

VAJRASŪCIKA UPANIṢAD

I. *vajrasūcim pravakṣyāmi jñānam ajñāna-bhedanam
dūṣaṇam jñāna-hinānām bhūṣaṇam jñāna-caḥṣuṣām.*

I. I shall describe the *Vajrasūci* doctrine which blasts ignorance, condemns those who are devoid of the knowledge (of *Brahman*) and exalts those endowed with the eye of knowledge.

jñānam: doctrine. *V. 'śāstra'*: scripture.

2. *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-vaiśya-śūdrā iti catvāro varṇāḥ; teṣāṃ
varṇānām brāhmaṇa eva pradhāna iti veda-vacanānurūpam
smṛtibhir apy uktam. tatra codyam asti, ko vā brāhmaṇo nāma?
kiṃ jīvaḥ? kiṃ dehaḥ? kiṃ jātih? kiṃ jñānam? kiṃ karma? kiṃ
dhārmika iti.*

2. The *Brāhmaṇa* the *Kṣatriya*, the *Vaiśya* and the *Śūdra* are the four classes (castes). That the *Brāhmaṇa* is the chief among these classes is in accord with the Vedic texts and is affirmed by the *Smṛtis*. In this connection there is a point worthy of investigation. Who is, verily, the *Brāhmaṇa*? Is he the individual soul? Is he the body? Is he the class based on birth? Is he the knowledge? Is he the deeds (previous, present or prospective)? Is he the performer of the rites?

3. *tatra prathamo jīvo brāhmaṇa iti cet tan na, atītānāga-
tāneka-dehānām jīvasyaikarūpatvāt. ekasyāpi karma-vaśād aneka-
deha-sambhavāt sarva-śarīrānām jīvasyaikarūpatvāc ca, tasmān
na jīvo brāhmaṇa iti.*

3. Of these, if the first (position) that the *Jīva* or the individual soul is *Brāhmaṇa* (is to be assumed), it is not so; for the individual's form is one and the same in the large number of previous and prospective bodies. Even though the *jīva* (the individual soul) is one, there is scope for (the assumption of) many bodies due to the stress of (past) karma, and in all these bodies the form of the *jīva* is one and the same. Therefore the *jīva* is not the *Brāhmaṇa*.

4. *tarhi deho brāhmaṇa iti cet tan na. ācaṇḍalādi paryantānām
manuśyānāṃ pañca-bhautikatvena dehasyaikarūpatvāt; jarā-mara-
na-dharmād dharmādi-sāmyadarśanāt, brāhmaṇas śveta-varṇah,
kṣatriyo rakta-varṇah, vaiśyah pīta-varṇah, śūdrah kṛṣṇa-varṇa iti
niyamābhavāt. pitrādi-dahane putrādīnām brahma-hatyādi-doṣa-
sambhavāc ca, tasmān na deho brāhmaṇa iti.*

4. Then if (it is said) that the body is the *Brāhmaṇa*, it is

not so, because of the oneness of the nature of the body which is composed of the five elements, in all classes of human beings down to the *caṇḍālās* (outcastes), etc.; on account of the perception of the common features of old age and death, virtue and vice, on account of the absence of any regularity (in the complexion of the four classes) that the Brāhmaṇa is of the white complexion, that the Kṣatriya is of the red complexion, that the Vaiśya is of the tawny complexion, that the Śūdra is of the dark complexion and because of the liability of the sons and others (kinsmen) to becoming tainted with the murder of a Brāhmaṇa and other (sins) on cremating the bodies of their fathers and other kinsmen. Therefore the body is not the Brāhmaṇa.

5. *tarhi jātir brāhmaṇa iti cet tan na; tatra jātyantara-jantuṣu aneka-jāti-sambhavā maharṣayo bahavas santi, ṛṣyaśṅgo mṛgyāh, kauśikah kuśāt, jāmbuko jambukāt, vālmiko valmikāt, vyāsah kairvarta-kanyāyām, śaśapṛsthāt gautamah, vasiṣṭha ūrvaśyām, agastyah kalāśe jāta iti śrutatvāt, eleśām jātyā vināpy agre jñāna-pratipādītā ṛṣayo bahavas santi; tasmān na jātir brāhmaṇa iti.*

5. Then (if it is said) that birth (makes) the Brāhmaṇa, it is not so, for there are many species among creatures, other than human, many sages are of diverse origin. We hear from the sacred books that Rṣyaśṅga was born of a deer, Kauśika of Kuśa grass, Jāmbuka from a jackal, Vālmiki from an ant-hill, Vyāsa from a fisher girl, Gautama from the back of a hare, Vasiṣṭha from Ūrvaśī (the celestial nymph), Agastya from an earthen jar. Among these, despite their birth, there are many sages, who have taken the highest rank, having given proof of their wisdom. Therefore birth does not (make) a Brāhmaṇa.

6. *tarhi jñānam brāhmaṇa iti cet tan na; kṣatriyādayo'hi paramārthadarśano'bhijñā bahavas santi, tasmān na jñānam brāhmaṇa iti.*

6. Then (if it is said) that knowledge (makes a) Brāhmaṇa, it is not so because among Kṣatriyas and others there are many who have seen the Highest Reality and attained wisdom. Therefore knowledge does not (make) a Brāhmaṇa.

7. *tarhi karma brāhmaṇa iti cet tan na; sarveśām prāṇinām prarabdha-sañcitāgāmi-karma-sādharmya-darśanāt. karmābhi-*

preritāh. santo janāh kriyāh kurvantīti. tasmān na karma brāhmaṇa iti.

7. Then (if it is said) that work (makes a) Brāhmaṇa, it is not so, for we see that the work commenced in the present embodiment or accumulated during the previous or to commence on a future embodiment is common to all living creatures and that good men perform works impelled by their past karma. Therefore work does not (make) a Brāhmaṇa.

8. *tarhi dhārmiko brāhmaṇa iti cet tan na; kṣatriyādayo hiranya-dātāro bahavas santi; tasmān na dhārmiko brāhmaṇa iti.*

8. Then (if it is said) that the performer of religious duties is a Brāhmaṇa, it is not so; for there have been many Kṣatriyas and others who have given away gold. Therefore the performer of religious rites is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Giving away gold is an act of religious duty.

9. *tarhi ko vā brāhmaṇo nāma? yah kaścid ātmānam, advīṭiyam, jāti-guṇa-kriyā-hīnam, śadūrmī-śadbhāvetyādi-sarva-doṣa-rahitam, satya-jñānānandānanta-svarūpam, svayam, nirvikalpam, aśeṣa-kalpādhāram, aśeṣa-bhūtāntaryāmitvena varlamānam, antar-ba-hiśc-ākāśavad anusyūtam, akhandānanda-svabhāvam, aprameyam, anubhāvaihkavedyam, aparokṣatayābhāsamānam, karatalāmala-kavat sāksāt aparokṣikṛtya kṛtārthatayā kāma-rāgādi-doṣa-rahitah śamādi-guṇa sampanno bhāva-mātsarya-tṛṣṇāśā-mohādi-rahitah dambhāhamkārādibhir asamsprṣṭacetā vartate, evam ukta-lakṣaṇo yah sa eva brāhmaṇa iti śruti-smṛti-purāṇetiḥāsānam abhiprāyah; anyathābrāhmaṇatva-siddhir nāsty eva. sac-cid-ānandamātmānam, advīṭiyam, brahma bhāvayet, ātmanam, advīṭiyam, brahma bhāvayed ity upaniṣad.*

9. Then, who, verily is the Brāhmaṇa? He who, after directly perceiving, like the amalaka fruit in the palm of one's hand, the Self, without a second, devoid of distinctions of birth, attribute and action, devoid of all faults such as the six infirmities, and the six states, of the form of truth, wisdom, bliss and eternity, that is by itself, devoid of determinations, the basis of endless determinations, who functions as the indwelling spirit of all beings, who pervades the interior and the exterior of all like ether, of the nature of bliss, indivisible, immeasurable, realisable only through one's experience and who manifests himself directly (as one's self), and through the fulfilment of his nature, becomes rid of the faults of desire,

attachment, etc., and endowed with qualities of tranquillity, etc., rid of the states of being, spite, greed, expectation, bewilderment, etc., with his mind unaffected by ostentation, self-sense and the like, he lives. He alone who is possessed of these qualities is the Brāhmaṇa. This is the view of the Vedic texts and tradition, ancient lore and history. The accomplishment of the state of the Brāhmaṇa is otherwise impossible. Meditate on *Brahman*, the Self who is being, consciousness and bliss, without a second; meditate on *Brahman*, the Self who is being, consciousness and bliss without a second. This is the Upaniṣad.

six infirmities: old age, death, sorrow, delusion, hunger and thirst.
six states: birth, being, growth, change, waning and perishing.

Many texts declare that the determining factor of caste is character and conduct and not birth.

*śṛṇu yakṣa kulam tāta na svādhyāyo na ca śrutam
kāraṇam vā dvijātve ca vṛttam eva na saṁśayah.*

Listen about caste, Yakṣa dear, not study, not learning is the cause of rebornness. Conduct is the basis, there is no doubt about it. M.B. *Aranya-parva* 312. 106.

*satyam, dānam, kṣamā, śīlam anṛśamsyam tapo ghrṇā
dṛśyante yatra nāgendra sa brāhmaṇa iti smṛtiḥ.*

O King of serpents, he in whom are manifest truthfulness, charity, forbearance, good conduct, non-injury, austerity and compassion is a Brāhmaṇa according to the sacred tradition.

*yatrailal lakṣyate sarpa vṛttam sa brāhmaṇas smṛtaḥ,
yatrailan na bhavet sarvam tam śūdrām iti nirāśet.*

O serpent, he in whom this conduct is manifest is a Brāhmaṇa, he in whom this is absent, treat all such as Śūdra. M.B. *Aranya-parva* 180. 20, 27. The gods consider him a Brāhmaṇa (a knower of *Brahman* who has no desires, who undertakes no work, who does not salute or praise anybody, whose work has been exhausted but who himself is unchanged).

*nirāśiṣam anārambham nirnamaskāram astutim
akṣiṇam kṣiṇakarmānam tam devā brāhmaṇam viduḥ.*

M.B. XII. 269. 34.

See *Dhammapada*, Chapter XXVI.

Sanatsujāta defines a Brāhmaṇa as one who is devoted to truth:
sa eva satyānāpātī sa jñeyo brahmaṇas tvayā.

It is valuable to recall the teaching of this Upaniṣad which repudiates the system that consecrates inequalities and hardens contingent differences into inviolable divisions.

APPENDIX A

FOREWORD

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE

to *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*

NOT being a scholar or a student of philosophy, I do not feel justified in writing a critical appreciation of a book dealing with the philosophy of the Upaniṣads. What I venture to do is to express my satisfaction at the fact that my friend, Professor Radhakrishnan, has undertaken to explain the *spirit* of the Upaniṣads to English readers.

It is not enough that one should know the meaning of the words and the grammar of the Sanskrit texts in order to realize the deeper significance of the utterances that have come to us across centuries of vast changes, both of the inner as well as the external conditions of life. Once the language in which these were written was living, and therefore the words contained in them had their full context in the life of the people of that period, who spoke them. Divested of that vital atmosphere, a large part of the language of these great texts offers to us merely its philological structure and not life's subtle gesture which can express through suggestion all that is ineffable.

Suggestion can neither have fixed rules of grammar nor the rigid definition of the lexicon so easily available to the scholar. Suggestion has its unanalysable code which finds its depth of explanation in the living hearts of the people who use it. Code words philologically treated appear childish, and one must know that all those experiences which are not realized through the path of reason, but immediately through an inner vision, must use some kind of code word for their expression. All poetry is full of such words, and therefore poems of one language can never be properly translated into other languages, nay, not even re-spoken in the same language.

For an illustration let me refer to that stanza of Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale,' which ends with the following lines:—

The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

All these words have their synonyms in our Bengali language. But if through their help I try to understand these