. IX in Gopinatha Rao's book is a *farman* dated *Shawwal* 1, A. H. 1088. This date according to the *Hijiri* era corresponds to Saturday, November 17, A. D. 1677. (*Saka* 1599—*Pingala Margasira* Ba 3). Gopinatha Rao, or rather the scholar who deciphered the plate for him, made a mistake in equating the *Hijiri* year to A. D. 1710. The ruler mentioned in the grant is Abul Hasan Kutb Shah (popularly known as Tana Shah: 1672—87). The grant refers to a gift of the village of Melpakkam not far from Jinji (but now included in the Chingleput revenue district) to meet the daily expenses of the services to God Chandramauliswara worshipped by Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya of the Sarada mutt in sacred Kanchi otherwise known as Satyavrata etc. The languages of the text of the grant are Sanskrit, Telugu and Persian, all written in Telugu script. The grant begins with four invocatory verses in Sanskrit, addressed to Ganesa, Sarada, Sambhu and Varaha.

The first question that one may ask is—Is there any *farman* of a Muslim king beginning with invocations to Hindu Gods and Goddesses ? Let us examine the verses.

The first two verses are taken from a work called *Sivashtapati* by Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, who according to the mutt list, was the 60th guru and occupied the pitha in the period 1746-83. (1729-89 according to Venkatesan). We have here a record of 1677 *quoting from a work written more than half a century later!* The other two verses are borrowed from the *prasastis* of early Vijayanagar emperors and we are asked to believe that a Kutb Shahi adopted them in his farman !

Abul Hasan's farmans, including those granted to Hindu religious institutions, such as the Rama temple in Bhadrachalam and the Bhramara-Malleswara temple near Vijayawada, have certain distinctive features:

- (1) every royal order was issued in two languages—Persian and Hindvi (Telugu),
- (2) the Persian calligraphy was in the Shakishtha style,
- (3) the Telugu version bore the ruler's seal,
- (4) the Persian version was found on the reverse side,
- (5) the document was drafted and translated by the Dabir and Dabir Hindvi,
- (6) the King's instructions were issued to the revenue minister Madhobhanji (Madanna) for communication to the local authorities including the tarafdars, and
- (7) the seal bore the legend in Persian—*Khatam bil*

Khair wus sadat (meaning) *it comes to a good and blissful end*, (Sajjanlal) Does this farman satisfy any of these points ?

The country round Jinji belonged to the Bijapur Adil Shahi Sultan during the period 1648—1677 and not to the Kutb Shahi ruler of Golconda. (Cf. H B Love: *Vestiges of old Madras The Indian Records Series. I P 463*) In March 1677, Sivaji made Jinji the seat of his Karnatic provinces. (Melpakkam is close to Jinji), and within a few months the whole coastal territory of the Carnatic between the Tungabhadra and the Kaveri came into Sivaji's possession. Is there any further need to labour this point to prove the untrustworthiness of the record?

Here is mentioned a Saradha mutt in Kanchi. One should be a bold man to vouch for the reliability of this grant or any part of it.

The next and last grant in Rao's book dated S. 1608 *Prabhava, Vaisakha Su.* 15 lunar eclipse (corresponding to April 16, 1687—Saturday) purports to be a gift of land at Melpakkam by Mahadevendra Sarasvati, disciple of Chandrasekhara Sarasvati of the Sarada mutt at Kanchi to Rama Sastri, a Hoysala Karnataka Brahmin. L. D. Swamikannu Pillai, who examined the astronomical details, says that there was no lunar eclipse on the day mentioned. Gopinatha Rao says that the plate is engraved in an extremely *slipshod manner* and in a kind of Nagari character, *quite modern* and which is very peculiar for the shapes of the letters, and it is full of mistakes. To these observations we may add that according to the mutt lists, *there was no Mahadevendra Sarasvati, disciple of Chandrasekhara Sarasvati occupying the headship of the mutt in 1687.* The guru at the time, as shown in the mutt list was Bhagavannama Bodha, disciple of Atmabodha also called Visvadhika.

CHAPTER IV

SOME OPINIONS AND STATEMENTS

We gladly supplement by the following the references in Part I

Imperial Gazetteer

To him (Sankara) is attributed the foundation of monasteries from Sringeri in Mysore to Badrinath in Kumaun. Much of his life was spent in wandering along the hill country from Kashmir to Nepal where he organised the temple service (I p 421)

H. H Wilson

In the course of his peregrinations he established several Maths under the presidency of his disciples, particularly one still flourishing at Sringeri or Sringagiri, on the Western ghats, near the sources of the Tungabhadra. Towards the close of his life he repaired as far as Kashmir, and seated himself after triumphing over various opponents. on the throne of Sarasvathi. He next went to Badrikasrama and to Kendar-nath in the Himalaya, where he died at the early age of 32. The events of his last days are confirmed by local traditions and the Pitha or throne of Sarasvathi on which Sankara sat is still shown in Kashmir.....

(A sketch of the Religious sects of the Hindus from the Asiatic Researches XVI. Also reproduced in the Encyclopaedia of India III p. 522)

Combakonam : A branch mutt of Sankaracharya' founder of the Adwaita philosophy is presided over by a chief gooroo of Smarta Brahmans. (*Glossary* by the same author p. 206)

Shringairy Rishya Sringagiri in Sanskrit, most important of Mutts founded by Shuncara (*ibid* p. 635)

—at Sringeri on the edge of the Western Ghats—at which place he is said to have established a college that still exists and assumes the supreme control of the Smartha Brahmans of the Peninsula. (Wilson : quoted by Sitanath Datta in his book on *Sankaracharya* pp- 73—4)

J. N. Farquhar

He (Sankara) also founded four monasteries to form centres of advaita learning and influence, Sringeri in Mysore, Govardhana in Puri, Sarada in Dwaraka and *Joshi* at Badrinath in the Himalaya. All four have survived to our day and there are a number of subordinate houses. (*Outline of the Religious Literature in India* p. 174)

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics ;

Sankara founded throughout India four monasteries and his immediate disciples established ten orders of ascetics.

He established four mathas or seats of religion at the four ends of India—the Sringeri matha on the Sringeri hills in the South, the Sarada Matha at Dwarka in the West, the Joytimatha at Badrikashrama in the North and the Govardhana matha at Puri in the East. Each of the mathas has a Sanyasin at its head who bears the title of Sankaracharya in general with a proper name of his own.

Everyman's Encyclopaedia

Towards the close of his life he repaired to Kedarnath in the Himalaya where he died at the age of 32. (11 p. 84)

Sir Monier Williams :

—and four monasteries of Sankaracharya, one at each extremity of India viz., Sarada matha at Gomati Dwaraka,

Sringeri matha in Karnatic, Jotir matha near Badrinath, one of the sources of the Ganges and Vardhana matha at Puri, (p. 179)

Horace L. Friers and Herbert W. Shneider (Department of Philosophy : Columbia) :

Among the most ancient and distinguished are the ascetic orders founded by Sankara in the eighth century. They still cultivate learning after their founder's example. They provide for different degrees of world renunciation. that of Paramahamsas being the highest. From men of that degree the heads of their principal monasteries or *maths* in Dwaraka, Puri, Sringeri and Kedarnath are chosen. The head of Sringeri is the supreme authority among Southern Saivites (*Religion in Various Cultures* p. 108)

J. Estlin Carpenter :

As disciples gathered round him, he (Sankara) established four *mathas* or monasteries, one of which at Cringeri in Mysore still flourishes under a Preceptor who exercises considerable authority.....Cankara himself is said to have travelled as far as Kashmir and he died at Kedarnath in the Himalaya, according to received tradition, in 820, at the age of thirty two. (*Theism in Medieval India* p. 309)

Sri Charles Eliot : *Hibbert Lectures—Second series* Oct.—Dec. 1919) :

—and in the course of the journeys in which like Paul he gave vent to his activity, he founded four mathas or monasteries at Sringeri, Puri, Dwaraka, and Badrinath in the Himalaya. Near the latter he died, (p. 209)

↓
Chief Justice Courtney Terrell (Patna High Court) :

The founder Adi Sankaracharya divided India into four jurisdictions with a math at the head of each. Under the

western jurisdiction was placed the territory roughly corresponding to that now known as the Bombay Presidency— called the Sarada Math at Dwarka, Northern India was placed under the Jyothi Math which is now extinct, Eastern India was placed under the Govardhan Math and Southern India under the Sringeri Math. (Appeal from original decree—No. 3 of 1931—Judgement 19 November 1936).

Chief Justice Bijan Kumar Mukherjee(Supreme Court of India)

For the purpose of strengthening and maintaining the doctrine of nondualistic philosophy which he preached, he established four mutts or monasteries at the four extremities of India, viz. the *Jyotir Mutt* at Badrinath in the north, *Sarada Mutt*, in Gujrat, *Sringeri Mutt* in South India and *Gobordhan Mutt* at Puri in the east, and each one of them was placed in charge of one of his ascepic disciples. After the death of Sankaracharya many of his disciples, of whom some adopted his name, established Mutts at various places, and the original mutt at Sringeri was in course of time divided into six institutions.

(Tagore Law Lectures on the Hindu Law of Religious and Charitable Trust ; August 1951 p. 24)

... ..Thus Hindu Mutts were established for the first time by Sankar. He himself founed four Mutts at the four corners of India and made them centres of his Vedantic teachings In the east he set up the Gobordhan Mutt at Puri, in the north the Jyotir Mutt at Badrinath, in the west there was the Sarada Mutt at Dwaraka and in the south the Sringeri Mutt on the Tungabhadra. Each one of these Mutts was placed in charge of one of his four principal disciples who were Padmapad, Has-tamalak, Sureswar and Trotaka. These four disciples had disciples of their own and in course of time ten orders or classes of monks were formed into which the monks of the Sankar school stand divided even at the present day, (*ibid*, p. 296)

Chief Justice M. Patanjali Sastri (Supreme Court of India)

Adi Sankaracharya, born at Kaladi in the far south, travelled all over the country.....when there were no means of communication in the modern sense, using Sanskrit as his medium for propagating what believed to be the truth, and established Mutts for such propagation in the four corners of India—at Joshi Mutt near Badrinath in the north, Dwaraka in the west, Puri in the east and Sringeri in the south, thus visualising Bharat as a single cultural entity.

[Extract from a boardcast in the A. I. R. reproduced in the *Sringeri Temples Kumbhabhishekam Souvenir* Feb 1963]

Edwin T. Atkinsou :

.....established *maths* or monasteries for his disciples—the Sringeri Math on the Tungabhadra in Mysore to the south : the Jothi Math (*Vulgo* Joshimath) near Badrinath to the north; the Sarada math at Dwaraka to the west ; and the Vardhana math at Puri in Orissa to the east. Sankara, towards the close of his life visited Kashmir, where he overcame his opponents and was enthroned in the Chair of Sarasvathi, the goddess of eloquence. He next visited Badari where he restored the ruined temple of Narayana and finally proceeded to Kedar where he died at the early age of thirty-two. (*The Himalayan Districts of the North West Provinces of India II-XI of the Gazetteer of the N. W. P.* pp 768—9) (1884)

Rev. A. R. Slater ;

The great teacher (Sankara) in order to spread his teachings over the whole land, decided to found four maths at the four cardinal points Sringeri was one of the places selected. (Q. J. M. S. VI p. 251)

Swami Dayanand Sarasvati(Founder of the Arya Samaj) mentions in his *Satyartha Prakash* the four mutts founded by

Sankara—Dwaraka, Jyoti mutt, Puri and Sringeri and none other.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan :

He (Sankara) established four mutts or monasteries of which the chief is the one at Sringeri in the Mysore Province. The others are those at Puri in the East, Dvaraka in the West and Badrinath in the Himalayas. He died at Kedarnath in the Himalayas at the age of thirty two according to the tradition. (*Indian Philosophy II* London : George Allen and Unwin) Also in *Brahmasutra* p. 28 and again in his address at the Sri Venkatesvara University on Jan. 28, 1962)

Swami Sivananda : (Founder-President of the Divine Life Society-Rishikesh)

The Sringeri Peetha is one of the oldest monasteries of the world flourishing for over twelve centuries now. It is the first of four seats of learning established by Sankaracharya, the other three being Puri, Dwaraka and Joshi Mutt, each one of them representing one of the four Vedas of the Hindus. (*Sringeri Kumbhabhishekam Souvenir*)

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :

He established four great *maths* or monasteries, locating them far from each other, almost at the four corners of India. One of them was in the South at Sringeri in Mysore, another at Puri on the east coast, the third at Dvaraka in Kathiawar on the west coast and the fourth at Badrinath in the heart of the Himalayas. At the age of thirty-two this Brahmin from the tropical South died at Kedarnath in the upper snow-covered reaches of the Himalayas. (*The Discovery of India* p. 152)

Swami Nikhilananda : (Vivekananda Centre, Red Top, Lake George, New York) ;—

Before his death at the age of thirty-two at Kedarnath in the Himalayas, Sankara had established monasteries at Sringeri (Mysore) in the South, Puri in the east. Dwaraka (Kathiawad) in the west and Joshi math (the Himalayas) in the north, and had placed four of his gifted disciples.....in charge of them. He organised the ancient Vedic order of sannyasis and assigned to it the spiritual leadership of Hindu society, (*Preface to Self knowledge—आत्मबोध*)

Chief Justice Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Sinha ; Supreme Court of India) :—

—the four Piths which had been established in the four corners of India by the Adi Sankaracharya many centuries ago. (Culled from his lecture on *My Master*, published as a supplement to *Bhavan's Journal*, dated March 20, 1960)

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar ;

He established mathas in the Himalayas, on the shore of the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea and in the Karnatic country at Sringeri (Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar has expressed this in several of his writings and speeches.) In a discourse entitled *World Religions. A study in Synthesis* reproduced as Appendix E. in Ramesan's *Sri Sankaracharya*, he includes Kanchi among Sankara's *far flung "spiritual capitals"* the others being Srinagar, Dwaraka, Puri, and Sringeri. That the expression *spiritual capital* does not mean *pitha*, in the sense the four *pitha* are understood will be obvious from the inclusion of Srinagar (in Kashmir) and the omission of Jyoti mutt in this list. No body, not certainly the followers of the Kumbhakonam Mutt, will be prepared to say that Sankara established one of his great *pithas* or *mutts* in Srinagar. In Kashmir he worshipped Sarada Devi and mounted the Throne of Omnisciences. In Kanchi he reformed the mode of worshipping the Devi, and made the place a centre of spiritual power-

Whenever Dr. Aiyer refers to the mutts establishd by Sankara for the propagation of his teachings he speaks of only four—Jyoti (Badri), Puri, Sringeri and Dwaraka, The reader may refer to his *Homage to Sankara*.)

Prof. D. S. Sarma :

He wandered from place to place all over India and established four monasteries at Shringeri in Mysore, at Puri in Orissa, at Dwaraka in Gujarat and at Badrinath in the Himalayas. (*Hinduism through the Ages : p. 35.*)

R. S. Diwakar :

Shringeri in Shimoga District is the place where Shri Shankaracharya (8th Century)established his first Dharma Peeth or pontifical seat, the other three places being Dwaraka in the West, Puri in the east and Badrikedar in the north. The Peetha has an unbroken tradition and has been adorned by such distinguished men as Sureshwaracharya, Vidyaranya and others. (*Some Saints and Savants of Karnatak. Indian National Congress Souvenir 1960*)

Dr. Kalidas Nag :

Four maths in the four cardinal points of India (*Message to Hemantakumar Sen's Acharya Sankara H. K. Sen also, on p. 130 of the book, mentions only these four maths*).

V. Nagamā (in Travancore Manual Vol. II p. 97) mentions Badarinath, Jagannath, Sringeri and Dwaraka as the chief mutts established by Sankara.

Sitanath Datt (Tattvabhusan) ;

Of the many Mathas or colleges of the order, four seem to have been established by the illustrious Founder him-

self. They are the Sringeri Matha on the Sringeri Hills, the Sarada Matha at Dwaraka, the Govardhana Matha at Puri and Jothi Matha on the Himalayas (Badrikasrama)—Sankara died in A. D. 820 at the early age of 32 at Kedar on the Himalayas. (*Sankaracharya* pp. 10—1 : Published by the Society for the Resuscitation of Indian Literature, Calcutta 1905).

Sankara, one of the greatest religious teachers and reformers of India, was probably born in 788 A. D, at Kaladi in North Travancore. He travelled all over India and founded monastic establishment in Shringeri, Puri, Dwaraka and Badrinath. (*The way of the Buddha* p. 372 Publication Division, Government of India).

Dr. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudri and Dr. Kalikrishna Datta :—

Among the most durable monuments of his organising zeal are the famous monasteries at Sringeri in Mysore, Dwaraka in Kathiawar, Puri in Orissa and Badrinath on the snowy heights of Himalayas. (*An Advanced History of India II Edn.* p. 203)

C. N. Krishnaswami Aiyar :—

At Kedarnath he passed away in his thirty second year or in his thirty eighth as another tradition has it.

These mutts, though founded by the same Teacher and for the same purpose, have had but little connection with each other, administrative, social or religious. But at the same time there has been no rivalry known between any two of them. India having apparently proved wide enough for all of them to work smoothly on. There has been but one small secession in the South caused by the establishment of a Mutt now at Kumbakonam which has a limited following in Tanjore and

and the adjoining parts. That this Kumbakonam Mutt is comparatively modern, appears to be probable though its exact age cannot be well ascertained. (*Sankaracharya G. A. Natesan & Co.* pp. 71–3 First edition p. 59. The four Mutts are mentioned on p. 73)

Prahlad Chandrasekhar Divanji :

During his triumphant tour he took many disciples, the most notable of whom were Sureswara, Padmapada, Totaka and Hastamalaka and founded four Maths one in each corner of India. i. e. at Sringeri in Southern India, Puri in Eastern India, Dwaraka in Western India and Badrikashram in Northern India. (*Introduction to Siddhantabindu of Madhusudana* p. LXXII)

Swami Atmananda :

..... At last, he consolidated his work by establishing the four Sankara Maths at Badrinath, Puri, Sringeri and Dwaraka.

..... Sankara travelled to the other end of India and cast off his body at Kedarnath. (*Sankara's Teachings in His own words* pp. 34–35—Bhavan's Book University)

H. Chatterjee :

He (Sankara) founded four maths or monasteries at Badrinath in the Himalayas in the north, Sringeri in Mysore in the south, at Puri in the east and Dwaraka in the west, the one in the south, his own country, being the chief (*Brief Survey of Indian History* Fifth edition p. 101)

C. S. Srinivasachari and M. S. Ramaswami Ayyangar :

He (Sankara) is “the St. Peter of India's Popes” and established four great monastic establishments at Sringeri in Mysore, at Dwaraka in Kathiawad, at Puri in Orissa and at

Badrikedara in the Himalayas. (*A History of India—Part-I—Hindu India* p. 163 also on page 267)

M. M. Dr. P. V. Kane :

The foundation of mathas received a great fillip after the time of the celebrated Advaita teacher, the great Sankaracharya, whom tradition credits with having established for the propagation of his system of Vedanta, four *mathas* at Sringeri, Puri (Govardhan matha), Dvaraka (Sarada matha) and Badri (Jyotirmatha) (*History of Dharma Sastra* Vol. II—2p. 907)

Dr. N. Venkataramaniah :

A section of the Brahminic mathas trace their origin either to the great philosopher Sankara or to one of his disciples. The most important matha belonging to their class was of course, the Matha at Sringeri which had very close and intimate connection with the State. Branches of this matha, were established at Pushpagri, Virupaksha and Kumbakonam (*Studies in the History of the Third Dynasty of Vijayanagar* p. 324)

Svami Tepovanji :

(Sankara) renounced his earthly existence here (Kedarnath..... in the course of his peregrinations he visited the Sarada temple (in Kashmir) where he met and vanquished many learned disputants and seated himself triumphantly on the throne of Omniscience. (*Himagiri Vihar—Wanderings in the Himalayas* pp. 42 and 70-1)

Varanasi Sammelanams :

The Sammelan of eminent Sanyasis and scholars who met at Varanasi (Biharipuri mutt) on September 30, 1934 declared that Sri Adi Sankara established only four pithas and rejected the Kumbhakonam mutt's claims to be called the supreme mutt established by Sankara

Earlier in 1886, “a galaxy of famous pandits of Banaras had unequivocally declared that Sringeri, Dwaraka, Jotish and Govardhan were the only four Peethas and Mathas established by Shri Adi Shankaracharya himself.”

Surat Sammelanam संशय तिमिर भास्करः सुरत पतन)
S. 1808 A. D. 1886 :

Answer to question 4 considered by the Sammelanam

श्रीमच्छंकराचार्यं निर्मितं पोठं चतुष्टयादतिरिक्ताः पीठशाखा भवितुमर्हन्ति न वा भवेयुश्चेत् कियत्यस्ताः कानि च तासां नामानि तत्र स्थिता आचार्याः श्रीमच्छंकराचार्यं परंपरा प्राप्त शिष्या वान्येवा?—सन्ति शाखामठाः शृंगेरि मठस्य तेषां नामानि कडली, करवीर, पुष्पगिरि, हंपी, अवनी, शिवगंगेति षट् तत्पीठस्था अपि आचार्यं परंपरा गता एव ।

The Kesari—Poona. Tuesday, April 16, 1898

प्राच्यां गोवर्धनमठं, प्रदीच्यां शारदामठं, दक्षिणस्यां शृंगेरिमठं, उदीच्यां च ज्योतिर्मठमित्याचार्यैः चत्वारि मठानि स्थापितानि । पुष्पगिरि, विरूपाक्ष, कुम्भकोणादि मठानि शृंगेरिरूपमठान्येव ।

The above excerpt is quoted on p. 48 of *शंकरविजय जूर्णिका* by Gurunatha (Nirnaysagar Press S. 1820). The work lists the following as branch mutts—Virupaksha, Pushpagiri Kumbhakona, Kudligi. Sankesvara, Sri Saila and Avani.

This work quotes also *Keralakokila* (V. 5 pp. 97-9) and the *Light of the East* (Calcutta-July 1894) in support of this observation.

Vadakkankur Raja Raja Varma mentions only the four established mutts in his work *Keraliya Samskrita Sahitya*

charitam (Tiruvaram — Kamalalayam Book Depot.
ME 1113)

Svami Ranganathananda :

.....Sankara took steps to ensure the continuity of his great work by setting up ten orders of monks—the Paramahansa Parivrajakas. a band of moving and teaching monks—and establishing four monastic centres at the four corners of India and entrusting them to the care of monks noted for their intellect, character and vision. The location of these centres—at Sringeri in the south at Puri in the east, at Dwarka in the west, and at Badrinath in the north—reveals his far-seeing genius as also this vision of the geographical and cultural unity of India, (*Eternal Values for a Changing Society*, p. 91)

Justice P. B. Mukharji (Calcutta High Court) President,
Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture.

.....His organisation of the Dasnami Sannyasis, the spiritual leaders in India, and his organisation of the Maths, as the spiritual light-houses are eloquent and enduring proofs of his masterful personality and efficiency. In the four corners of India and in the four directions he established the life radiating spiritual centres ; in the east at Puri the Gobardhan Math, in the South at Mysore the Sringeri Math, in the west at Dwarka the Sarada Math; and in the north the Jyoshi Math.....These four Maths are the spiritual sentinels keeping sleepless vigil to guard, preserve, maintain, and enhance the essential traditions of spiritual life. (*Shankara—The Panorama of his Life, Message and Philosophy*)

Swami Rajeswarananda :

He established four mutts, the mighty seats of learning and spiritual discipline in the four corners of India, (*Thus spoke Sankara* p. 9)

Swami Atulananda :

Then came the last pilgrimage. Sankara went into the Himalayas. At the foot of the snowcapped peak he blessed his disciples and told them to follow him no further. This was the last ever seen or heard of the Great Sage. (*Vedanta Kesari* 1927—8 *Sankaracharya's life* p. 477)

Ernest Horowitz :

A. D. 828, the Master died.....in a hill resort in the Himalays (*Vedanta Kesari* Vol. 21. 1934/35. *A Day Dream*)

R. N. Dandekar :

That an absolute monist and an astute sanyasi like Sankara should have in a true missionary spirit founded in the four corners of this country four Mathas for the propagation of the highest truth is itself perhaps the best illustration of that ideal of spiritual life. (*Kalyanakalpataru* Vol 16—1950—1 pp. 458—63)

Dilipkumar Roy and Indira Devi :—

He first of all established the four well-known monasteries ; Jyotir Mutt in the North, Sringeri Mutt in the South, Govardhan Mutt in the East and Sarada Mutt in the West. (*Kumbha—India's Ageless Festival—Bhavan's publication*)

Tozhuvur Velayada Mudaliyar disciple of Jothi Ramalinga Swamigal speaks only of the four Mutts. (*Sankara Vijayam* in Tamil ; 1879 and 1913)

C. R. Pattabhiraman :

Behind the (Kedarnath) temple a few miles away is visible the great waterfall—Above the waterfall is Brahma Guha—and to the left of the cave is the famous Mahapantha—Sri Sankara in the thirty - second year of his life, disappeared from the world taking this path.

..... After a period of inactivity of many years this Math (Joshi math) which is one of the four established by Sankara is active again, (*Bhavan's Journal* VI No. 9 p. 33)

எஸ். அருண் :

கேதாரநாதரின் ஆலயம் எடுப்பாக அமைந்திருக்கிறது. கோவிலை அமைத்தவர் ஆதிசங்கரர் அவருடைய சமாதி இங்கே இருக்கிறது அமைதி கண்டதாஸ்தான் சங்கரரும் அங்கே சமாதி அடைந்தாரோ !

(மஞ்சரி ; பிலவ, பய்குனி, பக்க. 92 நவ இந்தியாவில் வெளிவந்த கட்டுரையிலிருந்து எடுக்கப்பட்டது)

Swami Suddhananda Bharati :

Sankara established *muths* in strategic centres all over India. The chief of them was at Sringeri in Mysore which is known as the *Sarada Pitham*. The other *maths* are at Puri, Dwaraka and Badrinath. (*The Illustrated Weekly of India*, May 27, 1962. p. 23)

V. Subramania Iyer :

He (Sankara) founded four colleges at the four cardinal borders, Badarinath, Jagannath, Sringeri and Dwaraka comprehending the whole country, lying about and between them, as one. (*The Philosophy of Truth or Tattvajnana* p. 339)

அபிதான சிந்தாமணி : (பக்கம் 1064)

சங்கராசாரியர் மடம் : ஆதிசங்கரர் முதலில் நாற்றிசைகளுக்கும் நான்கு மடங்கள் தாபித்தனர். அவை : வடக்கு அரித்வாரம்: கிழக்கு ஜகந்நாதம், தெற்கு சிருங்ககிரி, மேற்கு துவாரகைகளாம். இவைகளில் சிறந்தது சிருங்ககிரியாம். சிருங்ககிரியின் கிளைமடம் விருபாக்ஷமாம், வித்தியாரண்யசுவாமிகள் காலத்தில் புஷ்பகிரி மடம் உண்டாயிற்றென்பர். பின்னிருந்தவர்களால் குடும்பகோணம், ஆவநி, சிவகங்கை, காகர்ல (கரவீர?) மடங்களுண்டாயின.

T. A. Swaminatha Ayer :

காஷ்மீர தேசம் விஜயம் செய்து ஸர்வஜ்ஞ பீடம் ஏறி அதனை அலங்கரித்தார். (பக். 47)

புருஷோத்தமரான சுரேசுவரர், பதுமபாதர், அஸ்தா மலகர், தோடகர், என்னும் நான்கு முக்கிய சீடர்களையும் முறையே சிருங்கேரி, துவாராபதி, ஜகந்நாதம், பதரி ஷேத்திரம் என்னும் நான்கு இடங்களிலும் உள்ள மடங்களில் வீற்றிருந்து அத்வைத மதத்தைப் போதித்து வருமாறு நியமனம் செய்தார். பின்பு இவர் இமையமலையிலுள்ள குகைக்குள் பிரவேசித்து நிஜ ரூபத்தோடு திருக்கலைக்கு எழுந்தருளினார். (ஆசாரிய சரித்திர மாலை : ஸ்ரீமத் சங்கராசாரியர். பக். 48—9)

எம். ராதாகிருஷ்ண பிள்ளை :—

ஆதி சங்கராசாரியார் ஸ்தாபித்த மடங்கள் நான்கு. அவை முறையே பத்ரி, புரி, சிருங்கேரி, துவாரகா என்ற நான்கு இடங்களில் உள்ளன. (வடநாட்டுத் தலங்கள் பக். 45)

கலைக்களஞ்சியம் (தொகுதி 4 பக். 684—5)

ஆதி சங்கராசாரியார் அத்வைத மதத்தையும் வைதிக நெறியையும் மக்களுக்கெப்போதும் போதிப்பதற்காகப் பாரத நாட்டின் நான்கு திக்குகளிலும் நான்கு மடங்களை நிறுவினார். அவற்றுள் தென்னிந்தியாவில் மைசூர் நாட்டில் துங்கா நதிக்கரையிலுள்ள சிருங்கேரியில் நிறுவின மடம் ஒன்று.....பாரதநாட்டில் இமயம் முதல் குமரி வரை பிரசித்தமான பல இடங்களில் இம்மடத்தின் கிளைகள் உண்டு.

In the 19th Century the Acharyas of the Kumbhakonam mutt started travelling widely in South India and were shown some honours in some of the Southern States.

In 1843, the Acharya of the Kudi mutt claimed certain special honours, that were shown to the Sringeri mutt in

Hyderabad State. The Prime Minister appointed a *paneha* to report on this representation by the Kudi mutt, and on their report Government issued several *farmans* dated October 16, 1843, *Ramzan* 9, A.H. 1260, *Muharram* 11 A.H. 1260 *Rabisani* A. H. 1261 etc. directing that the honors and privileges belonging to the Sringeri mutt should not be allowed to the Kudli mutt, and also to the other *minor* mutts, among which were listed Sivaganga, Avani, Pushpagiri, Virupaksha, Kumbhakonam, Karvar, Ramachandrapur, Thirtharajapur, Hariharpur, Bandegade and Mulbagal.

The Mysore Government in their Muzrai department turned down a request of the Kumbhakonam Matha to be permitted to use *saptakalasaambari* on elephant and *addapalaki* (Pol. 109-MF 351-27—dated July 27, 1928). These honours, along with others including a salute of 21 guns in the cities of Mysore and Bangalore, were shown exclusively to the Sringeri Mutt.

Excerpts and references like the above may be multiplied. The necessity for their reproduction here arose out of the prominence that the publications connected with the Kumbhakonam mutt are giving to statements mostly by the disciples or admirers of the mutt. By and large the writers and the works referred to above are free from the taint of wanton prejudice against the Kumbhakonam mutt or any undue predilection for one or more of the four established mutts. Between themselves these excerpts reflect the view of a cross section of the intelligentia,—both Indian and Western,—on the three main points of the Kumbhakonam mutt propaganda—(1) that their mutt was founded and presided over by Sankara himself (2) that Sankara ascended the *Sarvajna Pitha* at Kanchi and (3) that he laid down his body within the Kamakshi temple in Kanchi.

Appendix C (pp. 165—6) of N. Ramesan's book—*Sri Sankaracharya* and a letter from Swami Anantananda that

appeared in the *Hindu* of July 7, 1959, which pose as a joint appeal in the names of Chief Minister Sampurnanand (U.P.) and Joint Director-General T. N. Ramachandran of the Archaeological Survey are two documents which for sheer adroitness can hardly be excelled. They are not joint statements, but really constitute a statement of Dr. Sampurnanand and a commentary thereon by the Joint Director-General and Svami Anantananda. We are asked to believe that Dr. Sampurnanand never meant to say that the place near Kedarnath temple, popularly known as Sankara's *Samadhi*, was not in reality the place of his final disappearance but was only a memorial, and that therefore we should look for some other place to mark the place of his disappearance which, according to them, was within the precincts of the Kamakshi Devi temple in Kanchi. The adroitness of the two documents reaches its climax in Svami Anantananda's appeal that "the public of the South under the guidance of the Kamakoti and Sringeri acharyas should take the matter earnestly in hand and take necessary action for the constitution of a strong and permanent memorial to the Great Sankara at Kedarnath."

To Dr. Sampurnanand, the very association of the word *Samadhi* with Sankara is downright heresy. Sankara, he would aver, never died the death of mortals. "He (Sankara) must have attained liberation", writes Dr. Sampurnanand to a friend, "soon after he received Deeksha from his Gura, Sri Govindapad." He disappeared from human ken and was merged in the all-pervading infinite. This is what any intelligent person would gather from his words. He never did and never would subscribe to the view inculcated in these two documents that Sankara once disappeared at Kedar, but appeared again (was it resurrection?) at Kanchi to lay down his bones within a temple. What really did Sampurnanand mean when he said "that he (Sankara) came to Kedarnath and, in modern phra seology, *disappeared* thereafter," and according to popular

tradition "from that spot he went to Kailash." (italics ours) Did he not mean something essentially different from sayings that Sankara thereafter went to Kanchi, died and was buried there. Dr. Sampurnanand has made his position clear in a letter to the late M. S. M. Sharma, which the latter published in the *Searchlight*.

Sri Sankaracharya of Dwarka Pitha has never been in doubt about the nature of monument in Kedarnath. The expression *Sri Sankaracharya Kaivalya Dhama* that this Acharya uses in his *Srimukhas* and communications on the subject clinches the matter. It is an inspiring expression that clothes the Kedarnath monument with the glory that it is.

At a meeting in Nainital over which the Dwaraka Jagadguru presided and at which men of the eminence, standing and intelligence of the late Govind Vallabh Pant, Dr. Sampurnanand, Dr. K. N. Katju [and Acharya Jugal Kishore participated, it was resolved not to alter the shape and position of the present monument—the *samadhi* to the commonplace expression...but to erect over and around in a memorial building worthy of the great Master. Governor V. V. Giri who visited the places later is said to have exhorted all to expedite the raising to the memorial. Kulapati K. M. Munshi avers that Sankara's place of disappearance was Kedarnath. His Holiness of Dwaraka issued an *adesapatrika* to all devotees of Sankara calling on them to co-operate in this great task. Sri Vidyanand Sarasvathi of Nainital, who among his other acts of pious service, represents the U. P. Government in the managing body of the Badri-Kedarnath temples also issued an inspiring pamphlet relating to the *Kaivalya Dhama*, wherein he deplores the propaganda in the South that Kanchi is the place of Sankara's *samadhi* which he says is doing violence to the sacred memory of the Adi-Acharyas. (We purposely put his point of view in euphemistic language). On May 27, 1963 His

Holiness of Dwaraka installed a *murti* of Sankara in the *Kai-valya Dhama* at Kedar in the presence of the Governor of U.P. and several leading personalities including eminent pandits,

Manakkal V. Sundaram Aiyar a disciple of the Kumbhakonam mutt, says in his book.

சங்கர விஜயம் : (p 117) பிறகு பரமசிவன் தரிசனார்த்தமாக கேதாரம் போன சமயம், ஸ்ரீ சங்கரர் மனுஷ்ய சரீரத்தை நீக்கி பரமசிவனது திரு ஜோதி ஸ்வரூபத்துடன் கலந்து ஐக்கியமானார்.

R. Krishnaswami Aiyar of Chidambaram in his book *A pilgrimage to Kedara Badrinath* (திருக்கேதார பத்திரிநாத யாத்திரை) has a brief paragraph on what he calls Adi Sankara's *Jiva samadhi* in Kedarnath (p. 33) Facing the page is a line block illustration of the *samadhi*. It is worth nothing that the book carries a *srimukham* conveying the appreciation and bleesings of the present Acharya of the Kumbhakonam mutt !



CHAPTER—V

LOOSE THREADS

Says C. N. Krishnaswami Aiyar in his *Life and Times of Sankara* “that the Kumbhakonam mutt is comparatively modern appears to be probable though its exact age cannot be ascertained.” This observation may be examined to some detail.

Girvanendra Sarasvati was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, to call himself an Indra Sarasvati. He belongs to the 16th Century. All other Indra Sarasvati and his disciple Ramachandrendra Sarasvathi, who was familiarly known as Upanishad Brahmendra, lived in the 17th Century. Abhinava-narayanendra should be placed in the 16-17th Century, and so should Gangadharendra Sarasvathi who has written a commentary on one of Appaya Dikshita's works. These are among the early Indra Sarasvatis,

Let alone the fantasy relating to the origin of the title Indra Sarasvati—that Sankara received this title from a repentant Indra ; no standard work on *Dharma : Sastra*—neither *Vaidyanatha Dikshitiyam*, nor *Ramanandiyam*, nor *Yatidharma-prakasika*, nor the *Mathamnaya* of any of the acknowledged mutts speaks of the institution of an *Indarasarasvati* order of sannyasis, *The Yatidharmanirnaya* however throws light on this *dikshanama* :

पूर्वोक्त तीर्थथ्रमादीनां मध्ये केषाञ्चिन्नाम्नां स्वस्वशीलाचार-
महत्ताभिमानेन जाता सम्प्रदायारतत्तन्नामभेदाश्च ।..... सरस्वती
सम्प्रदाय मेदौ आनन्द सरस्वती इन्द्र सरस्वती चेति ॥ (p. 387)

Personal preference of one Yati starts a sampradaya and in this way the *Indra Sarasvati* sampradaya must have started.

Epigraphical evidence furnished by the Kanchi temples, discloses that from about the 12—13th Century several *Yatir*

of different persuasions flourished within the city and in its environs. They lived, each in his own mutt where he gathered his pupils. The bulk of them who accepted Advaita were Saivas or Saktas, and they received or made grants in their own names. Some of them were commemorated in their portrait sculptures that are found in these temples. It is not possible to elaborate in this section on the identity of the sculptures that are believed "to represent Adi Sangara" (A separate monograph on the subject is necessary). There was at that time the danger to pure Advaita doctring getting coloured by Agamic beliefs and rituals. Appayya Dikshita integrated both, but all were not of his calibre and faith. Even in Dikshita's case, it has been said, that he was prompted by Narasimhasrami to write books on pure Advaita, and he is said to have presided over a *pitha* (अद्वैत पीठस्थितदेशिकः) A third was Upanished Brahmendra. A hand-out issued in 1939 by the head of the Upanishad Brahmendra mutt asserts that it was the '*first Advaita mutt of South India*' (italic ours) "founded about 250 years ago" (that is. in the second half of the 17th century). There must have been branch mutt also ; one such perhaps, a local representative of the Sringeri mutt went by the name *Sarada matha*. if ever there was one in Kanchi. Another great personality was Govinda Dikshita, a Hoysala Kannada Brahmin who came to Tanjore during the reign of the Vijayanagar Emperor, Achyuta Raya. For the best part of a century his personality dominated the religious life of the territory comprising the district of Tanjore and parts of South Arcot. His grateful contemporaries hailed him as श्रोमद्वैत विद्याचार्य, सर्वतन्त्र स्वतन्त्र. Govinda stands out among hundreds of Hoysala Kannada Brahmins who had then settled in the Tamil districts. The Kadaladi grant'(S. I461—A. D. 1530 in Achyuta Raya's reign registers a grant to a Hoysala Brahmin Ramachandra Dikshita, who apportioned 41 *vrittis* among his relatives. This was again what happened in the small locality of Padaividu (North Arcot).

With Govinda Dikshita's support the number of *Yatis* particularly from among the Kannada community naturally multiplied in the locality. It will not be lost on the reader that the Acharyas on the Kumbhakonam list for the past two centuries have been drawn from this group of Kannadigas only. Venkatasubramanya Dikshita, who assumed the *dikshanama* of Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati V (1814-51) belonged to Govinda Dikshita's family, and "the succeeding Acharyas of the matha have all been selected from the same family," (Venkatraman p. 102)

Bhagavannama Bodhendra (No. 57-A. D. 1638-92) is said to have come to the South from Kasi and "reached Conjeevaram ultimately" ; "The Mutt had *returned* thither by the time and he then ascended the Peetha", (Venkatesan p. 30) This is really amazing. Where had the mutt, if really it had existed, gone before that time and when did it go? Under what circumstance did it return to Kanchi to welcome Bodhendra to its headship?

The story of an Acharya of this mutt leaving Kanchi and going to Tanjore carrying the golden idol of Kamakshi hardly deserves credence. Government records tell us that temple priests carried away the idols and not any "Sankaracharya". In 1792 when Tippu was in Kanchi, he sought the guidance of the Sringeri Acharya to renovate temples and consecrate idols. Where was the "Kamakotipitha" Acharya then?

Let us draw these threads together. The *Gururatnamala* and *Sushama* take us in the beginning to the realms of romance, from which when we step down to reality we find associated with the headship of this mutt such names as Vidyatirtha and Sankarananda, who really belonged to another place. As we have said above, there was not one influential mutt in

Kanchi till about the 17th Century, though there might have been several residences for learned sannyasis. Not one of the several hundreds of epigraphs from Kanchi mentions any mutt known as Kamakoti Pitha. It is no doubt true that the *Kumbhabhishekam* of the Kamakshi temple in 1841 was associated with an Acharya of the Kumbhakonam mutt ; but that was done with the permission of the Madras Government specially obtained on his application. The *Kamakotipitha* is really the *chakra* in worship within the temple and cannot be the {name of any mutt.

A group of sannyasis comes into prominence in Govindha Dikshita's time. One of them is patronised by the Maratha rulers of Tanjore. In 1821 the then prince builds a mutt for him in Kumbhakonam and a few years later performs *Kanakabhishekam* to the then Svami. Thus shot into prominence backed by royal support in Tanjore, these Svamis, like other mathadhipatis, big and small, happened to receive *rahadaris* for their tours from the local chiefs and later on from the East India Company also. An English Judge in Tanjore rightly characterises this mutt as a schismatic mutt and confirms its name of *Sikkudayar mutt* (the mutt belonging to a minor Acharya.) We may leave it to the reader to piece together these data and form his conclusion.

CHAPTER—VI

CONCLUSION

Assessing the factors that work for the disintegration of great religious foundations, a learned Judge cum Indologist cum Vedantin observes : “The third cause for the weakening of their influence was the internal dissensions between the disciples of the same Acharya due to the love of the power and pelf which the occupation of the Gadis at the Maths carried with it and the consequent *foundation of other rival Maths and the assumption of the honorific title Sankaracharya by their founders and their succesors*. Thus for instance there are newly founded Maths in Kolhapur, Belgaum and Nasik in the Decan, Hampi, and Kanchi (Conjeevaram) in Southern India, Prabhaspatan, Dakor, and Dholka in Gujarat and Benaras in the United Provinces” (italics ours) (P. C. Divanji : *Introduction to Siddhantabindu* pp, LXXII—iii)

The contribution towards this state of affairs is largely from people who behave in a manner as to create a tendency in sannyasis in some position to accept in a buildup by publicity mongers. Such people bring to play all the apparatus of propaganda and necessarily lay themselves open to public criticism. Such criticism however should be done without rancour but with humility and strict regards for truth.

The methods pursued by these publicity mongers are as elusive and daring an assortment of statements as was ever assembled. To give some examples, an article in the *Madras Mail* (July 28, 1963.) speaks of the “*original Shankar Math at Kanchipuram*”. Another in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* (August, 11. 1953) lists five Sankaracharyas, the head of the Kamakoti Peetham being the most influential. The Tamil daily *Dinamani*(Madurai, July 6, 1963) carries an astounding statement

that a Pithadhipati from Mysore State took the orders of the Kumbhakonam Acharya to travel in some of the districts in the South. This is an adaptiaon from a vitriolic book in Tamil written by Atreya Krishna Sastri. Children's books, and translation of English books are not exempt from interpolations and misstatements. Publications issued by the Publicity Departments do sometimes carry delectable pieces of propaganda. *Kashmir Today* (June-July, 1962) leaves out Sringeri while mentioning the maths established by Sankara among which Kanchi is included. A feature bearing the caption *Aikya Bharat* contributed by the Department of Public Relations, Kerala, to the *Radhakrishnan Number (A Souvenir of Appreciations, 1962)* mentions that "Sankara founded monastries at Kanchi, Dwaraka, Badrinath and Puri," and conveniently leaves out Sringeri. An influential friend at Maddras drew the attention of the Kerala Publicity Department to this 'feature' and requested elucidation. The Director of Puplic Relatios promptly replied (January 23, 1963) The facts on which the advertisment captioned *Aikya Bharat* was based, were supplied by a *Sanskrit Scholar who is also a Student of Sankara's philosophy*. The advetisment is being corrected on the lines pointed out by you. Your gesture in having taken the trouble to point out the error is apprecaited." *Sanskrit scholars* of this type, who are also *students of Sankara's philosophy* are very much abroad and this tribe includes men who do not know Sanskrit. *The Tanjor District Hand Book* (1957) has the following on Pages 395—6: Kumbakonam has from a long time been the Head quarters of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, the famous religious institution founded by the well-known Teacher of Adwaitha, Sankaracharya. The matham was originally established at Kanchipuram where

Sankaracharya is said to have spent his last days, but owing to the disturbances in the country it was on the invitation of Raja Pratab Singh transferred to Tanjore in 1731 and later on to the banks of the Cauvery at Kumbakonam. The great temple at Kanchipuram known as the Kamakshi Amman Devasthanam is however still being managed by the Matham". How neatly does this account present in a nutshell the claims of the Kumbhakonam Mutt! Not only does this account differ from all previous accounts in books on Tanjore compiled by Anglo Indian civilians and in old publications like the *Illustrated Guide to the South Indian Railway* (by B. C. Scott, 1915) but regales us with curious specimens of historical facts. The staff who gathered materials for the editor, Dr. Baliga, will do well to seek answers for questions like these:—Did Pratab Singh invite the Matham to come over to Tanjore? Was he on the *gadi* in 1731? Where was the matham at the time he is said to have invited it? Did the matham manage the Kamakshi Amman Devasthanam in 1957?

May we repeat that not out of disrespect to the Head of this Mutt, have this pages been written but out of the compelling urge that history should not be allowed to be falsified and the true image of Sankara and his work should not be tarnished. While paying the mutt and its head, the tribute that is their due we cannot refrain from expressing our concern and resentment that protagonists of the mutt are making a mockery of the ideals of *Dharma* and *Satya* that their Acharya so often preaches.

It requires to be stressed that the greatness of an institution does not entirely depend upon claims to antiquity. The great Vaisnava and Saiva mutt which influence religious life in South India are only a few hundred years old. Today the Kumbhakonam mutt is a sufficiently powerful institution, When they should its adherents monoever for a non-existing

antiquity or for domineering situations? Will they continue to do so or will they bury all their slogans and work harmoniously with other such institutions and spread the teachings of Sankara ? This is the challenge they face to day.

In conclusion, we would fain commend to the attention of the mutt adherents the following pregnant exhortation of President Radhakrishnan, which, though addressed to a gathering of diplomats, is of significance in the present context.

“It is by indoctrination that we seduce man from his natural generosity of spirit, of sympathy and fellowship into dubious methods Our one aim in this world should be that we should not exaggerate, should not misrepresent, should not indulge in propaganda, but listen to the voice of truth. If we are able to do it thenwe will be proud of what we have achieved ”



ADDENDA

1

The Acharya of the Kumbhakonam Math was sometimes referred to as *Chikka Odeyar* (=the junior or subordinate Head) implying subordination to some other spiritual authority. This designation is also found in a judgement of the Subordinate Judge, Chingleput, in A. S. No. 163 of 1930 (a suit jointly decided together with A. S. Nos. 158 and 324 of 30 allowing the appeals against the Kumbhakonam Math.) The learned Sub-Judge also quotes Wallis and Ayling J. J. as having used the same designation. It is ingeniously claimed by some partisans of the math that the designation was applied to a junior Svami, perhaps a successor-designate to the Pitha and not to the Acharya himself. In 1930 the present Acharya had not nominated a junior Svami

2

A letter signed by V. Panchanada Ayyar and C. Swami Ayyar, that appear in a supplement to the *Brahma Vidya* (Vol. 10. No, 13 dated 17th *Adi* or Nov. 22, 1896 p. 187) says *inter alia* that the Kumbhakonam Math had had only four or five acharyas since its inception. (இந்த மடாதினம் தோன்றி 4-5 பட்டமாக). This is a rough indication of the age of the math

3

One of the ‘authorities’ now trotted out by Kumbhakonam math propagandists is an extract from Dr. Hultzsch’s *Reports of Samskrit manuscripts in South India* which is kept in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library bearing no. 2146. The portion which appears to favour the contentions of the math reads :

आगच्छस्वोन्नयाकाशी* पर्यटन्पृथिवीतले ॥

तत्र संस्थाप्य कामाक्षीं जगाम परमं पदम् ।

विश्वरूपयति स्थाप्य स्वाध्वमस्य प्रचारणे ।

[* Read काशी ॥

(Wandering at his will over the world, he reached Kanchi) installed Kamakshi there, and after nominating Visvarupa to propagate the tenets of his own asrama, attained his celestial state)

Just above these lines occur the following :

संस्थाप्य स्व मठं कृत्वा तुङ्गभद्रा नदीतटे ।

तत्र स्थित्वा द्वादशाब्दं यतिं पृथ्वीभरा* मिधम् ॥

विद्या पीठाधिकं कृत्वा भारती संज्ञया गुरुः ।

[* Read धरा]

(Having established his own matha on the banks of the Tungabhadra, he resided there for twelve years and made Prithivīdhara the head of the Vidya Pitha under the appellation Bharati)

How do these people who claim that Sri Sankara's own math was at Kanchi reconcile themselves to this statement? This excerpt claims this honour for the matha on the banks of the Tungabhadra, and strikes at the very root of the Kum-bhakonam math claims

It is alleged that this extract traces the *Guruparampara* of the Sringeri math. It is definitely not the Sringeri parampara. A list of gurus from Siva to Sankara, then the abrupt statement that Sri Sankara established his own matha on the banks of the Thungabhadra and from there went to Kanchi, followed by verses containing a string of names taken at random from the published list of the Kudli math parampara

and ending abruptly somewhere in the middle of that *parampara* is what constitutes this ‘authoritative’ document,

The same extract occurs in another copy bearing No. J. L. 36/499 which contains three parts, the first being two verses in praise of Sri Sankara, the second pertaining to this *parampara* and the third reproducing a *Mathamnaya stotra* which last is a strange medley of different versions. In this *stotra* Suresvaracharya is assigned both to Dwaraka and Sringeri, overlooking the ‘right of Prithvidhara to the headship of Sringeri’, which the *parampara stotra* in the second part has conferred on him. And again this *amnaya stotra* mentions only *four* maths, leaving out the “fifth and central” math at Kanchi !

There is yet another manuscript No. 11292 which gives a correct list of the Sringeri gurus from Sri Sankara to Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi I (thirteenth Guru). After Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi the list traces a *parampara* headed by one of this Guru’s disciples, different from Sri Narasimha Bharati, his successor on the pitha. Formerly the acharyas gave *sannyasa diksha* to several qualified candidates and only those specially designated succeeded to the pitha, while the others started their own *sishyaparampara* none of whom had any claim to the pitha.

Are the propagandists aware that Dr. Hultsch was not concerned with the contents of the manuscripts he had collected except those that he edited? This clumsily faked up report transcribed by an illiterate scribe was originally in the possession of one Jambunatha Bhatta of Tanjore—obviously a partizan of the Kumbhakonam math. So much for the worth of this document which serves neither the Kumbhakonam Math nor the Kudli Math.

4

The Kumbhakonam—Kudli axis has been very much inevidence for more than a century. The two maths have ben putting forth exaggerated claims ; Kuldi to be recognis- edas the real Sringeri math and Kumbhakonam as the fifth or Sr Sankara's *own* math with sovereignty over all the other maths—claims which successive administrators in Mysore, Hyderabad and other States and convocations of learned padits have rejected.

Among the protagonists of this axis are S. Lakshmi- naayana Sastri and Nataraja Aiyar, the joint-authors of *The Trditional Age of Sri Sankaracharya and the Maths*. All the claims put forth in this book in support of the Kumbhakonam Mah have been answered in these pages. The two authors hav devoted several pages to establish the greatness of the Kudli Math vis-a-vis what they call the 'Neo Sringeri Math.' It isoutside the scope of this book to enter into this phase of their performance which requires a separate treatment.* The following extract from the *Mysore Gazetteer* – Vol. V p. 1307 will lo for the present.

“Kudli, a sacred village in the Shimoga Taluk at the confluence of the Tunga and Bhadra, is the seat of a *matha connected with the one at Sringeri, the original Guru having been appointed by the Sringeri Swami about 528 years ago* to minister to the smarthas of Mahratta descent” Italics ours. 328 years before the date of writing this Gazetteer.)

*Kudli Matha published by K. N. Natesan, Sri Sarada Institute, Salem is a small tract dealing with the 'claims' of that matha.

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