

A Study of Some Names in *Lalitāsahasranāma* Related to ‘*Darśanaśāstra*’

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1. PREFACE

The *Purāṇas* have come to us as an explanation to some abstruse *Vedic* passages. The *Prakāśa* form of *Brahman* is called *Śiva* and the *Vimarśa* form of the *Brahman* is called *Śakti*. Among the 18 *Purāṇas*, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* is well known for the extolation of *Devī Lalitā*. *Lalitāsahasranāma* containing 320 *ślokas* in three chapters occurs in the second part the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, which is the last of *Śrī Vedavyāsa*'s 18 *Purāṇas*. Even a cursory reading of this will impress one with the importance attached by *Śrī Vedavyāsa* to the subject of *Mantraśāstra* in the last of his *Purāṇas*.

The *Dhyāna Śloka* of *LSN* consists of one thousand names of *Lalitāparamēśvarī*. *Lalitāmbā* is the *Māyā* part of the *Brahman*. She is the *vimarśa* form and is the cause for illusion or duality. *Śiva* wanted to create somebody who can nurture this universe with motherly love and affection. *Śiva* also knows (*Brahman* is the knower of all) that only a woman can take care of this universe, like her own child. That is how *Śakti* came into existence. That is why we call the earth as Mother Earth. We call the nature as Mother Nature. Every mother has their own role to play in nurturing her children.

In the same way the Supreme Mother has her own role in sustaining us, in protecting us. Her administration is based on the law of Lord, which is called *Karma*. The *Śāktas* worship the Universal energy as Mother, it is the sweetest name they know. The Mother is the highest ideal of womanhood. Mother is the first manifestation of power and is considered a higher idea than father. The name of Mother brings the idea of *Śakti*, divine energy and omnipotence. The Baby believes its mother to be all powerful, able to do anything. The Divine mother is the *Kuṇḍalinī* sleeping in us. Without worshipping her, we can never know ourselves. Various names in *LSN* describes the *Dārśanika* elements. Some names of *Devī Lalitāmbā* are given below which are related to *Darśanaśāstra*.

2. COSMOLOGICAL ELEMENTS REFLECTED THROUGH SOME NAMES IN *LSN*

1. *Śrī Mātā*:

Śrī Mātā Śrī Mahārājñī Śrīmatsimhāsaneśvarī |

Cidagnikuṇḍasambhūtā Devakāryasamudyatā ||(Lalitāsahasranāma.1)

The first *Śloka* of *LSN* is given here. We address our Mother as *Mātā*. *Mātā* means Mother. The prefix *Śrī* is important here. *Śrī* represents the highest form of motherhood. The human mothers can take care of their children with love and affection. But they cannot remove the miseries and sufferings of their loved ones, which they are destined to undergo. Since *Lalitāmbā* is much more human than a human mother is. She has the capacity to remove sorrows and miseries of her children. Children mean all the living beings in the universe that includes the galaxy. She is addressed as *Mātā* as she is the creator, sustainer and also the dissolver.

The universe was created out of her. The universe as per her instructions when the dissolution takes place, the universe merges back into her. The cycle of *Samsāra* (The world which has phenomenal existence and also meaning transmiration) repeats itself by birth, sustenance and death.

Samsāra is called as an ocean. It is difficult to swim against of the current *Samsāra*. The current of *Samsāra* is produced by sense organs. These sense organs in turn influence the mind that causes desires and attachments. Only *Śrī Mātā* is capable of helping us to cross the hurdles of *Samsāra* and reach to the highest reality (Realisation of *Brahman*). This is possible only by worshipping her.

When *Śrī* is added as a prefix to any word, it shows the greatness. There are five such words with *Śrī* prefixed in the worship of the *Devī*. These five together are called *Śrī Pañcagam*. They are *Śrī Puram* (the place where she dwells), *Śrī Cakra* (the place where she lives), *Śrī Vidyā* (the ritual worship), *Śrī Suktam* (verses praise of her) and *Śrī Guru* (the spiritual teacher who initiates disciple into *Śakti* worship). The main element of *Śakti* worship is *Tantra Śāstra*.

Śrī also means *Vedas*. *Vedas* originated from the *Brahman*. *Lalitāmbā* is the *Brahman* as repeatedly stressed in *LSN*.¹

2. *Cidagni Kuṇḍa Sambhūtā:*

The Goddess *Lalitāmbā* born from the pit of the fire of consciousness. She burns out ignorance and confers immortality. She rose from the fire of knowledge and is the ultimate truth.² The ultimate reality is characterized by three concepts-absolute being, absolute consciousness and absolute bliss. Nevertheless the ultimate reality is beyond these and any other human conceptions. It is objectless, omnipresent, all-pervasive, eternal infinite, unchanging, motionless and without any form. Often the ultimate reality is referred to as a cosmic ocean of consciousness.³ Goddess *Lalitāmbā* rose from the fire of knowledge and she is the ultimate truth. The following names in *LSN* reflects the cosmological elements.

3. *Cakrarāja rathārūḍha Sarvāyudh Pariṣkr̥tā:*

She is mounted on *Śrī Cakra* inside body with all weapons i.e. power. She enlightens mind to realize ultimate reality as an all pervading consciousness.⁴ *Devī* possesses all the means of attaining the knowledge of self. The *Bhagavadgītā* (IV.33) says, "All rites, *O Partha*, are included in knowledge., knowledge means *Śuddhavidyā*." The *Śivasūtra* (I.22) says-"The Dawn of *Śuddhavidyā* implies success in the mastery of the *Cakras*."

4. *Śrī Manonmanī:*

She is the highest state of consciousness.⁵ And also it's a secret name of *Durgā*.

5. *Bhaktahārdatamobheda bhānumadbhānu sañtatiḥ:*

She is the effulgence of the sun and dispels darkness of ignorance. *Lalitāmbā* is the giver of the vision of the ocean of consciousness. Goddess *Lalitā* is the supreme wisdom, the state of consciousness where nothing else is experienced except self.⁶ Like the taste of salt in the Sea, it is everywhere, *Prajñāna* is all pervasive. (*Br. Up.121.*)

She is the giver of food and sustains life and consciousness.⁷ The fifth state beyond *Turīya* is *Lalitāmbā*. She is that state where individual and cosmic consciousness merge.⁸ *Devi* is ultimate light and status.⁹ The same thought is given in *Bhagavadgītā* that the state of consciousness from which there is no return, is my ultimate state. She is *Gaṁbhīrā* the bottomless lake. The same concept in *Śivasūtra* 1.23 that the ultimate mother is to be visualized as a great and deep lake of consciousness, uncomprehended by space and time.

She is *Kalpanārahitā* (*LSN.858*) the pure consciousness, she is *Tattvamayī* (*LSN.907*)-the mother of the ultimate state of the consciousness. The ten *Avatāras* of *Śrī Viṣṇu* emerge from her fingernails to fight her battles against force of darkness.¹⁰ The same concept is described in *Lalitopākhyāna*. From the right thumbnail of the great queen there sprang the divine, all pervading *Nārāyaṇa* in the form of a great fish. The ten *Avatāras* having performed their respective onerous tasks stood with folded hands before mother *Lalitā* saluting her.

6. *Devarṣigaṇasaṁghāta stūyamānātmavaibhavā:*

Gods and seers perceived her cosmic form, seers realized unity of individual and cosmic selves. The *Śivasūtra* (I.1) says, *Ātman* is his consciousness (*Caitanya*). *Tantrarāja* says, the universal form *Lalitā* is declared to be the very self.

3. IN BRIEF

With the above discussion, we come to the point that, there are various types of names in *LSN* which are reflecting varied conceptions. These names are purely describing the *Dārśanik* elements. These cosmological names are found as attribute of the *Brahman* in *Upaniṣadic* Literature. Every manifestation of power in the universe is mother. She is life, she is

intelligence, she is *vidyā*, she is the highest and ultimate reality. She is the person can be seen and known- as *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramhansa* saw and knew her. Established in the idea of mother, we can do anything. She quickly answers the prayers. She can show herself to us in any form at any moment. The divine mother can have form (*Rūpa*) and name (*Nāma*), as we worship her in these various aspects, we can rise to pure being, having neither form nor name (*Nirguṇa*). So recitation without understanding the meaning will not give the desired results. Total concentration is only requirement.

Every single name has powerful meaning. When *LSN* is recited with the backdrop of these patterns of meanings of various names, it would no more remain mere mechanical uttering. Such a meaningful recitation would surely lead to a deeper impact and benefit for the recite as well as the listener..

END NOTES:

¹ *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.VI.18*

“He first created Brahma and then presented the Vedas to him. I a seekers of liberation, take refuge in that luminous Lord, who reveals the knowledge of the self in the mind”.

² *LSN.1*

³ www.rishi.dk/guide.

⁴ *LSN.68*

*Cakrarājarathārūḍha sarvāyudhapaṛiṣkṛtā |
Geyacakrarathārūḍha mantriṇiparisevitā ||*

⁵ *LSN.207*

*Sarvayantrātmikā sarvatantrarūpā manonmanī |
Maheśvarī mahādevī mahālakṣmī mṛḍapriyā ||*

⁶ *LSN.367*

*Bhaktahārdatamobheda bhānumadbhānusaṅtatih |
Śivadūtī Śivārādhyā Śivamūrtih Śivaṅkarī ||*

⁷ *LSN.669*

*Annadā vasudā vṛddhā brahmātmyaikasvarūpiṇī |
Bṛhatī brāhmaṇī brāhmī brhamānandā balipriyā ||*

⁸ *LSN.739*

*Mithyājagadadhiṣṭhānā muktidā muktirūpiṇī |
Lāsyapriyā layakarī lajjā rambhādivanditā ||*

⁹ *Bhagavadgītā.16-6*

Yadgatvā nivartante taddhāma paramaṁ mama|

¹⁰ *LSN.80*

*Karāṅgulinakhotpanna nārāyaṇadaśākṛtiḥ |
Mahāpāśupatāstrāgninirdagdhāsurasainikā ||*